



**British School  
Overseas**  
Inspected by Penta International

## **Inspection Report**

# **English College in Prague**

## **Czechia**

Date	6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2021
Inspection number	20211006

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## 1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education has put in place a voluntary scheme for the inspection of British colleges overseas, whereby colleges are inspected against a common set of standards that British colleges 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 college's management on the overall effectiveness of the college, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent colleges 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 the students; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the college's premises and accommodation (including boarding); and the college's complaints procedures. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the college is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for and students' achievements.

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

During the inspection visit, all teachers were observed by inspectors. College documentation and policies were analysed, and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised. Discussions were held with the senior staff, the management teams, a range of teachers, parents and groups of students. Two and a half college days were monitored.

This uses the college's nomenclature for year groups: so Year 8 in the British system is here known as Year 1, and so on through to Year 6, which is the equivalent to the UK's Year 13.

The lead inspector was Dr Mark Evans. The team members were Mr Ciprian Ghisa and Mr Alfons Vinent.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The English College in Prague (ECP) meets all standards for British Schools Overseas.

### 3. Overall effectiveness of the college

The college offers an excellent British education that meets the needs of its students in a truly context-sensitive manner. It is excellent in all the BSO standards. The students are well known to staff and supported appropriately. The curriculum is rich and fit for the particular requirements of the Czech Republic. Teachers make good use of the wide range of resources; students are often excited by and highly engaged in their learning. Parents and students are very supportive of college, the provision of education and also the positive manner in which the Covid-19 pandemic has been handled.

Students' behaviour is outstanding and they clearly enjoy being at college. As a result, they make excellent progress, becoming eager, confident speakers of the English language and articulate learners.

#### 3.1 What the college does well

The college has many strengths.

- The relationships between students and staff are outstanding. They are based in mutual respect and provide the foundations for the excellent learning and teaching that takes place. The exemplary ethos based on trust between students and teachers is significant; the students feel that they are respected and well supported; the level of responsibility given to them is high, and they meet the challenge.
- The curriculum provision is excellent. The college blends the required Czech curriculum with the best of the British curriculum very effectively, ensuring students are well prepared for the challenges of the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD).
- The bespoke pre-IB curriculum in Years 3 and 4 provides students with the necessary skills to meet the IB learner profile attributes and ultimately achieve high scores at IBD. The development of a dynamic, interactive and cross-curricular approach to humanities creates an excellent learning experience for the students in subjects like history, geography, business studies and psychology.
- There is very strong and consistent provision for English language, mathematics, science, drama and arts; the drama provision for example is highly appreciated by the students and respects the heritage of Vaclav Havel, one of the founders of the college.
- The senior leadership team is outstanding. Led by the highly effective, sensitive and focussed headmaster, they work well as a team, sharing the vision for college improvement. They have put in place effective strategies that have resulted in significant positive changes across an already very good

college. The leaders are held to account and supported by a wise and highly experienced board of governors.

- ECP benefits from a strong team of middle leaders, experienced and enthusiastic about the college; they have a strong focus on aligning the academic policies and systems so that the learning experience of the students is of a high quality on a daily basis. The college benefits from an excellent administrative and support team.
- The teachers benefit from an excellent programme of professional development, flexible as well as directed towards the teachers' needs.
- The provision for personal, social, moral education is excellent. There is a strong and palpable focus on the promotion of the values of the founders, such as freedom, respect for diversity and equality; the college also values deeply the Czech heritage, history and traditions, including them in the curriculum, presentations, assemblies, projects.
- Teaching is excellent: in the vast majority of the lessons, the teachers make regular reference to prior learning, and also to real-life situations.
- Students make excellent progress across their academic path, achieving high standards which enable them to access the universities of their choice – almost half go to UK universities.
- All students receive high quality career guidance, which is not focused only on Year 5 and 6 students, but it is carefully developed across the college starting from Year 1; the student mentoring programme is excellent, through it, Year 1 students are mentored by Year 6 students, helping them to understand the college standards and requirements, as well as guiding them in their understanding of their needs and aspirations for the future.
- The college's strong focus on the wellbeing of students and teachers helped the community meet the challenges raised by the Covid-19 pandemic; the college's choice to develop this direction even further is likely to provide even more benefits in the future.

## 3.2 Points for improvement

Whilst not required by regulations, the college might wish to consider the following points for development:

- improve the quality of teaching further, so that all lessons are as effective as the best ones, for example in terms of techniques used, pace and the use of classroom displays to support and engage students;
- further embed the ECP attributes, in the everyday running of the college;
- seek ways to share with and support other excellent schools and colleges, to mutual benefit.

## 4. The context of the college

Full name of college	The English College in Prague - Anglické gymnázium o.p.s.		
Address	Sokolovská 320, Praha 9, 190 00, Czech Republic		
Main telephone #	+420 283 893 113		
Website	<a href="http://www.englishcollege.cz">www.englishcollege.cz</a>		
Email	<a href="mailto:office@englishcollege.cz">office@englishcollege.cz</a>		
Principal	Dr Nigel Brown		
Chair of board of governors	Denis Keefe CMG		
Age range	12-19 years		
Number of students	Total = 384	Boys = 179	Girls = 205
Student numbers by age on date of entry	(0-2 years)	(3-5 years)	(6-11 years)
	0	0	0
Student numbers by age on date of entry	(12-16 years)	(17-18 years)	(18+ years)
	261	111	11
Total number of part-time students	0		

The English College in Prague (ECP) is a not-for-profit co-educational school, providing a British-style education for Czech and international students from the age of 12 to 19 years. The college was founded in September 1994 after the Velvet Revolution, with HRH Prince Charles and Václav Havel as Patrons. The college offers many bursaries and scholarships.

As well as aiming to be an English grammar school, the college is licensed under the jurisdiction of the Czech Ministry of Education. It is both on the register of Czech schools (as six-year bilingual gymnasium allowing those students who wish to sit the Czech *Maturita* examinations), and is an international-style independent college offering IGCSEs in English language and mathematics and the IB Diploma programme.

In 1995, it became the first college to offer the International Baccalaureate in the Czech Republic. All students take the full IB Diploma exams. Most ECP graduates go on to study at

universities in the UK, but also in the Czech Republic and elsewhere in the world. The College is a public benefit organisation (the Czech equivalent of a UK charity), established by the English College Foundation, legally operating under a two-tier Statutory and Supervisory Boards in Czechia but operationally overseen by a board of unpaid governors.

Since the creation of the Czech National Curriculum, and because of the requirements of the Czech Ministry of Education, the UK and Czech systems are now combined in a single programme of study for all students up to IBD. This meets the requirements of the Czech National Curriculum.

ECP is one of only four colleges in the Czech Republic which are licenced so that students who take the full IBD, automatically get the Czech college leaving certificate (the *Maturita*) on passing additional examinations in Czech Language and Literature. The college also delivers Czech history, Czech geography and explore these through a series of seven whole college domestic residential trips spread over the first 3½ years of the students' college life.

It is situated on two sites which are 5 minutes' walk apart. The main college is in an older building previously leased from the municipality, but now owned by the college. There have been significant improvements made to the infrastructure of the building, and there are well-defined plans for extensive further improvements. The oldest two year groups receive most of their lessons in a dedicated sixth form centre in a nearby modern office block.

The majority of teachers are UK-trained and professional development is focused on UK courses, mainly through HMC and IBO-accredited programmes, as well through the Association of Central European Schools.

This year the college led the formation of the first European training college consortium for trainee teachers who are training in the UK. ECP (along with St. Georges in Rome and The British School of Brussels) will offer placements to UK training providers from Nottingham, East Lancashire and West Cumbria.



## 4.1 British nature of the college

The college is supported by a charitable trust in the UK, the English College Foundation. The foundation entrusts the daily management of the college to the headmaster and his team, but they are overseen by a group of nominated governors. The governors bring a range of professional expertise from the senior positions they hold in the UK and in the Czech Republic. Governors meet three times per year. There are two patrons of the college: HRH The Prince of Wales and Karel Schwarzenberg, a renowned Czech politician.

ECP is palpably British in terms of the style of education. It has a pastoral care system that is recognisably British, operating through form tutors and senior tutors. Parents report that their children feel challenged academically and by being exposed to different perspectives and ideas, in the style of an excellent UK liberal education.

The college employs a significant proportion of native English teachers, the vast majority of whom are PGCE trained and have experience in the UK. There is a generously-funded continuous professional development (CPD) programme for all staff, a significant proportion of which is for UK-based training. When conditions allow, staff both attend and present at HMC, COBIS and IB conferences. Many are connected with UK educational entities on social media such as the Chartered College of Teaching, the National Association for the Teaching of English and the Department for Education.

ECP child protection policies are derived from UK best practice and there is regular consultation with a UK based child protection expert. All staff are required to complete regular training through the EduCare online platform, as well as attend annual refresher sessions with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

Culturally the college's links with the UK remain strong, and there are frequent college cultural trips and exchange visits. Many parents choose ECP because of the track record of getting students into the UK universities, including Oxford and Cambridge. The college promotes British values through the college's vision, curriculum activities, displays and events. The college is very well resourced with books and materials of the type that are in use in other British curriculum schools. The library has an outstanding collection of British and world literature that the students really enjoy.

## 5. Standard 1

### The quality of education provided by the college

The quality of education provided at ECP fully meets the requirements of the BSO Framework.

#### 5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum at the ECP is excellent. There is a broad and balanced curriculum that is based on the British curriculum, but is adapted effectively to the local requirements of the Czech curriculum.

The curriculum allows students to attain knowledge across five areas of learning: knowledge and understanding; analysis and evaluation; problem solving; creativity and communication. The embedding of cross-curricular links is evident in plans and schemes of work. For example in humanities, the development of a dynamic, interactive and cross-curricular approach creates an excellent learning experience for the students through their new *Changing World, Changing Times* programme.

The first two years of study at the ECP are equivalent to the UK Year 8 and 9 and students follow a broad curriculum of English, Czech, mathematics, science, history, geography, computer science, French, German or Spanish, art, music, drama, physical education and personal, social and moral education (PSME). This emphasis ensures students are well prepared for the increasing demands of Years 3 to 6.

A new bespoke pre-IB curriculum for Years 3 and 4, has been developed over the last four years, so students in those two years are now provided with the necessary skillset to meet the IB learner profile attributes and ultimately achieve high at IB level. The pre-IB curriculum has a clear and appropriate rationale based on the IB learner profile: it is the result of collaborative work between the senior leadership team, the heads of faculty and the teachers.

At the end of Year 4, students take external examinations in English (iGCSE or Cambridge English), mathematics (iGCSE) and Modern Foreign Language (Common European Framework) and Drama (LAMDA).

In the upper college, students in Years 5 and 6 follow an exciting and challenging course of study which leads to the IB Diploma qualification. Students have the option to follow the *Maturita* route which leads to qualifications in both the IB and the Czech *Maturita*; or opt for a non-*Maturita* route.

In IB, students are offered a wide range of subjects to choose from in groups 3 and 4 including economics, geography, history, environmental systems, global politics,

philosophy, psychology and computer science. Internal Assessments (IAs) are staggered over the two years of the IB programme which provides students and teachers with more flexibility, and reduces stress and work-load.

There is a comprehensive pre-CAS programme for students in Years 1 to 4, that explores aspects of reflection, creativity, activity and service, mainly through PSME lessons, cross-curricular activities and the extra-curricular programme. This pre-CAS very effective programme is well embedded in the ECP curriculum and facilitates the transition between the pre-IB and the IB course.

Very good careers guidance is given. The 2020-2021 cohort had 44% of students going to UK universities, with 82% of students being granted places for their first or second choice. The careers programme at ECP starts in Year 3 when students start exploring careers and universities during their PSME lessons and continues all the way up to Year 6. Students reported that their teachers inspired them into these career choices and felt their teachers really supported them.

## 5.2 *Teaching and assessment*

The quality of teaching and assessment across the college is excellent: there is outstanding practice evident in classrooms in all year groups.

In the best teaching, the focus was 100% on learning, even when that meant leaving the lesson plan, adapting or improvising. These lessons are brisk and engaging. The teacher is highly responsive to the students and the context at that particular moment in time. For example, in Year 2 and Year 3 physics lessons, not only were the lessons well planned and fast paced, but the skilful questioning by the teachers meant that students were constantly on their toes and challenged. A wide range of resources and activities were used, again keeping the students highly engaged. These most successful lessons were dynamic: all students were highly involved in their tasks. They worked in groups, on differentiated tasks. In one of the groups, one student modelled the experiment for his colleagues. In both lessons, the students were very well supported by the teachers' constant and constructive feedback.

Teachers create a positive, warm learning environment in which students are able to articulate their thoughts and feelings clearly. They feel confident and comfortable about asking for help from their peers and readily offer that support when it is required. This proactive, constructive and non-judgemental attitude is another strong element of the college ethos and culture.

Teachers are good at encouraging students to express their individual views. In many lessons, students are provided with opportunities to reflect upon, share and discuss their thoughts, ideas and beliefs. Connections with real life situations and with the contemporary political, economic or social evolutions in the world are made in most of the lessons leading to a better understanding of the world for the students. Many teachers use a range of very high-quality questioning techniques to encourage student voice in their lessons.

In English for Year 2, for example, the students worked for the development of their text understanding and interpretation skills. There was excellent use of google classroom, where students could find the necessary resources as well as the lesson plan. There was very good questioning, with excellent constructive feedback, encouraging students constantly to explain their answers and choices. In other examples, like Czech literature in Year 3 and English in Year 5, excellent relationships and strong bonds of trust, led to a university feeling in the classrooms, rather than a college. In Year 5 lessons on geography and philosophy, the expectations of students were so high, it led to a fantastic bubbly atmosphere and outstanding learning.

In a few lessons that were good but not excellent, what held them back was in general missing opportunities to extend and expand on the planned learning because the teacher stayed within the confines of their planning. In these few lessons, learning objectives were not always as clear as they could have been. There was more limited interaction and support from the teacher during the main activity. There were more limited occasions for differentiation, which meant the most able students were sometimes not sufficiently challenged.

The college has established a very strong learning support programme in order to meet all the individual learning needs of the students. The students are very well sustained by the learning support department. An internal system of tests has been developed, offering effective data for EAL, as well as for the learning of the Czech language.

Academic action plans are used to support students who are performing below their baseline in a subject. Interventions are coordinated from both a pastoral and academic point of view, which ensures students are supported holistically and the reasons for any under-performance are identified and addressed.

The career advice is excellent and highly appreciated by the students. An extended working experience programme is in place, and it was reorganised in order to be functional in the Covid-19 pandemic context as well.

Assessment processes have been greatly improved in the last three years. Each faculty handbook includes a faculty assessment policy that outlines the methods of assessment used in different subjects, using the ECP assessment framework. Formal progress checks take place in the autumn, winter and spring. These grades reflect the work in the previous period and are derived from multiple sources, not a single test or assessment. Students who underperform in these compared to their baseline are reviewed by the senior deputy head, senior tutor and tutor.

The mid-year report is a summation of the first two progress checks. The end-of-year report reflects the spring progress check and work or exams done afterwards.

Across all the year groups, student attainment and progress is recorded and analysed against the college's own standards and expectations, through regular teacher marked assessments. Each student is assigned an ECP baseline, which gives an estimation of attainment potential. This baseline is based on several aspects, including CEM assessment, entrance exams, previous academic performance, tutor judgment and previous colleges' reports.

### 5.3 *Standards achieved by students*

The ECP is a selective college and the admission process is also linked to local requirements. Three open days are offered every year and all prospective students have to sit admission tests, some legally required by the Czech system. They sit exams in English, mathematics and Czech language. Any student admitted whose English languages are low is provided with 10 weeks of English language lessons in college. As part of the admissions process, all prospective students have a 30 minute interview with the headmaster.

Academic attainment, based on a strong curriculum, excellent teaching and high-quality pastoral support leads to standards achieved by students being excellent. The students' commitment to learning is commendable: in the vast majority of lessons observed, they were focused, active and engaged.

Student performance is measured against ECP's own standards and expectations, which are derived from entrance exams and Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM) assessment, IB statistics, and CEM value-added data.

Recent IGCSE results have been consistent with or above with the students' academic profile. However, the school has gradually replaced IGCSEs (except in mathematics and English) with its own pre-IB course and so their importance in the overall assessment of academic progress is much reduced. This approach is consistent with Czech schools that do not have external examinations at 16.

Externally assessed academic standards at the ECP have improved over recent years. The IB results over the last 5 years have been consistently good. From 2017 to 2021 the ECP average score has gone up by 2.5 points and is 2.5 points above the world average. The number of students taking the diploma has increased again after a decrease in 2020.

IBD results are excellent and the trend continues to be upward. The number of diploma candidates registered in the last session was 72; the number of candidates who passed the diploma was 71, or 98.6%. This compares very well with the world average of 88.9%.

The overall points average for all candidates was 35.51, 2.5 points higher than the world average. ECP average IB scores have increased every year for the last five years. The number of students with 38+ points was 26, and the number with 40+ points was 17: very high standards.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is outstanding: it is a key strength of the college.

The college fosters a feeling of togetherness based on strong trust between the students and the teachers. This is an important aspect of college life and supports the development of the students as self-aware, self-confident and responsible human beings. All of these qualities are apparent in the older students, who are ready to become global citizens, prepared to make a real difference in the world.

The college implements a very effective spiral curriculum for PSME, developed internally to support the values of the community, and to meet IB outcomes. It promotes democratic values and underlines importance of law. It is also linked to the Czech curriculum *Civics* programme. Diversity and multi-culturalism are highly valued. At the same time, a strong emphasis is put on the Czech history, heritage and traditions. This creates a very balanced ethos which is clearly an important strength of the college. It is promoted regularly in assemblies, events, the charities, the student led clubs and projects or through the highly effective trips programme which uses Prague as well as the country beyond it, into learning resources.

The students are very polite, friendly and open-minded. Their outstanding respectful behaviour allows them to develop to their full potential, in a safe, friendly and supportive environment.

The promotion of democracy and human rights is a consistent strength of the college, thus respecting the legacy of Vaclav Havel, one of its main founders. His spirit is felt in all the programmes of the college that aim to cater for all the individual aspirations of the students. The college offers a forum for open debate, for feed-back, for exploration, and for boosting students' creativity.

Students have a real voice in the decision-making process of the college, evidenced by their activity in the student council, students' feed-back groups on teaching and learning, the working group on wellbeing, or in the very well-organised house system. The peer mentoring programme is another highly effective and appreciated tool by and for the students: Year 1 students are mentored by Year 6 students in aspects such as career-choices, learning skills, or general student life experience.

Personal, social and moral development is seen as part of the celebration and emphasis on ECP's 'Britishness' in terms of teaching style, pastoral care and grammar college ethos. It is an unashamedly liberal college founded on liberal values: values like open-mindedness, tolerance and internationalism are revered.

## 7. Standard 3

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

The college meets the standard. The college places the students' safety and welfare at the heart of its activity, policies and procedures. The health and safety officer is supported by an experienced team which works closely with senior tutors. Together, they are responsible for implementing the policy in the college. The college is fully compliant with all its written policies and procedures, which are regularly reviewed.

The college has an appropriate first aid policy and maintains an up to date register of staff and their first aid qualifications. All the senior tutors and many other members of staff are qualified: the college ensures that they update their training as necessary. Clear procedures are in place in case of an accident or emergency. The college has a suitable health and safety policy which includes e-safety, and safety in laboratories. Risk assessment processes are rigorous, especially around the extensive college trips programme. There is also a suitable anti-bullying policy. Special attention is given to the cyber-bullying.

A very effective behaviour policy is in place. The college has established a list of very clear learning behaviours, that are visible in all classrooms. These are acknowledged and respected by the students. This ensures a calm, warm and very supportive environment for learning.

The child protection policy is adhered to. A child protection officer is in place as are two deputy child protection officers. Staff are fully aware of disclosure procedures. Good cooperation has been developed with the local authorities in this field.

The college site is kept immaculately clean throughout the day. Daily check-ups are conducted by the maintenance team in order to fix any possible health and safety hazards.

The college complies with all the Czech regulatory requirements in all aspects of health and safety. Fire drills are conducted regularly and written evacuation procedures are evident in all rooms. The college also conducts drills for possible cyber-attacks and intruder threats.

The administrative staff contribute to the safety of students, as well as to the immaculate day-to-day running of the college, by ensuring that the security procedures are followed.

Admission and attendance registers are well maintained. Daily attendance is recorded and tracking of any absence is rigorous. This is really important especially as the students enjoy the freedom to leave the college site during the lunch break or while going for lessons to the annex building or to the Sparta sport facilities. In addition, in the context of the pandemic, the students' physical presence in lessons has been particularly vital for their academic progress.



The college culture is strongly based on trust. The students are suitably supervised, whilst being allowed a high degree of freedom and space. The teachers' duty-rota was developed since the last inspection, covering the main areas of the college site.

The challenges raised by the Covid-19 pandemic encouraged the college to further develop its focus for the wellbeing of students and teachers. The mental health of the students is one of the directions for this focus: the college leaders and staff team clearly understand that the students and the teachers need high quality specialised support in order to help them cope effectively with the challenges raised by potential anxiety, depression and high levels of stress. The college does not employ a college counsellor, but works closely to local agencies when needed and ensured specific training for the learning support team as well as for the senior tutors.

## 8. Standard 4

### *The suitability of the proprietor and staff*

The suitability of the proprietor and staff meets the standards required for BSO.

The proprietor and staff are highly suitable, in that the college was established with monies raised by a charitable trust in the UK, the English College Foundation. It is now a separate foundation based in the Czech Republic.

The college is well staffed with qualified teachers and support staff. More than 70% of the teaching staff come from the UK. Teachers are experienced and well qualified to teach their specialist subject/s. Subject knowledge is excellent. There is a very high retention rate of staff.

There are appropriate procedures in place to ensure the suitability of staff appointments. The board and headmaster are well aware of the requirements for safer recruitment: wherever possible, the interviews for new staff are conducted personally, in the UK.

Prior to appointment, appropriate checks are made to confirm identity, qualifications, medical fitness and to establish that they have the right to work in the Czech Republic. All key recruitment staff have had safer recruitment training. Checks on the suitability of potential teaching staff to work with young people, including the UK ACRO International Child Protection Certification are made. The college maintains a comprehensive single central record of all staff, whatever their role. The designated safeguarding lead has undertaken training with the Safeguarding Alliance to ensure the highest standards are being met. The college systematically audits the personnel files of all existing staff and carried out an extensive exercise in staff and governors obtaining fresh safeguarding documents. Although Czech regulations do not require that governors undergo criminal record checking, it has become standard practice nevertheless in order to meet UK standards of best practice: In 2021, the board of governors obtained fresh Czech criminal records excerpts and International Child Protection Certificates.

The number of teachers at the college is sufficient to absorb short-term absences through cover provision. If members of staff are ill for longer periods, either the timetable is rearranged or additional staff are employed to cover.

There is an outstanding sense of teamwork at the college and it has developed even more than at the last BSO inspection. There has been further emphasis given to good relationships, professional trust, autonomy in particular the senior/middle leadership teams, and support during the Covid-19 pandemic. This has again been significant in helping to embed procedures and policies, as they are not seen as top-down strategies 'imposed' by management.

Action research remains an important part of the teachers' development: it is therefore the central to the college's development, too.

## 9. Standard 5 The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation meet BSO standards: the creative use of what is available is excellent.

ECP operates in two locations, the main, historical building and the annex, which is in a nearby office block. The college management is aware of the limitations, but their overall quality is more than appropriate to the curriculum taught. All available space is creatively used to provide for specific students' needs. The teaching areas and the science labs are appropriately resourced. The new library is very well equipped and has become a central area of support for the students and teachers – indeed, it is wonderfully absorbing place to visit. The art, music and drama rooms are well resourced and support the learning experience of the students, but for the largest classes they can be a little cramped.

The grounds include a multipurpose fenced pitch that is used for an area of relaxation during the breaks. The main site does not include accommodation for PE activities, but the students have access to the excellent Sparta sport base which is in the vicinity of the college.

All classrooms have access to IT resources, including computers and good internet access. All classrooms also have whiteboards and digital projectors. Interactive whiteboards are also used in some of the classrooms. Corridors contain many examples of very high quality display that celebrates students' artistic achievements. Plans are considered by the college management to expand the display areas focusing on the long and valuable history of the college.

The site is very clean and well maintained and meets the standards required by the local authorities. Daily checks are conducted by the maintenance team making sure that all classrooms and areas used by the students are safe.

The college has invested a lot in the modernisation of the main building, which is commendable. There are also detailed strategic plans covering areas for future development, including further refurbishment of the main building and the construction of an extension .

## 10. Standard 6

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

The provision of information for parents, carers and others is excellent. Parents feel that the college communicates well and promptly and they are happy with the fact that the rationale behind important decisions is explained and shared with them.

The college mission is stated on the website and all other required information is posted there too. Parents have access to a parent portal where important information is shared with them. The college is actively working to increase the usage of its portal.

Parents reported that they were very satisfied with the education provided for their children and the information about it. They suggested that staff are very approachable and have an excellent understanding of their children's needs. Support for children and parents alike was felt to be excellent. Parents praised the college's leadership team and mentioned that they exceed expectations, with constant support and communication. Parents were particularly happy with the restarting of trips, which help students bond again, after more than a year of lockdown.

In the last few years, the college has actively sought to improve the provision of information for parents, carers and others. This year, parents will have 12 to 14 opportunities to interact with the college, either online or in person. The number of Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings have increased from 3 to 6 and parents are invited to several social events during the college year. The duration of the parents evenings has also increased from previous years, so parents have an extended opportunity to talk to teachers about their child's progress.

The college provides parents with access to several policies relating to anti-bullying, safeguarding and child protection, health and safety, academic policy, and the college's code amongst others. All the college's policies are grouped together in two hyperlinked documents which makes it easy for parents to access any of the policies swiftly. Any parental complaints are dealt with swiftly and parents are aware of the ways they can formalise these complaints. The headmaster has very consciously changed some of the language used in the college when dealing with parents and often uses the word 'relationships' to describe the importance of fostering good interaction between students, teachers and parents. It is seen as coming first, even before academic aspirations, and has positively changed the way parents approach certain college issues.

The college publishes five progress reports in the college year that include internal assessments and attitude to learning. In addition, an annual subject-based report is published in February and a written report is published in June that contains commentary about academic subject progress alongside other more holistic information.

## 11. Standard 7

### The college's procedure for handling complaints

The college's procedure for handling complaints meets BSO standards.

The ECP complaints procedure is in the parents handbook and on the website. At the beginning of every college year, parents are reminded that the handbook is on the college portal. They are also reminded of the policies that are on the public website, including the parental complaints procedure. Parents new to the college are offered a physical copy of the parent handbook.

The procedure sets out clear time scales for the management of a complaint. It also allows for a complaint to be made and considered initially on an informal basis. Where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made, the ECP procedure allows for the complaint to be made in writing. Furthermore, where the parent is still unsatisfied with the response to the complaint the ECP procedure makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the board, consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.

There are clear directions as to the best person to approach in different circumstances. Initial contact might be with the subject teacher or head of faculty directly for academic matters or, for matters of welfare and behaviour, the child's tutor or senior tutor. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, contact is then suggested with the senior deputy head or the deputy head pastoral and wellbeing.

If all these approaches fail, the parents are invited to write to the headmaster, or if necessary, to the governors. There are clear timescales regulating the process: the complainant should indicate they are not happy with the resolution offered by sending a written statement to the headmaster within five days of receiving the headmaster's first statement, for example. Within a further two working days, the headmaster then sends this written statement with his own written statement to a relevant governor explaining it has been dealt with. A copy of this is given to the complainant.

The complainant then has the right to a panel hearing with the relevant governor. This meeting takes place within 10 working days of the statements being received. If the complainant wishes it, this hearing will include two other people (in addition to the presiding governor) who have not been directly affected by the complaint.

In the event of an appeal against the governor's decision by either the complainant or the headmaster, this would be sent to the chairman of governors within one week of the decision. The chairman's decision is final.

## 12. Standard 8

### *Leadership and management of the college*

The quality of leadership and management of the college is excellent. The college has made significant further progress since the last inspection, building on an already very strong foundation.

The senior leadership team is outstanding. Led by the highly effective, thoughtful, sensitive and focussed headmaster, they work well as a team, sharing the vision for college improvement. The members of the team have widely differing strengths, but have been together for many years now: this experience is part of its success. They have put in place many effective strategies that have resulted in significant positive changes across an already very good college. The leaders are held to account and supported by a wise and highly experienced board of governors.

The highly effective board of governors is responsible for the financial and strategic direction of the college. It comprises members drawn from different walks of life in the Czech Republic and the UK. Board member positions are honorary and as such, unpaid. They have an excellent impact on the provision, long-term security and quality of education provided at the college. They have been strong and successful stewards of the financial, student welfare and facility-related components of the college, as well supporting the headmaster to have the same impact on the quality of learning and teaching. They are clearly unified and able to deal with their role as critical friend to the college.

The college is held to account and guided through 3 governors' meetings, all held in Prague. There are also 3 finance committee meetings, a newly-established buildings, health and safety sub-committee and 3 education committee meetings which review results, departmental performance and discusses educational initiatives. These meetings have demonstrable impact on school operation.

All decisions and planning are linked through careful linking of meeting minutes from senior to middle leaders and to other groups. The strength and impact of the middle leaders has increased noticeably since the last inspection. The draft college development plan is shared with all staff in August and ratified by governors at their Autumn term meeting.

The college continues to have appropriate policies and procedures in place. The board reviews them regularly for effectiveness and appropriateness. The aims of the college are very clear: to provide an English-medium education which is second to none academically, but also develops every individual student's potential to the full and prepares them for the practical, social, intellectual and moral challenges of today's world.