



**Inspection report**

**New English School**

**Kuwait**

**Date**  
**Inspection**

15<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> November 2015  
20151115

Contents		page
1	Purpose and scope on the inspection	2
2	Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
3	Overall effectiveness of the school	3
	3.1 What the school does well	3
	3.2 Points for improvement	4
4	The context of the school	5
	4.1 The British nature of the school	6
5	<b>Standard 1</b> The quality of education provided by the school	7
	5.1 Curriculum	7
	5.2 Teaching and assessment	8
	5.3 Standards achieved by pupils	10
6	<b>Standard 2</b> The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	13
7	<b>Standard 3</b> The welfare, health and safety of pupils	15
8	<b>Standard 4</b> The suitability of the proprietor and staff	15
9	<b>Standard 5</b> The premises and accommodation	16
10	<b>Standard 6</b> The provision of information for parents, carers and others	18
11	<b>Standard 7</b> The school's procedures for handling complaints	18
12	<b>Standard 8</b> The quality of provision for boarding	19
13	<b>Standard 9</b> Leadership and management of the school	19

## 1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education has put in place a voluntary scheme for the inspection of British schools overseas, whereby schools are inspected against a common set of standards that British schools overseas can choose to adopt.

The inspection and this report follow the Department for Education (DFE) schedule for the inspection of British Schools overseas.

The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's management on the overall effectiveness of the school, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent schools in the United Kingdom.

The inspection and report will cover the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation (including boarding); and the school's complaints procedures. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for pupils and pupils' achievements.

This inspection was completed by Penta International UK. Penta International is approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the English Department for Education (DFE) on the extent to which schools meet the standards for British Schools Overseas.

During the inspection visit, 66 full- or part- lessons were observed by inspectors. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, a range of teachers, representatives of the governors and a group of students. Two and a half school days were monitored.

The lead inspector was John Cranfield. The team members were Glenn Doublesin, Hilary Rowark and Sheila Smith.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

New English School Kuwait meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

## 3. Overall effectiveness of the school

New English School Kuwait is a good school with some outstanding features.

Overall, the quality of learning, teaching and leadership are good. The pupils, parents and staff are committed to the school and feel valued and appreciated. Most pupils make progress at least in line with their ability, some better. Standards at the end of Key Stage 4 are high. Pupils are well supported through effective pastoral care and the implementation of robust welfare, health and safety policies and procedures. The curriculum is broad and balanced, enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities. The board are effective in providing strategic direction and support for the school. They appropriately hold the senior leadership to account.

### 3.1 What the school does well

Some of the many strengths are:

- A highly supportive proprietor and board.
- The school is successful in enabling pupils to develop their personal skills and qualities: pupils are thoughtful, well behaved, treat others with respect and have well developed social skills.
- The creativeness within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum enables pupils to be imaginative, develop new ideas and express themselves.
- Middle leaders demonstrate a commitment and capacity to continue to move the school forward.
- Home – school relationships are a strength
- The newly appointed primary leadership team are beginning to make a significant impact on the development of the school.
- The quality of teacher–pupil relationships is high.
- English language development across all phases is a strength.
- Examination results at the end of Key Stage 4 are above average.
- Non-teaching staff make a significant contribution to the life of the school.
- The school is held in high regard by the wider community: parents and pupils are proud to be members of ‘their school’.

## 3.2 Points for improvement

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- i. In the secondary school, establish clearer lines of accountability between heads of department and the senior leadership team.
- ii. Develop a shared understanding of outstanding teaching and learning.
- iii. Increase the rigour of the current system of performance management, in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and raise pupil attainment.
- iv. Develop the continuity between key stages in primary and secondary in order to improve the quality of pupils' experiences and learning.

## 4. The context of the school

The school has identified a number of potential barriers to school improvement:

- A culture in which students see themselves as 'receivers' of education.
- Conforming to Ministry regulations regarding curriculum and recruitment.
- The effect of the climate and the short school year.

## 4.1 British nature of the school

The school broadly follows the National Curriculum for England. UK directives and initiatives are followed when and where applicable. In many instances, the school mirrors developments in the United Kingdom. Staff focus on both the curriculum and pastoral areas, in order to ensure the 'Britishness' of the school is maintained.

The resources and schemes used to deliver the curriculum are British and reflect both the curriculum and culture found in the UK.

The teaching staff have appropriate qualifications and English has to be their first language (excluding Arabic teachers). The majority of teachers are British: school policy requires that all teaching qualifications are recognised in the United Kingdom.

English is the dominant language used within the school and also in communication with parents, via newsletters, the web site and class blogs. At least one parent in the home is expected to have a good command of the language.

The school utilises a wide range of assessment methods comparable to best practice in the UK. Consequently children can join/re-join the UK education system without disadvantage.

The school is organised according to the structures used in English schools. The head boy and girl, the school council, prefects, house captains and librarians all contribute towards the 'Britishness' of the school.

UK practice is evident in approaches to performance management, staff target setting, annual review meetings, etc.

All communications from the school to families and students are provided in English, as are all school publications, reports and letters and the website.

The importance of extra-curricular provision including and clubs and school trips are in line with British best practice. The school celebrates special events in the UK, for example Remembrance Day and the London Olympics.

Membership of the British Schools of the Middle East and British Schools Overseas supports the school in keeping up with educational developments within the United Kingdom. The school takes a full part in the range of developmental, cultural and sporting activities available.

The school was inspected by the Ministry Private Schools Department and deemed to be 'good'.

## 5. Standard 1

### The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided by New English School Kuwait is good.

#### 5.1 Curriculum

There is full-time supervised education for all pupils of compulsory school age. The National Curriculum of England provides the framework for teaching and learning. The school effectively implements its curriculum policy which is supported by appropriate schemes of work. The curriculum also provides for the academic, moral, physical, creative and social development of students. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn and make progress. The school ensures that national requirements are met in the teaching of Arabic and Islamic.

Throughout the school, curriculum provision enables pupils to experience linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative ways of knowing. Schemes of work are in place which are effective in establishing what is to be taught and when; teachers identify lesson objectives in their teaching. The school does not have the licence required to admit pupils with severe learning difficulties. All prospective pupils are required to undertake admission evaluations.

In the Early Years, pupils are taught and assessed with consideration of the UK's early learning goals. All classes are mixed ability and curriculum planning is appropriate. Differentiation is evident in curriculum planning, including extension and challenge activities.

In the primary school, the curriculum is broadly in line with National Curriculum expectations; adaptations have been made to ensure it meets local requirements. Pupils are set in phonics in Years 2 and 3 according to ability and mathematics in Year 5 and 6. Reading is taught in ability groups of 4 – 6 pupils from KG to Year 6. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are in place to support pupils with additional needs. IEPs are an established strength in the primary section and are used effectively to raise levels and respond to meet individual student needs. The secondary school does not presently have a formal system in place.

Throughout the primary and across the lower secondary school, the curriculum is enhanced by a planned PSHE programme which takes into account local regulations and cultural sensitivities. The school provides a planned careers program in Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. A wide range of extra-curricular activities enhances the learning experiences of pupils. Pupils are well prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Throughout the secondary school, pupils are setted, following courses leading to IGCSE, AS and A2. Able students are fast tracked, taking their IGCSE at the end of Year 10. The school takes into account the types of curriculum and external examinations commonly used in schools in the UK. This enables pupils to enter, or re-enter the UK educational system without disadvantage.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

Teaching and assessment are good, and meet the standard required.

Throughout the school, good teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress at least in line with their ability, increasing their understanding and developing skills in subjects taught.

Lessons are generally well planned and teaching methods are effective. Suitable activities are used and class time is managed properly. Teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, cultural background, needs (including the needs of EAL learners) and prior attainments of the pupils. They mainly ensure these are taken into account in the planning of lessons.

The quality of learning throughout EYFS is good or better. Teachers endeavour to structure the lessons around the developmental needs of individual pupils and aim to reflect their interests whenever possible. The wide variety of activities in EYFS contributes to the rich educational experience of the youngest pupils. Activities are planned that encouraged pupils to lead in their learning and to share outcomes with peers that enhances speaking and listening skills. Classroom assistants in EYFS lessons are generally utilised effectively to support learning and encourage speaking and listening skills that enhance the fluency and confidence of the pupils. In an effective lesson based on the theme of 'Going on a Bear Hunt', nearly all pupils demonstrated an ability to work independently on a wide range of planned learning activities. In a less effective lesson, pupils spent too long on the mat listening to the teacher before moving on to more active learning. As a consequence some pupils began to lose interest. Pupils are respectful of each other and their teachers, and enjoy learning. Displays in nearly all classrooms and around school help celebrate achievement and enhance the learning environment. Teaching remains generally good across Key Stage 1, although in a few lessons lack of challenge and slow pace restricted progress. In an effective mathematics lesson on partitioning number, planned differentiated tasks effectively challenged the more able. In mathematics lessons, in keeping with the school's emphasis on literacy, pupils were asked for synonyms for mathematical operators.

Throughout Key Stage 2 teachers plan for differentiation, although effective implementation was only evident in the best lessons. Learning objectives were displayed on nearly all lessons plans, although they were only shared and specifically referred to in the better lessons. In a few lessons the stated learning objective was more of a learning 'task' and it was unclear what the pupils were expected to learn by the end of the lesson. Consequently, the teacher was unable to assess the pupils' learning against learning objectives and could only acknowledge that the pupils had completed the task or not.

Overall the quality of teaching and learning across Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. Some lessons were good or excellent. Pupils are keen to learn and are happy to meet the challenges set for them in the best lessons. The level of challenge is inconsistent. In some lessons, the pace was too slow with an over-reliance on work sheets. Opportunities for pair or group work to enhance learning were missed. Interactive white boards are underused to support pupil learning.

Teaching is more effective throughout Key Stage 4 with more good or better lessons. In the better lessons, high expectations, challenge, the effective use of probing questioning and well planned learning activities led to highly effective learning. In less effective lesson, an over-reliance on work sheets and too much teacher-centred delivery slowed pace and learning.

Overall the quality of teaching across Key Stage 5 is good or better. Teachers are knowledgeable about their subject and through skilled questioning consolidated and extended pupils' understanding. Pupils are effectively challenged; effective feedback consolidated mastery. Learning is a positive partnership between pupil and teacher.

There is a framework in place by which pupils' performance can be evaluated by reference to the school's aims, as provided to parents on the website and in the prospectus. As nearly all pupils arriving in EYFS speak languages other than English, the school has implemented baseline assessment strategies, to provide a more complete picture of pupils' abilities. For older primary pupils, academic progress is tracked using InCas and PIPS on-line assessment. A reading audit is taken 3 times a year; writing is levelled at the end of most units; outcomes are moderated twice a year. Pupils know their targets in writing and mathematics and these are recorded in exercise books and on reports. In the secondary years, teachers are using of a range of tracking and monitoring systems to provide more accurate baseline data. The range of monitoring tools includes MIDYIS, YELLIS and ALIS. The school is making increasing use of baseline data: teachers are analysing baseline and internal assessment data to identify pupils suited to fast track IGCSE and AS Level courses, in Key Stage 4. However, the marking and assessment policy is inconsistently applied.

## 5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

In-school assessments of the youngest pupils in mathematics, reading and writing, indicate standards of attainment on entry that are in line, or above UK expectations.

Levelled writing is moderated twice a year. In Year 1, 85% achieved level 1A or above; in Year 2, 92% of pupils achieved level 2 or above. The figures for mathematics and reading comprehension are 98% and 92.5% respectively. The results compare favourably with UK expectations. There is effective support for pupils entering the school with limited literacy skills.

There is good progress in language/reading from Year 1 to Year 2. In Year 1, 36% of students are reading 1 year or more below their chronological age, this was reduced to 12% by Year 2. In Year 1 in 2013, 4% of pupils were reading 1 year or more above their chronological age. The same cohort in Year 2 achieved 18%. Pupil progress is broadly in line with ability. The SEF indicates that in 2015 girls outperformed boys significantly in reading and writing. This is currently being investigated at the school. Data is beginning to be used more strategically to identify mismatches between ability and progress and implement intervention strategies.

The junior school uses a range of assessment processes, referenced to National Curriculum attainment descriptors. The data suggests that most pupils are making good progress. Standards are high in music and PE.

Precise individual learning targets are set in some years for both writing and reading; these are valued by the pupils as they give a clear indication of strengths and weaknesses. The pupils' competence in reading and writing is good, and they use it effectively in their various subjects. Their spoken English is used to good effect, particularly in asking and responding to questions. Their good mathematical skills support their work in science, geography and ICT. However, use of ICT to support their learning in other subjects, is under-developed.

At Key Stages 3 and 4, standards are good overall, and high in several subjects. Initial testing for pupils entering Year 7 revealed scores skewed to the high end in all areas except vocabulary, which was skewed in the opposite direction. CEM data shows that the skew in vocabulary has reversed from low to high by end of Year 9. Although these were different year groups, the school suggested that the cohorts were of similar ability. Pupils continue to improve their English vocabulary, particularly subject specific, throughout Key Stage 3. All departments have formalised plans to improve further language acquisition.

Results at Key Stage 4 indicate high standards of achievement, particularly in mathematics and the sciences. In the Year 10 IGCSE accelerated programme, 92.6% of grades were either A\* or A from 449 entries. In Year 11, 53.6% of grades were either A\* or A. The school is aware that standards in drama are not yet satisfactory. In the Year 11 AS accelerated programme, 62.9% of grades were either A or B from 170 entries. In the non-accelerated programme, 48.5% of grades were either A or B from 380 entries. In A2 examinations, 64.6% of grades were B or above from 127 entries. A Year 10 pupil was commended by International Examination Board for achieving the highest mark worldwide in the IGCSE mathematics examination.

The school is very successful in helping pupils to develop their personal skills and qualities: pupils are thoughtful and well behaved. Pupils are highly motivated learners: as a result, by the time they leave school, they have the personal and social skills needed to move successfully to the next stage of their lives.

## 6. Standard 2

### The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of the pupils is good with outstanding features.

Pupils develop their understanding of spirituality: moral, social and cultural awareness through a combination of assemblies, PSHE lessons and the informal curriculum as they move through the school. Pupils show a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible. During their time at school, pupils develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and gain in confidence.

Moral development is excellent: the school effectively enables and encourages pupils to distinguish right from wrong, and to show respect for the law. This is achieved through discussion; measured, logical argument and discussion is the norm. This is highly effective in ensuring that pupils behave responsibly, show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life, especially within school. For Muslim students, the principles of right and wrong are supported through Islamic studies and the Quran.

Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to work in pairs in order to reinforce the necessary social skills that underpin effective pair and small group work. Pupils' views are valued and praise is used effectively to motivate and acknowledge achievements. Teachers or classroom assistants quickly address any rare instances of unacceptable behaviour to safeguard the well-being of the other pupils. Responses to attitude surveys indicate pupils are highly positive about their schooling: this was supported by observation.

Pupils are respectful of others' views and cultures, and are strongly committed to promote good relationships between people regardless of age, cultural background, social class, race or gender. Tolerance, democracy, respect for freedom of expression and other human rights are developed throughout the school. As pupils progress through the school, rich curriculum experiences ensure they broaden and deepen their understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship not only in Kuwait but also the UK and internationally. Care and concern for others extends beyond the school: last year pupils raised a substantial amount of money for charity. Pupils are friendly and welcoming to visitors: they are very happy to talk about their school, their work and their interests.

Nearly all pupils take an active interest in school life through participation in choirs, concerts, sporting activities and assemblies. The school encourages responsibility and provides opportunities for pupils to show initiative and demonstrate responsibility, for example school council representatives and voting for house captains and supporting them in their role.

A spirit of internationalism is firmly embedded in the curriculum. The school shares information about Britain to support their pupils and parents should they wish to relocate to live or study in the UK.

## 7. *Standard 3*

### The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The welfare, health and safety of pupils through the school is good with outstanding features. The school demonstrates a high priority on ensuring that the well-being of all pupils is at the heart of school policies and practices. Parents identified the safe and caring environment as a significant strength of the school. The school fully complies with Kuwaiti regulatory requirements in all aspects of health and safety.

Written policies are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils in the school, trips within the country and abroad. There is an anti-bullying policy document which highlights preventative procedures in the first instance, moving to more punitive depending on circumstance. The document was updated at the beginning of the academic year 2015. Focus groups of pupils were highly complementary with the way the school dealt with any instances of unpleasantness.

Fire safety procedures are well established with evacuation protocols displayed in every room. Emergency evacuations are held twice a year and monitored for effectiveness. There is a high level of supervision before, after school and during the school day.

Transport safety is given an appropriately high priority as well as internet safety and well-being procedures. Admission and attendance registers are well maintained. Daily attendance is recorded and tracking of absence is effective. Pupil's medical needs are well supported; the school nurses are a strength providing on-site care, support and liaising closely with parents.

Pupils are encouraged to lead healthy life styles with opportunities for active play and sports. The school's PSHE programme supports pupil's emotional and social development. Teaching assistants and administrative staff contribute to the safety of pupils by ensuring security procedures are followed. Every attention is given to ensuring the premises are secure and that any potential concerns are addressed immediately.

## 8. *Standard 4*

### The suitability of the proprietor and staff

All board members are of high standing and well regarded in the local community. The board oversee school policies and the strategic direction of the school. They do not interfere with the management of the school; there are clear lines of demarcation. All local requirements are met, including the right to work in the host country; suitability to work with children and appropriate certificates of suitability. The board ensures the school fulfils the safety, care and guidance requirements for pupils. In addition, they take responsibility for the checking of staff credentials.

Prior to the confirmation of staff appointments, appropriate checks, including police checks in the country of origin, are carried out to confirm their identity, medical fitness, right to work in Kuwait and their previous employment activity.

There is a list of all staff who currently work in the school. This is regularly updated and shows when they started and stopped working in the school. The school does not employ supply teachers.

Staffing levels are more than adequate for the successful delivery of the curriculum. All teaching staff have qualifications appropriate to their role; some staff have further academic or teaching qualifications that enhance school development.

## 9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

Overall, the quality of the accommodation is good. The school provides a stimulating learning environment with displays of pupil's work in classrooms and public areas. In the best learning environments, displays are a good balance between teaching resources and pupils' work. The school has reached full capacity: this places significant pressure on shared accommodation, especially the school hall, playgrounds and stairwells.

Staff throughout the school work hard to ensure that restricted space has minimum impact on the quality of learning and teaching. Observations demonstrate high levels of quality supervision of students at break times and as they move around the school. Timings of the school day and timetabling are adapted to best meet the pressures placed on space and resources.

The school meets local building regulations. Water supply is tested and meets local regulatory requirements. Sound insulation and acoustics allow effective teaching and communication. Lighting, heating and ventilation are effective. Flooring throughout the site is well maintained and is in excellent condition

Maximum use is made of limited outdoor space to facilitate a wide range of play opportunities, support physical development and enhance the PE provision. The school hall and playground areas are utilized to their full potential. A theatre is used for assemblies and dramatic productions. Washroom facilities are plentiful, hygienic and easily accessible. Medical facilities on site are good with designated facilities for pupils with health issues. Canteen facilities are hygienic and meet or exceed local regulations.

The site has sufficient access to ensure emergency evacuations can be accomplished safely and speedily. All pupils are able to enter and leave the school in safety and comfort. Policy and procedures provide clear detail and guidance for relevant staff.

Water and drainage systems meet local requirements and are tested regularly. Parents and other visitors sign in and are given ID badges on entry into the building. Security teams are on duty 24/7. Appropriate provision is made for religious observations.

The school has appropriate recruitment policies and procedures designed to attract and retain highly qualified and committed staff.

## 10. Standard 6

### The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents, carers and others is good.

Appropriate contact details are provided for parents and other stakeholders, including the e-mail contact details of the school board and the senior leaders. The website provides details of educational provision for pupils with additional learning needs. It also includes reference to key policies relating to bullying, child protection, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and the sanctions the school adopts in the event of pupils misbehaving. The complaints procedure is available on request. Details of the staff employed by the school are readily available.

The school regularly seeks feedback from parents both formally and informally and proactively works to address any issues identified. Face to face meetings are given a high priority. Teachers in the lower primary provide effective contact points for parents collecting pupils. In addition, parents are invited to attend transition meetings, music concerts, school productions and sports day.

The school reports regularly on the progress made by pupils. Internal assessments and examination marks are reported at least every term. A full report is issued biannually. Grades achieved by pupils are readily available at any time, on request.

The school is successful in making links within the community, subject to the constraints within which it operates. Students participate in inter-school competitions and sporting events and the senior choir performs at local functions. Sixth form students have opportunities to help in primary classrooms as part of their community service skills development; younger students are able to visit, for example, science labs, in the senior school. Educational visits are linked to curricular studies to give students experiences outside the classroom

Following any formal inspections or accreditations, the school publishes the report together with the details of development plans that have been written following the recommendations of the visiting team.

## 11. *Standard 7*

### The school's procedure for handling complaints

There is a formal complaints procedure that is transparent, open and effective. It takes into account local laws and regulations. The procedure is rigorously adhered to and highly effective in ensuring that a complaint is dealt with at the appropriate level.

Written records clearly detail the process regarding individual complaints and a high level of confidentiality is observed. Parental feedback indicates a high degree of satisfaction with both the speed of response and the outcome of any complaint.

## 12. *Standard 8*

### The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable.

### 13. Standard 9 Leadership and management of the school

There is a very positive relationship between the board and school leaders. The chairman is highly supportive and knowledgeable. The board ensure sufficiency of resources through robust financial management.

The school runs well on a day-to-day basis. In the primary school, newly appointed senior and middle leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Collectively they have already begun to implement effective improvement strategies. A particular focus for this year is improving writing across the school. In the secondary school the senior leadership team has successfully addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection. Whilst senior school leaders are primarily responsible for pastoral issues, the impact of departmental appraisal introduced during the previous year is inconsistent. There is no formal structure for senior leaders other than the head, to hold heads of department to account. Marking and assessment policies are department-specific.

The school ethos promotes positive behaviour and excellent personal development for pupils, including all aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Teaching is improving as a result of monitoring, but this is not yet rigorous enough and sufficiently sustained, to raise the standard of teaching to that of the best. The school's curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn and make progress.

The school has identified the need for a more consistent and rigorous approach to monitoring, tracking and assessment. Whilst all teachers undergo formal lesson observations, their impact on improving teaching and learning and raising pupil attainment sometimes lacks consistency. A more effective link between performance management, whole school priorities and a planned continuous professional development programme is under development. The school actively seeks to recruit and retain quality staff. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and exceed statutory requirements. There are effective strategies for engaging with parents and carers.