



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

**International School
of Bucharest**

Romania

Date **10th – 12th October 2022**
Inspection number **20221010**

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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 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 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.

This inspection was completed by Penta International. 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, nearly 70 lesson observations took place. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Students' workbooks and digital work was seen in lessons; discussions were held with the staff, parents and informally with students. The inspection took place over three days.

The lead inspector was Dr Mark Evans. The team members were John McCance and Joanne Wild.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection, the school has shown that it meets the standards for British Schools Overseas. This judgement is endorsed by the British Government and is valid for three years. The inspection process is quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED).

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

The school provides effective education and care in a friendly, student-focussed manner. It is quick to celebrate students' successes and has many good features.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including the:

- school ethos, which is positive, friendly and student-focussed;
- curriculum which has some good features and is developing towards more enquiry-based learning and more practical activity;
- quality of teaching and assessment which is at least satisfactory across the school with some good features;
- standards of attainment are at least satisfactory, with good features like the International Baccalaureate (IB) results which are above the international world averages;
- spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students which is good;
- welfare, health and safety of the students are strong with effective security, and safeguarding is effective;
- school's policies are useful and promote students' welfare;
- digital safety which is strong;
- good use of accommodation with a 5 year facilities plan to improve further certain areas in need of further development;
- provision of information for parents, carers and others, which is good and is a strength of the school;
- leadership and management of the school which are open, transparent and place good focus on further development, with students at the heart of this journey.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

1. Further improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment, for example by ensuring:
 - a. teachers have the opportunity to share good practice
 - b. a variety of teaching techniques are used
 - c. there is a review the function and role of classroom display, which is excellent in some parts of the school, and less focussed in others
 - d. greater consistency across the school on how data supports planning and the ownership of data shared across all stakeholders
2. Further developing the curriculum to ensure it is consistently practical, innovative and supportive of a high level of challenge for all students;
3. Review and refresh the school's policies and protocols, for example the constitution of and representation on the board, updating the website, and encouraging healthy eating (including in the canteen).

4. The context of the school

Full name of School	International School of Bucharest				
Address	Sos. Gara Catelu, No. 1R, Sector 3, Bucharest, Romania				
Telephone Number/s	+40 21 306 9530				
Website Address	www.isb.ro				
Key Email Address	info@isb.ro				
Headteacher/Principal	Serdar Sakman				
Chair of board/Proprietor	Fatih Goktas				
Age Range	2 – 19 years				
Total number of pupils	597	Boys	317	Girls	280
Numbers by age	<i>0-2 years</i>	15	<i>12-16 years</i>	304	
	<i>3-5 years</i>	35	<i>17-18 years</i>	78	
	<i>6-11 years</i>	164	<i>18+ years</i>	1	
Total number of part-time children	0				

4.1 British nature of the school

ISB is a non-profit day school which provides a British style of education for children aged 2 to 18 years. There are many features which support its British nature:

- The academic calendar replicates that of a British school;
- The school is organised into year groups and key stages;
- The school promotes British values through its vision, curriculum activities, displays and events, and a clear uniform policy;
- It follows DfE safeguarding requirements and shares that guidance with staff;
- The school broadly follows the National Curriculum for England (NCE) from Years 1 to 6 (KS1/2), and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance;
- Years 7-9 (KS3) follow the Cambridge Lower Secondary curriculum for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science;
- Students in Years 10 and 11 (KS4) follow the CAIE IGCSE programme;
- As of September 2017, Year 12 and 13 (KS5) students have followed the International Baccalaureate (IB) programme;
- Assessments are UK-sourced and benchmarked against UK standards;
- The school is resourced with materials that are used in UK schools;
- The libraries are well stocked with British literature, reflecting the modern multicultural character of the UK;
- The Parent Teachers Association (PTA) is based on a British model;
- Over the past 5 years, an average of 22% of their graduating students have entered the UK higher education system;
- Parent communications are in English and Romanian: signage is in English;
- The school has been awarded the UK Eco-Schools Green Flag award;
- Approximately 1/3 of secondary staff are internationally trained, with the majority qualifying in the UK;
- 17 members of the teaching staff are British, plus five NPQSL qualified leaders, including heads of primary, secondary and deputies;
- Some Romanian staff have QTS, having trained and taught in the UK;
- Members of both the secondary and primary school senior leadership teams (SLTs) include British staff members;
- Each primary year group consists of one internationally trained teacher and one locally trained teacher;
- Policies are derived from UK best practice, and British providers are used for many professional development opportunities;
- The school is currently an NPQSL centre and an exam centre for the Cambridge YLE;
- Extracurricular activities and enrichment events are in line with British practice;
- The school is a member of the British-Romanian Chamber of Commerce, and participates in activities in partnership with the British Council, such as the UK Universities Fair.

5. Standard 1 The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education is satisfactory and meets the BSO standards: it has some good features.

5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory with some aspects that are good.

The curriculum for the EYFS is relevant and adequately balanced. Classes follow the newest EYFS curriculum from the UK, which allows for *In the moment* planning and more interaction time between staff and students. Shared planning takes place at the start of each year during induction week, and leads to the delivery of a shared theme across the department. This long term planning format encourages development for the youngest children towards achieving the 17 early learning goals (ELGs), which students are assessed against in their learning profile at the end of their foundation stage (FS) year.

Tapestry is the online format used to record observations, offer feedback to parents and collate information at set age-related checkpoints. Children are given an initial baseline assessment and this starting point, in conjunction with the checkpoint information data, is shared with parents. Phonics is delivered through *Bug Club Phonics*, starting with Phase 1 sounds. The curriculum is sufficient to prepare most students for moving on to the next stage and teaching enables the students to make progress towards achieving many of their ELGs.

In key stages (KS) 1 and 2, subject planning also follows the guidelines of the National Curriculum for England and match the requirements of students. *Talk for Writing* is the main literacy scheme, *White Rose Maths* the numeracy scheme and *Twinkl* is the science based scheme. Guided reading is taught through the online *Bug Club* programme and *Oxford Reading Tree* books are provided as take home reading. The curriculum mainly takes into account the needs of the individual and the cohort, with Mandarin having been introduced as a separate subject, due to an increase in the number of Chinese students in the key stage. End of unit assessments for literacy, numeracy and science can be oral, or recorded, depending on the age of the children involved, and information from assessments is used to form intervention and enhancement groups in order to add support and challenge to the curriculum. Adequate resources, useful assessment and feedback sessions and extracurricular activities, enhance and develop the curricular needs of the students. The curriculum is more developed in some classes than in others and there are more opportunities for some students to achieve when expectations and learning objectives are clear

and progressive. Teachers are able to quickly identify their students particular needs and useful feedback enables support to be put into place in a timely manner. The school provides equal opportunities for students to learn and make progress, including those with SEND, ESL or particularly talented. Students with SEND receive additional support after their additional needs are identified, through individual or small group sessions, where the activities are suitably adapted for their needs.

In KS2, curriculum feedback from the teaching team recently fed into the intervention policy for numeracy, with 2 intervention sessions being programmed each week to support learning. KS2 students also use their class readers as a means to plan topics at the start of each year and these books feed into the long term planning for each year group. Feedback is given to year leaders regarding the curriculum and the interests of the students, and this further informs planning.

In secondary, the IB curriculum replaced A Level in 2017. British Council CAM tests provide feedback to the secondary team for courses delivered in Year 7. CM baseline is an additional assessment tool used for new students in order to offer specialist lessons upon their enrolment into the school. Career counselling is provided at the end of Year 9, with feedback from these meetings affecting choices made by students in Year 10. Currently there are approximately 22 to 24 different curricular options available, leading to a greater choice of IB options for career needs.

Transition meetings are used to share curriculum and assessment data and information is passed to the head of academics, alongside information from lumina coordinators. Adaptation of the curriculum is designed to meet the needs of the national and international cohort, whilst still providing a clear British focus and relevancy.

In-school curriculum enhancement initiatives such as peer support and mentor programs, have assisted the teaching team in the school with developing the best curriculum planning. Music workshops, online training and termly inset from subject leaders have disseminated the spread of understanding of the curriculum to local teaching team members. Curriculum subject training in the primary school, in conjunction with subscription to the National College of Teachers site has afforded staff to develop their own professional development needs.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is satisfactory, with many good features. The styles of teaching, learning and assessment equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to enter (or re-enter) the UK educational system at an appropriate level.

Teaching at ISB enables students to acquire new knowledge, and make progress according to their ability. They increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects that are taught. In the best lessons, for example in EYFS, active learning experiences and 'awe and wonder' moments shine through. Similarly, a FS2 mathematics session was well-prepared, organised and led. The teaching assistant worked purposefully, and each student learned mathematical terms through different activities/mediums.

in a *Talk 4 Writing* lesson in a Year 2 class, there were lots of actions and vocabulary used, and students were very much centre stage with their learning choices. Outdoor learning experience in FS1 are excellent, based on practical learning opportunities.

Teachers encourage students to apply intellectual, physical and creative effort, to show interest in their work, and to think and learn for themselves; the latter is inconsistent through the age groups, however. For example there is more emphasis on independent learning in the earlier years than in many of the later. In two year 6 classes, working with purpose on biographies. One class identified and described biography features (using iPads to highlight the key and features). The teacher gradually drew out the features, from prior learning, to recap at the start of the lesson. This was after using a *Quiziz* biography task. The second class quietly wrote their biographies with the TA and teacher supporting individuals. Both lessons were highly effective.

Lessons are well planned, teaching methods are effective and class time is mainly managed properly. Teachers generally show a good understanding of the aptitudes, cultural background, needs (including the needs of EAL learners) and prior attainments of the students. In one class, year 4 were generating ideas for a shared piece of writing. There was a real 'buzz' in the classroom. The displays celebrate work or shared visual aids. The students worked in pairs to generate dragon descriptions and used an online thesaurus to up-level their vocabulary. The teacher circulated between all groups to provide support and extend vocabulary.

However, in one of the less successful lessons, the lack of exciting teaching methods led to poor behaviour made the learning a more limited experience for the students.

Teachers encourage students to behave responsibly, and most ensure that prior achievement is taken into account in the planning of lessons. They also demonstrate

appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter they teach. In one year 5 art lesson, for example, the class were fascinated by the Benin sculptures introduced to the by the teacher, and discussed with genuine interest, why the discoverers were so amazed by what they found. The teacher's knowledge was a significant positive factor in their learning, as it was with the support offered to students in a year 8 science lesson investigating solubility in water of sugar, sodium carbonate and barium carbonate.

In the primary school, when occasional poor behaviour is evident, there are support systems to deal with it effectively . When students have had the consequence of being on 'reflection' and missing Golden Time, this is recorded, and parents are informed. Consistent recording of behaviour issues is in place for class teachers to aid better communication and to enable senior leaders to identify patterns in behaviour if appropriate. Where rare instances of individual students showing consistent poor behaviour occur, class teachers and leaders work with parents to find supportive solutions.

Secondary student behaviour is generally good, with very little outside of normally expected instances of disengagement in classes. The school states that this has been improving consistently for the few years. The ISB approach to behaviour and discipline is recognised as fair, consistent and transparent, emphasising promoting and rewarding positive behaviour rather than punishing negative behaviour. However, it acts quickly and firmly when necessary. Disciplinary sanctions are determined by a committee usually including two senior leaders, the form teacher(s) of the students involved and often a member of the counselling and learning support (CLS) team. This is to ensure a fair and balanced response.

Classroom resources are of a good quality, quantity and range. They are generally used effectively. Sometimes, the students themselves support the learning, as in a year 13 science lesson on the radioactive decay of thalium: one student made notes on a digital whiteboard, for all to see.

There is a framework in place to assess students' work regularly and thoroughly. The information from this assessment is utilised effectively to plan teaching, so that students can make maximum progress. There is a framework in place by which students' performance can be evaluated by reference to the school's aims, as provided to parents, and by comparing to averages derived from externally accredited assessments.

Students' achievements and academic results are also celebrated in school in various ways. They are highlighted during assemblies, displayed in the entrance foyer, and on the school website for all stakeholders to access.

5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

The standards achieved by students meet the standards requirements: they are good.

The vast majority of students are engaged in their lessons, enjoy school and attend well. Almost all students are punctual and arrive to lessons on time, ready to learn.

The attendance register is taken at the beginning of the day at 08:40. In primary, class teachers are responsible for checking attendance and raising concerns with the deputy headteacher, who systematically monitors and follows up on absences. In secondary, form teachers are responsible for checking attendance while key stage leaders collect and monitor attendance and liaise with parents. Secondary subject teachers mark student attendance every lesson.

Parents/carers of students who have an unexplained absence are telephoned or informed with an email as soon as possible. This system has recently been updated, and the school plans to evaluate its effectiveness soon.

Standards of student behaviour and attitudes to school are good. Primary students transfer between lessons and break times accompanied by teachers or TAs. The vast majority of students behave very well both during lessons and out of class. High expectations of behaviour and the use of positive praise help to maintain this standard.

The standards of reading are good across the school. In years 2 to 6, where students were heard to read, a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts were read competently. The systematic teaching of phonics through a published scheme ensures the progression of phonics skills through the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Younger students utilise their phonics knowledge to decode words in reading.

The primary school uses progress tests to benchmark students against international English, mathematics and science standards. However, the school has been unable to administer the tests over the last two years due to the pandemic. Once the current academic year standardised assessments are completed, they will be able to view an overview of attainment for all, and how students have progressed if they have previous standardised data.

The IGCSE results and secondary International Baccalaureate Program IBDP (IBDP) results are above the world average. As of May 2022, 100 per cent of ISB students (40 candidates) passed, compared with 85.6 per cent worldwide. The average overall diploma mark awarded per ISB student was 34, compared with a global figure of 31.98. The average ISB subject grade was 5.2, compared with 5.12 internationally. The highest achieving ISB student was awarded 45 diploma points.

6. *Standard 2* Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students meets the requirements of the BSO standards: it is good, with some excellent features.

Students come from 40 different backgrounds and clearly enjoy the cultural and religious diversity within the school. Students display an awareness, appreciation and respect for each other, the wider world and other cultures. Spirituality is developed in assemblies, lessons and through service learning. Students show a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves and others. The school works hard to develop knowledge of, and respect for, different people's faiths, feelings and values.

The school actively promotes the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs in many areas. There is a firm understanding of these values across the school. The school achieves this by:

- having these values embedded in their school values and mission
- ensuring that the behaviour policies of both sections of the school reflect the importance of these values
- creating and delivering a PSHE policy and high-quality curriculum which supports the values of the Character Education programme
- aiming to represent a wide range of cultures in teaching and learning materials and opportunities

The opinions and views of students are valued and they have many opportunities to share and discuss these during PSHE lessons and secondary form time. When political issues are brought to the attention of students, students are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

Students are courteous and respectful to others, with excellent manners. They share positive views when talking about ISB and enjoy attending school. Students' moral and social development is promoted through the curriculum and a consistently applied behaviour policy.

ISB encourages students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence in many ways. Star or Student of the Week/Month is awarded to those students who show the consistency and effort that encompasses the school vision. Weekly assemblies also relate to children's own experiences and concerns while exploring a wide range of moral, spiritual and religious issues celebrating the different social, cultural and religious backgrounds of the community.

The school respects the various traditions and festivals of the community by celebrating events, including an annual International week and International Food Fair; Chinese New Year;

Remembrance Day; Ramadan; Christmas and Easter; Halloween and Diwali; and the Festival of Lights.

To develop student cultural understanding, they are given diverse opportunities during curriculum and enrichment activities, the extra-curricular programme and residential trips. There is a big appetite and willingness to participate in artistic, musical, sporting and cultural activities.

ISB has a house system (Bear, Fox, Hare and Lynx) that supports students with different initiatives and opportunities. In primary, the House team leaders are elected following a speech and presentation to the whole of their houses while prefects are selected by a group of teachers based on a written application and a shared, transparent job description.

There are regular Student Parliament and School Council meetings. The school's Eco Council is a group of elected and volunteer students from ISB working together under an adult advisor to voice students' opinions, giving opportunities for experience in leadership and encouraging community relations. The elections for the Eco Council took place in each class.

In secondary, the CAS (Creativity Activity and Service) projects are challenging the students to develop skills such as perseverance, collaboration and decision making. CAS must be completed as part of the Diploma Programme (DP) for students in Years 12 and 13. KS4 students are encouraged to tackle issues of significance as part of their Global Perspectives course.

Students know who to talk to if they have a problem. Students were able to talk about what they would do if they had an issue that they could not resolve themselves and readily identified trusted adults they were happy to discuss their feelings with. There

The school has focused on the well-being of students, particularly since the return of students to face-to-face teaching. ISB has worked very hard to ensure that the needs of the students are being met and this can be seen in the recent further enhancement of their approach to well-being and the PSHE curriculum.

In 2020/21, ISB started implementing the character education program. The character traits were decided by all stakeholders, and a core team was formed to oversee the programme's implementation. *Character.org* will evaluate the school in November 2022 with a view to becoming a Character School. The Eco-School Program programme at ISB has been selected by *Character.org* as a 2022 Promising Practice.

The 'Habits of Mind' was introduced to Primary school in 2020 to increase students' awareness of learning behaviour and encourage their development of lifelong learning skills. Students have a growing voice within the school with primary and secondary student eco councils meeting frequently to pass on student views. Prefects and heads of houses in primary also encourage student voice and representation. Each secondary class also has a class

representative who meets directly with the head of secondary to discuss ideas monthly. Secondary students also choose their own voluntary projects as part of their CAS aspect of IB and via participation in the Duke of Edinburgh award. Secondary students have meetings with the school's Career Guidance Counsellor before selecting options for IGCSE and IB. Supervised study periods are provided, advice is shared before assessments and career guidance tests are also used to guide students on to further study. As well as this, the school arranges university fairs and visits to universities around the world.

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

The provision for welfare, health and safety of the students is good with some outstanding features.

Welfare, health and safety is seen as integral and parents said that they were happy that the school took such good care of their children. All staff contribute to the day-to-day safety of the students, especially during movement around the campus. Attendance is monitored closely and information is sent to parents daily regarding both attendance and punctuality. The school secretary receives the registers daily and will inform the deputy head if there are repeated lateness offences or absences. This may lead to the deputy head asking parents to come in for a more formal meeting regarding this issue.

The school counsellor, who is also the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) updates her training on a yearly basis and conducts annual staff meetings, where safeguarding training and new initiatives, is disseminated to all staff. All the members of the safeguarding and child protection team update their training at least every two years, with courses allocated every year on National Online Safety. There is a safeguarding CPD timetable for all the members of staff to cover relevant areas. All new teachers receive appropriate induction training. The school makes appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of students and staff, taking account of both UK and local requirements. The school also has a subscription to a UK based company for introducing new procedures.

PSHE is an integral part of the curriculum and the school counsellor fosters a strong pastoral element amongst the staff towards their students. Currently the counsellor is introducing a new recording system called *MyConcern*, which will aid in the recording of any safeguarding issues and provide the school with a more efficient safeguarding register. The counsellor also leads sessions on bullying: during PSHE sessions, this issue is raised and discussed with the students. A discipline committee has also been set up, with sanctions for bullying infractions being decided between themselves, the counsellor, the key stage leaders and tutors. Cyber-bullying and on-line safety are closely monitored through oversight of all registered devices through the digital provision programme. Internet safety is also taught in the curriculum, with a 'safe internet' day being a regular event for students.

Risk assessments are conducted rigorously, and meetings are held with teachers to collaborate on assessing risks for both in-school and out-of-school areas and events.

Healthy lifestyles are encouraged and there are many opportunities for active play during continuous provision in and out of the classroom and at breaktimes. During pre-registration the school conducts a 'wake up, shake up' session and students are actively encouraged to participate. Healthy eating is not an issue of high priority as yet, as the food options on offer, especially in the shop and canteens, are not conducive to promoting good health.

Effective whole school policies are in place for health and safety, equality, the prevention of bullying, including cyber bullying, counselling and learning support, safeguarding and child protection. All staff members are required by law to provide the school with a police check and a certificate of integrity.

Behaviour in the school is generally good, with occasional issues of low level disruption being dealt with efficiently. Expectations are reinforced in the classrooms and corridors, with visual reminders and displays encouraging the students to make the right choices. Playtimes are well supervised, with adults clearly visible on duty. Most students engage in collaborative play. The atmosphere was happy and playful.

Toilets are clearly signposted for specific users and regularly cleaned. The cleaners employed in the school were highly visible throughout the day.

Corridors and passageways are wide and generally uncluttered, with directions and spacing measures clearly labelled. Movement around the school is controlled and calm. Main doors to school entry points are keypad locked, requiring staff to use a card activated locking system to enter and exit protected areas. A security team were noticeable at the outer school gate and in the inner school lobby.

The 2 nurses are in charge of day to day health of the staff and students, with a part-time doctor being on site from 11 to 3 p.m. A defibrillator is available inside the nurse's office and there is information pertaining to students who need epi-pens and other medication on the MyEducare system. There are 20 First Aid boxes placed around the campus at strategic points and designated staff members are trained to use the equipment. The majority of staff have received first aid training in English and/or Romanian languages. Individuals who come to the nurses' room are accompanied by an adult and the visit is recorded by the nurse. A permission slip is sent with the child, and their parent/carer, should they need to leave the school premises.

Systems are in place to ensure health and safety laws, and the school has a rigorous approach to health and safety. Policies meet and sometimes exceeds local requirements; fire standards are met. Fire extinguishers are visible throughout the school. Evacuation procedures are displayed throughout the school and systems are in place to ensure students are safe and accounted for in the event of an emergency evacuation. Some lighting in the stairwells is not fully functional, as is some of the lighting on the exit signs.

8. Standard 4 The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The suitability of the proprietor and staff meets the standard for BSO.

ISB is a non-profit day school founded in 1996 and is authorised by the Romanian Ministry of Education. It is registered as a subsidiary of Lumina Foundation (*Fundatia Lumina Institutii de Invatamant*), under Romanian Law. Lumina educational institutions combine to make the largest private school network in Romania with 13 schools and over 5,000 students in 6 cities. This allows for strong collaboration with sister schools of the Lumina network.

Lumina Schools have a good reputation with high students' academic achievement such as first place at NASA Space Settlement competition, Cambridge Top in the World, full score in IB in 2022 and Gold Medal at the World's Scholar Cup supporting a positive image. Common activities initiated by Lumina Schools such as the National Lumina Maths contest, International Infomatrix Contest, International Festival of Language and Culture (IFLC), and book donations strengthen the links with the local community and add value to the schools.

The ISB board consists of six male persons: a general director, the educational coordinator, the social activities coordinator, the administrative and finance directors and the head of HR, which means there is limited representation from the community. The board works together to appoint a director who is responsible for the direct control and running of the school. Financial management is carried out by Lumina Foundation.

General policy is decided by the school's SLT which comprises the director, the two heads of schools, deputy heads, key stage coordinators, head of pastoral care, head of enrichment and IB coordinator. The director is the head of the SLT and reports to the board.

In accordance with the Romanian law and the standards required for BSO all staff, volunteers and long term and regular contractors are required to provide a police check before commencing work. All overseas staff are required to submit a police check from the last, and previous, countries in which they have worked and, where applicable, a check from the UK's ACRO Criminal Records Office.

The director and the HR department are responsible for all aspects in regards to the law enforcement for all the school employees and volunteers. All school policies and procedures are in accordance with the Romanian law. When outside contractors are utilised for a short period and the above documentation is not available, a member of school staff will accompany them at all times. HR can and did provide a single centralised list of all the employees and volunteers who have worked in the school since it opened, showing the dates when they commenced and ceased working in the school. This central register is kept by the administrator, showing the documents held for all members of staff.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

Premise and accommodation of the school meets the standards for BSO.

The premises at ISB meet the requirements of the BSO standards and are good.

The school makes very effective use of the existing premises and outdoor areas. ISB employs a security firm that controls who has access to the campus. The site is secure, with one main entry point and exit for ISB staff, students, and visitors.

There are four floors, with the primary and secondary schools operating mainly on each wing of the school building. Each floor is accessible via internal staircases with adequate handrails. An elevator is available to visitors, staff and students when required. The classrooms have teacher timetables outside them, rooms are labelled, and signposted fire exits.

The campus manager is responsible for ensuring the building is fit for purpose. The maintenance team follows a schedule for assessing risks and cleaning and maintaining facilities. Teachers are encouraged to report safety issues. Policies are in place to support effective procedures.

There are well-equipped and staffed medical rooms, plus rooms used by the department for learning support, counselling and student well-being. The medical rooms have a bed and are situated on the ground floor in the school's primary section and next to the secretary in the secondary area. The primary room contains a sink, and both rooms are close to toilet facilities.

School lunches are provided in a canteen with two levels. Students access this on a rota system. There are adequate and separate toilets available on each floor for boys and girls, staff/visitor toilets and people who are disabled. Additionally, suitable changing accommodations and showers are provided for students aged 11 years or over.

Classrooms across the school are well-lit, have appropriate ventilation and are furnished with age-appropriate tables and chairs. Adequate resources and storage facilities are available within classrooms and communal areas. Shared areas in corridors are utilised very effectively in the primary section. These enable groups to work outside the classroom.

In primary, classrooms and halls are used as working walls and are decorated with displays of students' work. In the best classes, the displays support and stimulate learning. The learning environments are of a good standard. There is a balance of knowledge prompts, a celebration of work and working walls to support learning. Work on displays is relevant to learning in adjacent classrooms.

Specialist subjects have dedicated facilities, such as science laboratories, an ICT lab, an art studio, and two well-stocked libraries. Physical education lessons are held in the large sports hall and outside pitches when the weather permits. Younger students can use a multi-purpose sports area inside the school.

Each part of the school has designated play spaces. The EYFS and KS1 have separate outdoor areas with permanently installed, age-appropriate play equipment, including climbing frames. At the front of the school is the main playground for students in KS2 upwards. It houses enclosed football pitches, a running track, one basketball court and a volleyball court.

It is obvious that ISB's leadership are constantly looking to optimise the use of their site. There are provisional plans to improve the energy sustainability of the campus by installing solar panels and adding a sprinting track to the front of the school to enhance the physical education provision.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents, carers and others is good with some outstanding features; it meets the BSO standard.

Information and infographics about ISB's ethos is clearly visible around the school; displays in school reinforce the school's values of *Learn, Respect, Succeed*. Information regarding student achievement is to the fore and is clearly displayed at key points around the school building.

The pre and post registration process for parents and carers is thorough, transparent and easily covers the four aspects associated with this section. At the enquiry stage, parents are offered a personal tour of the premises and handed an information pack, including the current prospectus, fees, timetables, calendars and GDPR forms attached. The admissions leader, SLT and PTA organise open mornings, breakfasts, step up days and welcome events for new and prospective parents. The website, is being updated, and allows visitors to inspect key school policies and a parent handbook. Appointments for further visits can be made through the office and follow up calls are made to those parents who have not registered after a guided visit. Information is reviewed as to why the parents chose not to enrol and this is discussed with SLT members and also used to put together marketing strategies with specific aims. The admissions team is building up a customer profile in order to better target the right people and help to understand their specific needs. In order to better provide information to parents, ISB are collaborating with local kindergartens, international schools, embassies, the British Council and other expat/local online forums. ISB's admissions process and procedures are highly efficient and supportive.

At interview, parents reported that they are very happy with the way ISB keeps them informed about current events. Parents said they were also well informed about their child's overall pastoral and academic development. Parents are provided with an *MyEducare* username and password which allows them access to protected information, also translated into Romanian. Termly reports are also posted on *MyEducare*, on *Tapestry* and through daily messages sent via email and class dojo, informing parents of absences, lateness, behaviour and health care issues. Parent representatives also collate suggestions from other parents and feedback monthly to the leadership team. This data is used to address any issues and to assist with identifying areas for further school improvement. Parents said they felt listened to, were supported by the school and were able to effect change.

The school website is currently being reviewed, as is the school prospectus. A parent handbook is shared with parents at the start of the year and curriculum leaflets and weekly newsletters are shared regularly. Parent/teacher meetings are held regularly, with parents agreeing that they felt the teachers and subject leaders were easily accessible and accommodating of their requests. Parents will also be able to start attending more events in school again, now that the pandemic restrictions have been lifted. Parental assemblies and theatre presentations have been mentioned as being back on the agenda.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school's procedure for handling complaints meets the standard for BSO.

The policy is very detailed, being divided into seven sections, and describes a four stage system. The document does not apply to complaints about student admissions, student exclusions, statutory assessments of special educational needs, disciplinary issues relating to members of staff, curriculum content, services provided by other providers who use school premises or matters that seem likely to require a child protection investigation. In the latter scenario, the school will immediately refer to child protection and services or/and the police. Any matter raised more than a month after the incident is not considered, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Anonymous complaints are not examined.

Stage 1 is when an issue or concern first arises, and it is taken up with the school. Parents are invited to inform a member of staff either in person, over the telephone or by writing an email. The school will then invite the concerned parties to an informal meeting. If the complaint is about the head of primary or secondary, the concern needs to be sent to the board.

If it is not possible to come to an agreement, it is possible to go to stage 2, which is making a formal complaint in writing, to the head of primary or secondary. There is no formal timescale for resolution at this stage given the importance of dialogue through informal discussion although it is expected that most issues would be responded to within 5 school days. The office is closed during weekends and the members of the staff and the leadership team may not be available during school holidays.

In order to ensure that complaints are processed efficiently and effectively, school deals with formal complaints in four stages. Stage 1 starts if the complainant feels that a concern has not been dealt with properly. If a complaint is about the head/s of school, stage 2 of this procedure begins immediately. The school will keep a record of all interactions, meetings and decisions made in reference to a complaint.

If, having spoken to the head, there is still no resolution, the complaint may be escalated to stage 3 and forwarded to the board. A complainant is invited to set out the actions felt necessary to resolve the complaint. The secretary of the board will usually respond in writing within 5 school days outlining the response to your concern. If the board decides not to take any further action on the issue, they explain what has been decided and why.

Stage 4 is the appeals process, in instances where a resolution cannot be found. If an appeals panel is requested, the secretary will acknowledge the appeal and make the necessary arrangements. The appeals panel is made up of between three to five members of the board including at least one person independent of the management of the school. The panel's decision is final.

12. Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are good.

The school's mission statement and core values are clear and well understood by the school community. They were last revised in 2022/23 in a process which included staff, parents and students.

The school's improvement plan is supported and strongly influenced by the suggestions of outside agencies which work with the school, for example the Lumina Board. Professional development of staff is managed through a devolved budget, and the school prioritises teacher and student needs. Areas of improvement are also chosen after feedback of the performance managers. Classroom observations are prioritised and giving constructive feedback to teachers supports professional growth and further improvement.

Leadership team members' attitude towards teaching and learning practices is highly commendable. The teams' strategic decisions regarding the activities that support ISB's mission, vision and values ensure strong development of the learner profile which is embedded within the school's guiding statements. Being independent, respectful and caring are the core values that are practised by the school leaders and they lead by example. Recruitment of the leaders is based on the school's fundamental values. There are five NPQSL qualified leaders in the whole school SLT, including the head of primary, secondary and deputies. There are also other middle leaders who are taking NPQSL and NPQML courses. All middle and senior leaders who are involved in recruitment take annual safety recruitment training.

All leaders are ambitious for the outcomes for each and every student. Senior leaders and teaching staff engage in a range of management duties alongside their teaching commitment. At all levels of responsibility, the leadership and management of ISB are effective in achieving its aims: in particular, policy implementation, curriculum improvement and the professional development of staff are strong foci.

The leaders have been shaping policies and programmes around the guiding statements. A very extensive range of whole school policies are in place, which are reviewed annually by the SLT members and shared with the board for their approval. Review dates are in place and there is a developing consistency of application by staff.

The school's leadership team has engaged its faculty and community to develop a research-informed and contextually appropriate definition of global citizenship, high quality of teaching and learning and digital citizenship to guide its practice. Most of the schools' staff and

leadership team members possess core school values and they live by their example. Role modelling has shaped the school's culture and has a strong impact on learners.

Clear job descriptions and relevant procedures are provided to all employees to ensure that the expectations for all staff are understood and consistently applied. The job descriptions are reviewed periodically to ensure that they are up to date.

ISB has dedicated and well trained members of staff in the safeguarding team who are active in promoting and reinforcing the importance of wellbeing. The school reports it has made big improvements in its safeguarding measures in the last few years. Staff are much more aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, although there are still some inconsistencies. Annual child protection training is provided each year by the school for all staff during the induction week. The school is in the process of implementing *MyConcern* safeguarding software.

Staff *Pulse* surveys from TES online platform are shared bi-weekly to strengthen engagement, motivation and trust, further developing a constructive culture within the school. Anonymous survey results provide school leadership with areas for development, as well as providing an opportunity for members of staff to raise concerns. The platform also helps leadership to work collaboratively with members of staff to prepare action plans by asking questions; "How can we improve?", "What should we do less of?" and "What should we do more of?". There is a very genuine desire on the part of the school leaders for everyone to become the best they can be.