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part of Independent Schools Inspectorate

**British Schools Overseas**

**Inspection Report**

**The High School of The Cambridge School of Constanta**

**November 2024**

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## School's Details

<b>School</b>	The High School of The Cambridge School of Constanta			
<b>Address</b>	Aleea Capidava nr 3 Constanta 900001 Romania			
<b>Telephone number</b>	00 40 241 647 745			
<b>Email address</b>	office@cambridgeconstantar.ro			
<b>Principal</b>	Mrs Nicoleta Grigoras			
<b>Proprietor</b>	International Educational Center Foundation, Constanta			
<b>Chair of Governors</b>	Mrs Noha Nasser			
<b>Age range</b>	14 to 18			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	78			
	<b>Seniors</b>	38	<b>Sixth form</b>	40
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26 to 27 November 2024			

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 The Cambridge School of Constanta is a co-educational day school, founded in 2002 and situated in the suburbs of Constanta. It was originally founded under the patronage of the Lebanese Embassy in Romania and known as the Lebanese School. It changed its name in 2006 to become known as the Cambridge School of Constanta. Since its foundation, the school has been owned by a local family. The High School provides education for pupils in Years 10 to 13 and is based on the main school site, which it shares with the Kindergarten, Primary and Secondary sections of the school, and also in a purpose-built building which it has recently acquired approximately two kilometres away. This new building is used by older pupils. Only the High School was inspected.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school states that its aim is to provide a high quality, holistic education that nurtures the academic, personal and social development of each pupil by combining rigorous academic programmes with the development of essential life skills. It seeks to prepare pupils for success in higher education and their future careers by fostering critical thinking, creativity and a life-long passion for learning. The school endeavours to create a supportive and inclusive community that values diversity, encourages open communication and involves parents in the educational process.

### About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from families with a range of professional backgrounds. Data provided by the school shows that the ability profile of the pupils is in line with that typically found in independent schools in the UK. The school has identified very few pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Of the 78 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), four require additional specialist support.

## 2. Inspection of Standards for British Schools Overseas

### Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting independent schools in England and overseas.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the Standards for British Schools Overseas (BSO). It also takes account, where relevant, of compliance with any local requirements. Schools may opt for an inspection of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include: an exhaustive health and safety audit; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures; an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law; in-depth consideration of the extent to which the school meets the requirements of local law and custom.

**This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas.** The standards represent minimum requirements, and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. In order to gain BSO accreditation, a school is required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report. If a school does not meet all of the standards, it may elect to be re-inspected once it has taken the required actions in order to gain BSO accreditation.

**Headline judgements against the Standards for British Schools Overseas indicate that the standards have been 'met' or 'not met' for accreditation.**

Accreditation as a British school overseas lasts for three years. This is the school's first BSO inspection.

## Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets all the Standards for British Schools Overseas and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

## Part 1 – Quality of education provided

### 2.2 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

- 2.3 Leaders ensure the school provides a British curriculum which reflects its international context. It provides pupils with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. It enables them to acquire effective speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills and a good understanding of English. It provides a programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and teaches relationships and sex education (RSE) in line with UK guidance. A range of extra-curricular activities, such as sport, computer programming and business club, is supported. The curriculum and the activities programme develop pupils' understanding of British values, whilst also reflecting the values and traditions inherent to Romanian society.
- 2.4 The teaching throughout the school is provided through the medium of English. Appropriate additional support is provided for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). Consequently, pupils demonstrate a good command of English and were often observed to use idiomatic language appropriately. Teaching is suitably adapted through individualised support for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- 2.5 Typically, teaching is well planned, employs effective teaching methods, uses a range of resources and manages behaviour well. Teachers have good subject knowledge which ensures that high academic standards are maintained. Almost all of the pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that their teachers know their subjects well and help them to learn. There is a relaxed yet purposeful environment in lessons because of challenge which is presented calmly. As a result, pupils make good progress. Pupils enjoy and embrace the opportunities to work with each other and independently. Many of the tasks seen in lessons encourage pupils to take appropriate levels of responsibility through independent thinking and problem solving. Teaching does not discriminate against pupils because of their protected characteristics.
- 2.6 Pupils are assessed frequently, and their performance is monitored systematically by the school. Standardised data shows that pupils make good progress to GCSE and to A level. Attainment is in line with, and often above, worldwide averages for pupils taking these examinations. Pupils who have SEND make progress which is in line with that of their peers due to the effective support provided for them. Pupils who speak EAL make good progress with their use of English. The monitoring of pupils' performance informs the school's development planning. Pupils value highly the careers guidance which is afforded them in the school. It provides advice which is suitably aspirational, and information about a wide range of career pathways and higher education institutions. Most pupils go on to selective university courses, with around two thirds of pupils each year going abroad to undertake further study; in recent years largely in The Netherlands and Spain.

## Part 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

### 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.

- 2.8 The school promotes values which are fundamental to life in Britain as well as to many other countries through its PSHE programme. Consequently, pupils are well informed about British values and readily draw parallels with their lives in Romania. The school's value of inclusivity permeates the life of the

school and encourages pupils to have respect for other people, regardless of their background or the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The school effectively promotes tolerance and harmony between the many different nationalities represented in the school.

- 2.9 The school prepares pupils for the responsibilities of citizenship in the UK, Romania and the wider world and encourages respect for democracy and the democratic processes through pupil councils and class debates. Almost all the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people. Pupils speak warmly of the friendly atmosphere. Elected pupil leadership positions are keenly contested. Pupils are well-informed and have balanced views on political issues. The school provides opportunities to make meaningful contributions to the lives of others within the school and the local community, such as through working with local charities and helping to clean the local beach.

### **Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

#### **2.10 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16] are met.**

- 2.11 Leaders make appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. The school's safeguarding policy suitably reflects the school's context and is implemented effectively. The procedures are based largely on guidance for schools in England but also take local requirements into account. Safeguarding matters are overseen by a designated safeguarding lead (DSL), who is also the principal, supported by a deputy. Both of them have undertaken advanced safeguarding training and have a thorough understanding of their roles. The school maintains detailed and confidential records of all child protection concerns. These contain sufficient detail and record any discussions, decisions and action taken. The proprietor has effective oversight of safeguarding to verify that procedures are implemented appropriately.
- 2.12 Staff are thoroughly trained in the school's procedures, not only when they join the school but also through training sessions at the start of each school year and through regular updates. Staff know what to do should they become aware of any safeguarding concern about a pupil or if there is an allegation against a member of staff. They understand how to respond in cases of child-on-child abuse, and recognise the dangers of extremism. All the staff who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that their safeguarding training equips them to deal with any concerns about pupils.
- 2.13 Pupils are made fully aware of issues that might affect their welfare, health and safety, particularly with regard to online safety, through workshops in the school's PSHE programme. Pupils have ready access to specialist support for their mental health if required. Leaders have developed a number of ways to ensure they hear the views of individual pupils. As a result, in discussion with the inspector, pupils stated that they feel safe in their school and know to whom they can go should they wish to share any concerns.
- 2.14 The school's code of conduct sets out clear expectations of pupil's behaviour and a structured scheme of rewards and sanctions is in place. All the pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that the school expects pupils to behave well. Poor behaviour is sanctioned through conduct marks which are centrally recorded and reported to parents. Pupils typically behave well around the school. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere.
- 2.15 The school is proactive in ensuring that there is an emphasis on inclusivity and in teaching pupils about developing healthy relationships. This enables pupils to form positive relationships with each other. Pupils are confident in challenging poor behaviour when it occurs. Consequently, bullying is rare. Should it occur it is dealt with appropriately.

- 2.16 The health and safety policy reflects the school's commitment to providing a safe and healthy working and learning environment. It states the responsibilities of all staff, including those with particular roles. The school implements the health and safety policy effectively. Hazards are identified and suitably managed. Record keeping is systematic and comprehensive. There is an effective culture of care which is reflected around the school.
- 2.17 Fire exits and doors are fitted with alarms at both sites. Exit signage, exit routes, and fire extinguishers are clearly marked and well maintained. Fire alarms are appropriately placed and regularly tested. Routine fire drills are conducted, ensuring pupils know what to do in case of an emergency. Advice is taken from the local fire department and competent third parties and acted upon. Suitable and effective monitoring procedures are in place.
- 2.18 Both sites have effective procedures for the administration of first aid. This includes fully trained nurses on each site. In addition, all members of staff are trained in first aid. Medicines are stored securely and are easy to access in case of emergency and for use on school trips. The requirements of pupils who have specific medical needs, such as diabetes or allergies, are managed effectively. Staff are aware of who they are and how they should be treated. Records are maintained effectively.
- 2.19 A well-planned rota of staff supervision duties is in place. The school has identified areas where specific supervision is required, and staff are given appropriate guidance. A suitable policy is in place to ensure that pupils are properly supervised on trips and visits. All of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that the school provides a proper level of supervision during the school day and on school trips.
- 2.20 The school maintains its register of admissions as required. Effective systems are in place to monitor and address any attendance concerns. Comprehensive records are kept, with an efficient process of absence monitoring which places due importance on the welfare of pupils.
- 2.21 Leaders have a strategic and comprehensive approach to the management of risk. Risk assessments are thorough and detailed. Staff are provided with appropriate guidance to identify and address risks in the school's activities both on and off site.

#### **Part 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors**

- 2.22 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**
- 2.23 The required checks are carried out on staff and proprietors to ensure their suitability to work with children. The school verifies each person's identity and previous employment history. It carries out criminal record checks with Romanian authorities and, where relevant, with overseas authorities. The school carries out regular medical checks on staff to ensure that they are fit to work. The school checks each person's right to work in Romania. All checks are recorded on a single central record of appointments (SCR). Staff files contain copies of relevant documentation used to carry out suitability checks and indicate that the information recorded on the SCR is accurate.

#### **Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools**

- 2.24 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**
- 2.25 There are adequate toilet and handwashing facilities. Separate facilities are provided for adults. Both sites have medical rooms which provide appropriate accommodation for the short-term care of pupils who are unwell. They include beds and seating areas, washing facilities and are close to toilets. Both sites are maintained and kept clean to a standard which ensures the health, safety and welfare of pupils. There is a clear and effective cleaning regime in place. Acoustic conditions and internal and



external lighting are suitable. The school provides drinking water, including water fountains which are suitably marked. Hot water does not pose a scalding risk. The main school site has adequate space for physical education (PE) outdoors and outside play. The new site for the older pupils has an adequate area for pupils to relax socially.

## **Part 6 – Provision of information**

### **2.26 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**

2.27 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and relevant local authorities. This information includes details about the proprietor, the aims of the school and the curriculum offered. The safeguarding policy is published on the school's website. Arrangements and policies for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, complaints, health and safety, first aid, provision for pupils who have SEND and those who speak EAL are available on the school's website. Particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year are available on request. The school provides a full written report regularly on each child's attainment and progress. Almost all of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that they receive regular and helpful information on their child's performance and progress.

## **Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

### **2.28 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.**

2.29 The school's complaints policy is made available on the school's website. The policy allows for any concern to be considered initially on an informal basis. It then ensures that it has suitable arrangements in place for a formal complaint to be made in writing for consideration by the head and the proprietor. Finally, provision is made for a hearing before a panel, which includes an independent member, and allows for the complainant to be accompanied. At this panel stage, there are suitable arrangements in place to allow the panel to make findings and recommendations and for a confidential record to be kept of such findings. Appropriate records are kept of formal complaints; these detail actions taken by the school regardless of their outcome.

## **Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

### **2.30 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.**

2.31 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management of the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards for British Schools Overseas are met consistently and the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted. A very large majority of parents in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school is governed, led and managed well. Inspection evidence supports this view.

### 3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspector observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. He held discussions with members of staff and with the proprietor. The inspector visited the facilities for sick and injured pupils. The responses of parents, pupils and staff to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspector examined curriculum and other regulatory documentation made available by the school.

#### Inspector

Mr Alasdair McBay

Reporting inspector