

Inspection report

Anglican International School Jerusalem

Israel





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Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education has put a voluntary scheme for inspecting British schools overseas, whereby schools are checked against a common set of standards that British schools overseas can adopt.

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

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

The inspection and report will cover the critical areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students; 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 students and students' achievements.

Penta International UK completed this inspection. The British Government approves Penta International to inspect schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the English Department for Education (DFE) on how schools meet the standards for British Schools Overseas.

During the inspection visit, 24 complete or part lessons were observed by inspectors. The team were in the school for three days. School documentation and policies were analysed, and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, teachers, school governors, parents and groups of students.

The lead inspector was David Berry. The team member was Lesley Birtwell.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The Anglican International School Jerusalem (elementary section) fully meets all British Schools Overseas accreditation standards.





3. The overall effectiveness of the school

The quality of education provided by Anglican International School Jerusalem (AISJ) has much to celebrate. Under the current leadership and governance, the school can sustain improvement. There is a variation in the consistency of teaching, with the best teaching being good and outstanding. The school has improved the provision for phonics and writing. The curriculum is broad, balanced, and supported by a range of extra-curricular clubs. The quality of relationships, support and care provided for students is a real strength of the school.

AISJ has many strengths:

- The dedication and commitment of the staff, as highlighted by how the teachers and support staff adapted to virtual learning at the outset of the pandemic in 2020 and, again, in 2021
- The elementary headteacher has a clear vision for how the school can improve
- The director has led the implementation of robust policies
- Some of the teaching is good and outstanding and meets the needs of all students, especially the most able and those with English as an Additional Language (EAL) and special educational needs (SEN)
- Parents have absolute confidence in the school and believe that the school keeps their children safe
- The unique premises are well maintained, which supports the learning of students
- The quality of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is outstanding
- The provision for those students with English as an Additional Language and special educational needs is outstanding
- The recently appointed chair of the school's board is ambitious for the school
- The provision for health, welfare and safety of students is outstanding.





3.1 Points for improvement

Among the school's many strengths, the following are areas for possible development.

- a. Improve the quality of learning and teaching further by ensuring:
 - high expectations of groups of students, especially the most able
 - that support staff are deployed effectively in all lessons
 - that feedback and marking are consistently provided for all students
- b. Improve the quality of provision of the Early Years Foundation Stage outside play area
- c. Develop middle leadership roles in the school to maintain and sustain the drive for school improvement.



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4. The context of the school

	T						
Full name of school	Anglican International School Jerusalem						
	Rechov Hanevi'im 82						
Address	PO Box 191						
Address	Jerusalem						
	91001						
	Israel						
Telephone Number/s	+927 2 567 7200						
Fax Number	+972 (0) 538 4874						
Website Address	www.aisj.co.il						
Key Email Address/s	contact@aisj.co.il						
Headteacher/Principal	Director: Mrs Rosemary Saunders Head of elementary: Mrs Sarah Coleman						
Chair of Board of Governors/Proprietor	Daryl Fenton						
Age Range	2-11 years						
Total number of Students	156	Boys	88		Girls	68	
	0-2 years	0	12-16 years	n/a			
Numbers by age	3-5 years	43	17-18 years		n/a		
	6-11 years	113	18+ years	n/a			
Total # of part-time child	dren		0				

AISJ initially started as a Girl's Day School in 1948, housed in the original building of the British Mission Hospital built in 1863. The school is presently owned by the Israel Trust of Anglican Churches and is closely connected to Christ Church in the Old City.

At present, there are 156 students on roll. Students, teaching staff and parents are drawn from many nationalities and religions. There are 46 nationalities; nearly half are from Europe or the UK, 22% are local students, and of the remainder, 17% are from North





America, 10% from Asia, 4% from South America and 1% from Africa. The average class size is 21 students, and all elementary classes are allocated additional support staff. AISJ is a private school and is not regulated by the Israeli Ministry of Education. The school's values and mission identify and respect the diverse religious beliefs and practices within the challenging context of Jerusalem.

The director, elementary headteacher and leadership team are all from the UK. The vast majority of teachers are from English speaking countries. The school is also a member of COBIS.

4.1 British nature of the school

The appearance, nature and ethos of the school are recognisably British. British practice is evident in approaches to progress meetings, monitoring pupil performance and annual review meetings. As well as implementing the curriculum for England, assessments are based on national standards from the UK, such as the British Early Years Framework and the Year 6 Key Stage 2 Tests.

All UK class teachers have the appropriate experience and qualifications. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum aligned with the National Curriculum for England (2014). The English Early Years Foundation Stage Framework is taught in nursery and reception. The school uses British curriculum materials and teaching resources, especially in teaching mathematics and English. The International Primary Curriculum for science and the foundation subjects, such as history and geography, underpins the curriculum. The school's assessment system is based on the English national standards both in the early years and across the elementary phase of the school.

School policies, such as safeguarding, are closely aligned with British practice and values. Communications from the school to families and students are provided in English, including school publications, reports, letters, and the website. Texts, materials, educational equipment, and software are almost always sourced from the UK. The house system uses the names of famous British citizens and adds to the overall ethos and values of the school.

Displays in classrooms and around the school further promote a British identity. The importance of extra-curricular provision, including clubs and school trips, aligns with UK best practices.

Parents are highly supportive of the British nature of the curriculum. Interviews with parents suggested they appreciated the high-quality care provided by the school and how well all staff engage with and support parents. They also understand how hard the team worked during the COVID-19 pandemic, in which teachers had to adjust lessons to online virtual learning. Parents also appreciate the extra-curricular



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provision, including clubs and school trips. Although English is the common language of instruction, Arabic, Hebrew, and French are also taught.





Standard 1 The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided at the AISJ easily meets the standard required for BSO accreditation with aspects that are good and outstanding.

5.1 Curriculum

The school's curriculum is supported by schemes of work which enable all groups of students to make at least satisfactory progress. The curriculum is underpinned by the International Primary Curriculum (IPC), which allows students to explore a wide range of themes, such as 'Toys' or the 'Water Cycle'. Subjects such as science, geography and history are taught through IPC.

The curriculum is planned to be broad and balanced and covers all subjects. The different subjects stimulate discussion and deepen thinking in the best lessons observed. The broad and balanced nature of the curriculum meets the needs of most groups of students, especially those with English as an Additional Language (EAL) and children with special needs. The high-quality care ensures that most students are provided with an appropriate amount of learning. However, the foundation subjects, such as science, history and geography, do not sufficiently challenge the more able students. Students, too, referred to their favourite lessons as challenging them to think or improve their learning.

The learning behaviours of students, when expected, are positive. Students like the high expectations that require them to take greater responsibility for their work and for the opportunity to support each other in pairs or small groups.

A real strength of the school is the support for students who speak English as an additional language (EAL). Expectations are high, and, as a result, students with little spoken or written English on entry to the school soon make rapid progress. Writing has been the focus across the school. The quality of writing is particularly strong in the English books and writing displays across the school show that students make at least good progress. However, the level of expectation is not as strong in science, history or geography. Feedback in the topic books is inconsistent and does not challenge students to improve or extend their learning.

In one lesson observed, dual narrative accounts of Hansel and Gretel were produced for Year 5 and students were given feedback by their peers about how to make their stories 'scarier'.

The school has focused intensely on teaching phonics by introducing Read Write Inc's scheme. The approach to teaching reading has been well-received by parents and staff. The structure and staged approach mean that the learning tasks match



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students' needs equally.

In EYFS, phonics is taught systematically. Relationships between adults and children are a real strength. However, the outside area for both nursery and reception needs to be improved. Some of the equipment is dated and does not support the curriculum or play and lunchtime activities.





5.2 Teaching and assessment

Teaching and assessment meet the required standard with some good and outstanding aspects.

Students are willing to persevere and meet the high expectations some teachers demand. One student noted, 'My favourite lesson is mathematics because my teacher makes it not too easy or too hard!'. Across the school, teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons appropriate to the age of the children. In the best lessons, prior knowledge and experience are built upon engaging questions and responding to misconceptions. Those students that are ready are quickly moved on to the planned activity. In those lessons, students were clear about their learning and what they were expected to do if they completed the task. In all lessons, the learning objective was displayed, and when questioned, most students were able to show that they understood the lesson's purpose.

In some lessons observed, students found the learning not sufficiently demanding and, as a result, there was some off-task behaviour. The pace of lessons can be a little slow, with some students not being allowed to start the activity promptly. Teaching assistants are inconsistently deployed in during class activities. This is especially the case at the start of lessons. In the best lessons, it is evident that they know what the teacher has planned and are expected to work with specific groups, such as the most able or middle achieving groups.

The school uses specialist teachers exceptionally well. Students are taught by art, music and PE specialists. In a PE lesson, students engaged in a series of movements that included running, striding and jogging. The students then moved on to ball skills with the support of the teaching assistant. In an art lesson, students explored the work of the artists Keith Harris. In a music lesson, the students were taught important music vocabulary, and then they engaged in playing musical instruments.

In the best lessons, feedback is used purposefully to inform the following day's learning, and this approach enables students to address mistakes so that they can make good or better progress. A small representative group of students was interviewed, and they commented on their favourite lessons as those that allow them to explore, discuss, and investigate ideas. The introductions of some lessons were too slow, with students losing concentration because of the lack of engagement between the teacher and students. Time was also wasted as students waited for resources to be distributed after the introduction to the lesson was completed.

The resources used across the school are of good quality. The library is an excellent space and is fully used across a typical school week. The librarian ensures that visits are supported with engaging activities. Every classroom is equipped with an interactive whiteboard.



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Students are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences in the UK and other birth countries.

A new and simplified system of assessment has been introduced. The termly tracking pupil progress through meetings with the headteacher, teacher, and support staff means that assessment information is being used purposefully to benefit students. The lines of accountability between students, teachers and leaders are unambiguous. The school is well-placed to build on this excellent initiative through its current level of services, including EAL, SEN, and specialist teaching provision. The school uses a range of UK test materials that includes 'Rising Stars', Progress in Reading Assessments and Progress in Mathematics Assessments.

Meetings with parents highlighted how much they appreciate the range and quality of information they receive from the school. They believe that the school provides sufficient information about every student's progress. Moreover, if they had any queries, they were confident that teachers would make themselves to discuss how well their child was progressing in school.







5.3 Standards of attainment

Most students make good progress across the elementary school from early years to Year 6.

In the EYFS, 75% reached a Good Level of Development in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language) and the specific areas of mathematics and literacy. The percentage is above the UK average. The school is particularly strong in reading, writing and number.

Many students make at least good progress in English and mathematics across the school. Progress is weaker in science, history and geography. The school's ambitions for its students need to be reflected consistently across all subject areas than just the core of English and mathematics. Feedback in mathematics is variable, with the best marking inviting student response or revisiting errors and asking them to unpick their mistakes and learn from this process of reflection and engagement.

Over the past two years, COVID-19 has meant that the UK Year 6 tests were suspended. Therefore, it is not possible to compare AISJ and the UK in the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics. Nevertheless, the school has redesigned its assessment system to ensure that teacher assessment and student test data are carefully monitored and discussed between the headteacher and the class teacher. Students are tested, and the data reveals that many students make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The use of data has also informed the decision to raise the writing profile and systematically coordinate and teach phonics in the early years and Key Stage 1.

Students regularly shared how much they enjoy school and all that it offers. The school prepares students for transition as they move from early years to Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 to the secondary section. Resources are well-coordinated to ensure that students settle quickly into their new phase.





6. Standard 2 Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development of students

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the AISJ students is outstanding.

The ethos statement on the school's website emphasises mutual respect and promotes a culture of respectful co-existence. The school's culture of tolerance and mutual respect is strongly evident in the way students, staff and families interact. There are 46 languages spoken in the school, but this is viewed as a strength for the way it actively includes all and celebrates its diversity.

In an assembly observed, the students were actively involved in a discussion about a mutual respect. The students fully participated in the assembly, and they experienced the Lord's Prayer in various languages. Children from all cultures respectfully participated in the prayer. Furthermore, the school promotes tolerance and respect and regularly explores the three religions of the country, namely, Christianity, Judaism and Islam. The school organises local visits so that students learn about the host country. Students have opportunities to study various topics in history and geography, which helps op a cultural understanding of the wider world.

The library is well-stocked with books from different cultures and written in other languages. Students are given regular opportunities to share stories and browse books. Opportunities to attend clubs after school (sporting, creative, mathematics and games) enhance the curriculum and enable children to succeed in various ways; for example, children were enthusiastic about the drama and music club and the upcoming production of Peter Pan and the Lost Dog. After the past two years of the global pandemic and the halting of school activities, the students were delighted that the school had reintroduced a sports day.

The students are confident and articulate, happy to relate to a range of visitors and have a good relationship with adults. The students trust their teachers and other adults. Displays demonstrate that children are expected to think and reflect; for example, A Picturing Christianity display enabled children to reflect on a piece of Christian art and say how it made them feel. Classroom and corridor displays reinforce the message that learning is a process, for example, a poster about 'Winnie the Pooh' and the idea of risk and bravery.

Students have developed strong moral values. The behaviour observed during the visit, both in the classroom and around the school, is calm and respectful. Students understood the difference between right and wrong and were able to talk about what is unacceptable behaviour and how they need to work together and celebrate friendship. The Jigsaw PSHE programme ensures progressive learning throughout the school, looking at key themes: Celebrating Difference, Dreams and Goals, Being Me in My World, Healthy Me and Relationships.

A house system is in place with houses named after key British people in the history of Israel;



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The Year 6 teacher nominates house captains. Children develop a sense of citizenship and democracy.

The 'Schools for the Future' group of current school parents were involved in a garden day that led to the creation of early years planters. The Parents and Teachers' Association, too, are highly active in their support for the school. The students and staff enjoy excellent food choices well-prepared by the school's chef, who greets the staff and students with a friendly smile and great food.





7. Standard 3 The welfare, health and safety of the students

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of students is outstanding.

AISJ is a safe, caring and welcoming environment for students to grow and flourish. When questioned, all children were unanimous about how much they felt part of a family. Both the students and parents have repeatedly made clear how appreciative they are for how they were supported during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overall, the Christian ethos: 'We strive to create a warm and caring environment, in which students, families, and staff feel respected and valued'. Several plans and policies promote pupil safety and welfare, such as the Emergency Plan and Transport Plan. The Emergency Plan is clear about the potential challenges of living in Jerusalem, and regular drills are held by the school.

Published lunch and snack arrangements encourage healthy eating and drinking water. A wide variety of fresh and healthy food is provided for children and adults, including delicious salads. Students are expected to wear hats when outside and bring water bottles during the summer period. Students are taught to keep themselves safe, including how to keep themselves when using social media.

Staff induction ensures that they are fully prepared for working at AISJ. The school's safeguarding policies are effective, ensuring a culture of vigilance. Staff are trained appropriately, which is checked by the director. All staff are expected to understand and apply the safeguarding policy, and it was evident that they know what to do if they have any safeguarding concerns. Staff suitability checks are in place and recorded in a single central record. The Behaviour Policy emphasises respect, tolerance and self-discipline. Students and staff know how to respond if bullying were to occur.

Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are located around the school. There are clear systems to raise concerns about any issues that may arise in the intervening period. A qualified nurse is available to administer first aid, and several staff hold first aid qualifications. She provides physical and emotional support and is an essential link to other staff if she has particular concerns about a student. Staff are made aware of students who have medical needs.

Classes are well-resourced with a typical teacher and teaching assistant ratio. Play and lunchtime have the appropriate allocation of adults. Procedures are in place to ensure that staff on duty know what is expected.

There is a robust admissions process in place. The admissions and attendance information are securely stored on the school's IT system, meeting local regulations. Attendance is high, but the trend over time is difficult to assess because of the impact of COVID-19 and virtual learning. Registers are completed accurately and lateness recorded. The checking of absences should be moved to a central function rather than the current arrangement that requires the teacher



to investigate. The school fully understands that parental work patterns can impact attendance.





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8. Standard 4 The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The suitability of the staff and the governing body is of high order. The director has done an excellent job ensuring that the school meets all students' safety, care, and guidance requirements.

The school is well resourced with qualified teachers and support staff. The school ensures that all appropriate checks are undertaken before their appointments. In addition, there is a Safer Recruitment Policy in place, which covers all aspects of the recruitment process, from advertising positions to the appropriate checks. The school induction programme and the initial two-year probationary contract support the robustness of the recruitment policy. The school director is part of the recruitment process, attends interviews and has recently attended Safer Recruitment training. The newly appointed director and recently appointed headteacher has also been trained.

Before taking up an appointment, all internationally employed staff undergo relevant checks, including identity, medical clearance, police checks, previous employment details, references, and the candidate's suitability to work with children. The school obtains work visas for staff, including checks on identity and right to work in Israel.

The checks on local staff, including police checks, are within Israel Law. All locally employed staff need to have an Israeli Identity Card, confirming their right to work and their identity. The same contractor checks security staff. Supply staff are drawn from part-time teaching staff and teaching assistants; no external supply staff are used.

A list is maintained of all staff and volunteers who currently work in the school named a 'single central record'. All appropriate checks and dates of employment are carried out, backed up by records held in personal files. The single central record includes checks on volunteer staff and the chair of the Board.





9. Standard 5 The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are outstanding.

AISJ is a historically listed series of buildings used imaginatively so that the school provides a wide range of educational opportunities. Some of the classrooms and school areas, such as the dining room, are small, but they are well used, appropriately supervised and fit for purpose. There is also specialist provision available for art, music and computing. The library is excellent and a fully used resource. The school corridors display children's learning, such as excellent writing examples. Overall, the classroom environments are variable, with some rooms not fully supporting children's independence.

There are sufficient toilet facilities across the school clearly marked for pupil use and segregated for boys and girls in the elementary school. Separate staff facilities are available. There is also a separate medical room with facilities to store medication, bed, washing and toilet facilities. The highly popular and caring nurse is always available with clear signs around school informing people how to contact the nurse. A defibrillator is available on the wall close to the medical facility.

There is a designated maintenance team that ensures a high level of cleanliness and issues are dealt with immediately; for example, a water spill at lunchtime was cleared up immediately to ensure children lining up did not slip. The premises are secure, and entry is limited and guarded. Many security cameras monitor the site and are accessed in an emergency or after an incident. There is appropriate access to shade in all outdoor areas.

The system of collecting students at the end of the day is calm and organised. The school is a safe and welcoming environment. There is the annual checking of fire equipment, and the maintenance staff are vigilant if any issues should arise. Internal lighting is appropriate for the activities undertaken; classrooms are light and airy, especially those with high ceilings. There is drinking water provided around the school. Water in the toilet and washing facilities is adequate, and the mixer taps ensure the water temperature is appropriate and does not pose a scalding risk.

The designated outdoor area in the early years needs to be modernised. The space across the school is fully maximised, especially the outdoor provision for sports and playtimes. The designated spaces include a football pitch, games tables, and tables for sitting and socialising. Observations of playtime show facilities are used well, and children enjoy the variety.



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10. Standard 6 The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents, carers and others meets the standard for accreditation.

Parents view the range and quantity of information as excellent. During the period of COVID-19, parents believe that the school did all that it could to keep them involved and engaged within the school community. A sample of interviewed parents stated that they receive a wide range of useful and helpful information. As one parent said: 'I am really happy with the school. I cannot fault the amount of information that I receive.' The school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is proactive and highly supportive of the school. The PTA also issue a newsletter to keep parents informed about events.

Parents are kept well-informed about how well their child progresses academically and emotionally in school. Teachers make themselves available both personally and through their emails. It is recommended that the accessibility is reconsidered because of the need for teachers and support staff to enjoy an appropriate work-life balance. Homework queries are addressed promptly, and parents appreciate how teachers are willing to increase, decrease or adjust the level and types of activities. The parents interviewed also believed that homework is valued and linked to the current actions being taught in the classroom.

The school's website is being updated. Currently, there is a range of policies posted that include attendance, homework, behaviour, bullying and child protection, and these are also available on request. The Behaviour Policy makes clear the school's expectations, and it adopts a clear and transparent approach.

The headteacher is highly visible in the mornings, during school times and after school. She makes herself available to parents before and after school and is quick to address concerns. The atmosphere around the school is calm and friendly. Parents have access to teachers and senior leaders. A newsletter is sent out regularly along with other relevant information.





11. Standard 7 The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school has a complaints policy on the website. The policy is based on the Independent Schools guidelines. However, complaints are rare: teaching staff are available to talk to families before or after school and replies to emails are sent promptly on most occasions.

The complaints policy sets out three phases to how AISJ manages complaints. First, an informal response is made with the teacher or support staff addressing the concern. Typically, most of the concerns raised are addressed and concluded. Secondly, in the rare event that the issue remains unresolved, the matter is passed to the headteacher. She is expected to address this matter in 10 working days. Finally, if the matter remains unresolved, the director will meet with the parent and attempt to resolve the complaint. The Head of elementary and director ensure that all complaints are treated confidentially. Most issues are normally resolved at the teacher or headteacher phase. The parent can request a hearing with a selected panel from the School Board if the director cannot resolve the issue.

The school considers most issues raised in school are concerns which can nearly always be dealt with informally between the relevant staff, family and students. The class teachers take responsibility for the children in their care, and all issues are raised initially with the class teacher.



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12. Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school

The effectiveness of the leadership and management throughout the school and the governance role fulfilled by the board is good.

The elementary headteacher provides clear and effective leadership of the school. Through her determined leadership, assessment has been simplified so that teachers examine and act upon student data. She has also introduced termly student progress meetings to monitor carefully student performance in the core subjects by the teacher, headteacher, and the inclusion coordinator. Moreover, the school has responded to an inconsistency in phonics teaching and has introduced Read, Write Inc. to support reading and writing across the school. This improvement is apparent in the quality of writing displayed around the school and in the student English books. Writing has been given a high priority, and the impact has been students producing interesting stories and accounts.

The director has brought robust systems to the school, and she has an excellent overview of the school. She has made several excellent appointments across the school, and the school has a good capacity to continue to improve. The school is robust in its approach to keeping children safe.

The recently appointed chair of the school board has now focused on working closely with the director and Head of elementary so that the school can continue to move forward. The chair cares deeply about the school, and he has an excellent grasp of its place in the complex city of Jerusalem. He understands the need to support and challenge the school's leadership team. The chair outlined plans to organise various committees that will hold the school's leadership to account for the performance of the elementary school.

The operational running of the school is both smooth and calm. The director and Head of elementary are well supported by a team of administrative staff who are highly competent. During the inspection, it was evident how committed the administrative and site management team care about the students and the school.

The school development plan is appropriate, accurate and well-judged and focused on setting challenging but achievable goals. Safeguarding is integral to all aspects of the school, and every adult understands how important it is to keep children safe. Induction is well-organised for newly appointed staff. Moreover, teachers are now provided with a new appraisal system that the elementary headteacher has recently introduced on assuming their position.

Inclusion is a real strength of the school. In particular, the provision for those students who have EAL or are adjudged to have SEN is outstanding. The school readily uses professionals for additional support and guidance, such as educational psychologists and occupational therapists.





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Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good and outstanding features. The school is fully aware of its areas for improvement and has plans to improve teaching. At present, there is not enough middle leadership across the school. The staff are highly capable and ready to share and lead in the future improvements of the school. The Head of elementary has an excellent understanding of what needs to improve.