



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

London Academy Rabat

Morocco

Date	30th May – 1st June 2022
Inspection	202205222

Contents		page
1	Purpose and scope on the inspection	2
2	Compliance with regulatory requirements	2
3	Overall effectiveness of the school	3
	3.1 What the school does well	3
	3.2 Points for improvement	4
4	The context of the school	5
	4.1 The British nature of the school	6
5	Standard 1 The quality of education provided by the school	7
	5.1 Curriculum	7
	5.2 Teaching and assessment	8
	5.3 Standards achieved by students	9
6	Standard 2 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students	10
7	Standard 3 The welfare, health and safety of students	11
8	Standard 4 The suitability of the proprietor and staff	13
9	Standard 5 The premises and accommodation	14
10	Standard 6 The provision of information for parents, carers and others	15
11	Standard 7 The school's procedures for handling complaints	16
12	Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school	17

1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

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

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

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

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

This inspection was completed by Penta International. 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, over 25 lesson observations took place, as well as a series of learning walks. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, and a range of teachers, parents and groups of pupils.

The lead inspector was Dr Mark Evans. The team member was Nicola Singleton: both inspectors visited the school.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The London Academy Rabat (LAR) meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

The London Academy Rabat (LAR) is a fast-improving school that already has many good features. The leadership provided by the head of school is excellent: under her guidance, she and her team have worked hard to ensure the best for the pupils. The school has the potential to become an excellent provider of education and care.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including the following:

- Pastoral care and well-being - pupils feel a palpable sense of support from staff and they genuinely enjoy being at school
- Significant progress has been made in recent months to introduce policies and practices that support day-to-day organisation as well as the quality of teaching and learning
- Strong unity amongst staff team with real loyalty to the school and a commitment to successful outcomes
- Staff resilience and flexibility of approach are strengths
- Parent communication has improved well – the introduction of parent class reps, options and other information evenings with weekly newsletters (in response to parental request) is impressive, and has been well received
- Identification processes and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities have been newly introduced: solid foundations have been laid
- Efforts to promote community culture have progressed well: a house system, student councils, special events and activities (some led by the parent community) have intentionally fostered cohesion, loyalty and belonging
- Stronger safeguarding measures have been introduced recently and are thorough
- Leadership of the school is driven by pupil needs and interests
- There is genuine appreciation from parents, pupils and amongst staff for the substantial progress that has been made in a relatively short period of time (amidst significant external challenges)

3.2 Points for improvement

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

- i. To establish joint vision and practice in teaching, learning and assessment for all teachers across the school, leading to the development of:
 - high levels of challenge and expectation in all lessons, particularly for the most able pupils
 - robust performance management system to monitor and support quality
 - timetable allocation that is in line with identified learning priorities, such as consideration of the amount of time dedicated to languages in the reception class and access to an increased number of IGCSE subjects in Years 10 and 11.
- ii. Identify clearer leadership roles and responsibilities in order to manage the school's anticipated growth and improvement.
- iii. Enhance recruitment process further, to match the best of international safer recruitment practices.

4. The context of the school

Full name of School	London Academy Rabat				
Address	London Academy Rabat Soussi Rabat Morocco				
Telephone Number/s	+21 268 424 0240				
Website Address	https://www.londonacademy.ma/				
Key Email Address/s	rabat@londonacademy.ma				
head of school	Emily Olot				
Chair of Board of Governors/Proprietor	Samir Benmakhlouf				
Age Range	2 to 15 years				
Total number of students	144	Boys	71	Girls	73
Numbers by age	<i>0-2 years</i>	5	<i>12-16 years</i>	42	
	<i>3-5 years</i>	26	<i>17-18 years</i>	0	
	<i>6-11 years</i>	71	<i>18+ years</i>	0	
Total number of part-time children	0				

LAR opened in 2019, just in time for the pandemic, which has understandably hampered its growth. It is now growing fast. The current head of school was appointed in August 2021 as a primary lead, and was soon promoted to be head of school. Under her leadership the school has prepared for BSO and there is clear evidence of significant development. There is excellent cohesion between the head and the chief operating officer: both are proud of the school's recent growth and are committed to its ongoing success

Enrolment is currently at 144 pupils (90 of whom have enrolled in the past 10 months); the anticipated maximum enrolment is 400. The enrolment policy is based on inclusivity - many pupils speak English as an additional language and/or have specific learning requirements.

4.1 British nature of the school

The school celebrates its British identity. Strong connections are being established with the British Embassy in Rabat, including pupil participation in a Christmas Concert and other community events. The British Ambassador is a frequent visitor to campus for assemblies etc. A letter from the Mayor of London, commending the school's efforts was shared. Display materials around school speak to the affiliation, including Queen Elizabeth and this year's jubilee.

The Union Flag is on display and a UK telephone box stands proudly in a corridor. Special days in the school calendar reflect global interests, such as *Earthday*, International Women's Day, World Wildlife Day and Poetry Day. The school's calendar references multi-faith observances including Eid and Christmas.

A house system has been introduced to the school - pupils, parents and teachers are all assigned to house and fun events encourage house allegiance. The school is hosting *Brit Fest*, the first of its kind in Rabat, which parents are spearheading as a community initiative.

The curriculum is aligned to the National Curriculum of England. Development Matters is followed in EYFS, supported by approaches to teaching phonics that are common in UK curriculum schools. Resources used to teach reading and numeracy, and subjects featured in the Key Stage (KS) 3 curriculum are aligned to the UK curriculum. Specialist teachers offer PE and Languages lessons. The Cambridge International Curriculum is taught in KS1 - 3; pupils are being prepared for CAIE examinations, although the school is yet to host its first external exam series.

The school culture promotes British values including democracy (through the student council), DEI and respect for others (through Life Skills, a programme which is similar to PSHE). The 6Cs (Critical Thinking, Character, Creativity, Citizenship, Communication, Collaboration) are reinforced at every age and stage of learning.

5. Standard 1

The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided at LAR meets the standard for BSO accreditation.

5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. The school currently provides from pre-nursery to Y10 and follows the appropriate UK guidance.

The range of IGCSE subjects on offer is broad, given size of cohort - this has been further developed this year and includes *Global Perspectives* to add breadth. Drama and art were also added, and in total 12 subjects were offered at the options evening including English literature, geography, history, world literature and Arabic.

There is consistent planning of learning at all levels. Curriculum planning and resourcing is satisfactory, especially given the size of the staff; planning is designed centrally to best ensure standards are met, and to support a number of teachers who are Early Career Teachers (ECTs).

Staff are committed to ensuring sufficient breadth of learning (content and skills); gaps and opportunities are continually being identified and addressed. Progress is also being made in providing for pupils of varied abilities.

The LAR inclusion policy means that pupils are joining from many different learning contexts, different curricula and different language backgrounds. Some join LAR because they have been unable to continue at their previous school for academic or behaviour reasons. The head is aware of the diversity and is successfully implementing strategies to support provision.

Engagement in the many extra-curricular activities (ECA) is high and reflects the diversity in the school. The ECAs are embedded within the curriculum. Additional provision activities include local trips, dance, martial arts, spring break revision school and various sporting opportunities.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

Teaching and assessment meet the BSO standards.

Teaching is good. Lessons seen were at least satisfactory and many were good. There was little unsatisfactory teaching, and some lessons were outstanding. Overall, the quality of teaching observed was good.

In an outstanding lesson for Years 3 and 4, there was strong evidence of differentiated challenge. All pupils were fully engaged and could comment cogently on their progress in mathematics.

Teachers are required to be flexible and resilient to the needs of the small school. Teaching assistants are tasked with providing targeted support for individual pupils both in the classroom and in identified groups, as well as closely supporting those with individual needs. They do this as directed, though with variable outcomes. The teacher assistant (TA) for SEND and targeted intervention in secondary have notable impact supporting differentiated learning and on small work group with identified students.

Professional development and staff meetings, led by the head and members of SLT reinforce a LAR's approach to teaching, this is based on the MAT lesson model. Data leads planning and teaching; there were common features to those lessons observed which were good or better, including string assessment for learning, good differentiation, and appropriate focus on the 6Cs.

Feedback observed in pupil books was variable. The best examples reflected engagement between teacher and pupils in the form of questions/responses. Poorer examples, in contrast, reflected missed opportunity to engage and very limited evidence of marking.

Formative assessments in English, mathematics and science are used to inform provision at all levels. They identify concrete next steps for underperforming or coasting pupils, as well as an opportunity to discuss the impact of teaching on pupil performance and challenge where needed. Teachers demonstrate a high level of ambition for their pupils. IGCSE mock examinations for Year 10 were observed; exam protocol was adhered to well.

5.3 Standards achieved by students

The standards achieved by pupils meets the standard for BSO. Pupils across all key stages make at least satisfactory progress.

The majority of pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL) with English often being their third language. Pupils have recently taken externally set checkpoint assessments for year 6 and 9: this will form the beginning of the external assessment data for LAR. In addition the school makes use of UK national assessments such as the Two Year old Progress check, the EYFS, the KS2 multiplication check and the KS1 phonics screening. LAR were proud to showcase their 95% pass rate for the phonics screening this academic year. The school also make use of the CAIE progress checks which are externally set and were internally marked and moderated. These assessments were used in years 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8.

Considering their starting point and issues with lack of fluency in the English language, pupils make sound progress. They have experienced several one month periods of school closure, due to Covid-19 restrictions and had periods of working in closed 'bubble' type systems.

There is no historical data, so judgements are based on progress made in the past 12 months. Observations of pupil work suggest that standards align with age-expectations.

The LAR inclusion policy may mean that comparisons with UK national averages do not give an accurate picture of teaching and learning ability; there is ample evidence in the form of summative and formative assessment records, collated this year, to demonstrate that progress is being made by pupils.

Parents in attendance at the parent meeting commented that they could see that their children had made "tremendous" progress, especially in the past 10 months.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at LAR is good.

The school recognises that it is critical to its continued success is the ‘family feel’. Recent initiatives, events and projects have been introduced that are designed to build allegiance and build/imbed a LAR culture, principled in concepts such as acceptance, community and belonging. There is a strong commitment to promoting good relationships between people regardless of age, race, gender, disability and ethnic heritage. Pupils are confident, articulate and supportive of one another.

A curriculum of emotional, social personal support and development is featured in the curriculum as Life Skills. Related concepts are taught in age-appropriate ways and reinforced through emphasis on the 6Cs.

Pupils are respectful towards one another and demonstrate good behaviour and positive attitudes. There is a strongly supportive feel to the school: pupils are supported by caring adults. Any occasional behavioural challenge is well managed with strategic individualised support and differentiated approaches to learning. There is a strong sense that every pupil is valued and cared for, no matter what their unique needs and challenges. Anti-bullying and behaviour policies guide practice - pupils commented that there is no bullying at LAR and the supportive ethos is reciprocated by all. Pupils know where to find support and also understand that they have an important role to play in being supportive of each other.

There is an obvious appreciation for the cultural mix of pupils. International day was a special event for the school: as the community grows, the intention is to feature a wider range of cultural celebration days in the calendar. School assemblies are based on topics of interest related to expectations, culture and community.

Policies have been developed this academic year with regard to attendance and punctuality so that any issues arising are dealt with swiftly. There is a strong sense of loyalty and gratitude amongst pupils and parents towards to the school: quite an achievement given that many are new to the community.

Pupils have a voice that is listened to at LAR. As significant stakeholders, they have a perspective that has become increasingly valued; this is a key contributor to the school’s success and roll growth.

7. Standard 3

The welfare, health and safety of the students

The provision for welfare, health and safety is good, and meets the standard for BSO. It is given due priority and pupils feel safe, listened to, cared for, and valued. The provision is an evident strength of the school.

Care for pupils and their welfare is palpable in all staff and exemplified in the head of school who knows every child by name and with whom children feel very comfortable and well cared for. There are effective policies in place for the prevention of bullying and positive behaviour management is strongly encouraged. Instances of bullying and other forms of harassment are rare, and the school deals swiftly and effectively with any instances that do occur.

The school ensures a calm environment for learning through promoting good behaviour. Secondary pupils have a good understanding about how to stay safe online and responsible uses of devices is promoted. Any instances of irresponsible use are logged and can result in confiscation of a device.

There is a strong pastoral element in the school and effective systems are in place to provide pupils with the support they need. Behaviour in the school is good. Expectations are reinforced in the classrooms, with visual reminders and classroom displays encouraging the children to make the right choices. Playtimes are well supervised. Most pupils were engaged in collaborative play. The atmosphere is calm and purposeful. Pupils feel confident that an adult will help them resolve issues, should they arise.

Systems are in place to ensure health and safety laws and fire standards are met. Fire extinguishers are evident throughout the school. Evacuation procedures are displayed throughout the school and systems are in place to ensure pupils are safe and accounted for in the event of an emergency evacuation.

A comprehensive child protection policy is in place and measures are being embedded; staff are properly trained, and child protection officers (CPOs) are designated amongst staff. The head of school is the CPO lead and is acutely aware of the needs of her pupils.

There is a clinic for essential care on site, staffed by one nurse. When she is not on site (after school etc) there is a first aid trained colleague available whenever children are on campus.

The school has a cycle of fire evacuations and evidence of a recent drill was observed. No earthquake or lock down drills have been practiced yet, due to COVID compromising the calendar and the newness of the school. Evacuation procedures include consideration for site departure from multiple exit points.

Pupils are happy and safe on campus - this is best demonstrated in their enthusiasm to stay after hours to access ECAs, work with teachers and engage with the community beyond class-based learning.

Pupils present with a range of needs, reflecting the school's open enrolment policy - over the past 10 months there has been a conscious commitment to ensuring exceptional needs are properly accommodated.

A special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) coordinator, new to school this year, is leading improved provision for differently able pupils. His genuine care in pupils was shown in his interactions with them and the strategic support he is putting in place to enable them to succeed. There are future plans to expand SEND services and increase specialist staffing in response to role growth in the areas of pupils needing additional support.

8. *Standard 4*

The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The suitability of the proprietor and staff is in line with the standard for BSO.

Procedures to ensure the suitability of teaching staff, cover staff, support and administrative staff, the board of advisors and owners have a high priority within the school. Recruitment procedures ensure the suitability of staff to work with children.

Checks are in place and confirm that employed staff are not barred from regulated activity relating to children. These checks relate to the right to work in Morocco, the person's identity, qualifications, and fitness are carried out before confirming an appointment.

A record of these checks is kept centrally and securely. Locally recruited staff are similarly thoroughly police checked. Staff will all be registered onto the system and then recorded on the single central record (SCR) which is managed by HR, centrally.

LAR has sufficient qualified teachers, with the majority coming from a UK trained background with many having previous international experience. Support staff are well qualified, holding locally recognised qualifications in education. The school has successfully managed staffing shortages mid-year generated by roll growth and competency issues. A locally employed secondary mathematics teacher was an excellent recent addition to staff.

The SCR indicates almost all teaching staff hold degree and/or diploma qualifications.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation of the school meet the standard for BSO: they are good.

LAR is housed in a purpose-built school building, which the proprietor has adapted to meet the current needs of the cohort. Specific learning spaces are designated for science, Creative arts, performing arts, library, sports, and IT, alongside this the school has adequate toilets, changing rooms, nappy changing facilities and a multipurpose Hall.

There is a canteen for the children to enjoy snack and lunch and both indoor and outdoor eating areas are provided. Although food is not prepared on site, there is a serving area where the outside provider can serve food from.

Spaces for teaching are furnished with age and height appropriate seating and tables, allowing for group work in younger age ranges and group or individual work in the upper primary and secondary; the science lab has specially designed lab benches and lockable cupboards. The art classroom has easel desks allowing the pupils to work at different heights and angles depending on the task at hand.

Classrooms also have white board working walls, projectors/interactive whiteboards, easel white boards for whole class and group work and a range of display boards to celebrate learning and promote subject knowledge. The current furniture, room designation and layout allow for teaching and learning to work effectively for the current cohort and will be reviewed as the school continues to grow.

The addition of an intervention room has been an excellent resource in the secondary building, providing a space for the SEND lead and secondary intervention assistant to support teaching and learning. The space is used well by staff and pupils alike.

The most recent development of a performing arts space has supported learning, especially for the iGCSE drama course and music provision across the school. The bright outdoor Early Years area gives a stimulating place for the youngest pupils to play and learn, ensuring they have a broad provision across indoor and outdoor learning.

The site is constrained by the size of some of the classrooms and spaces and while some rooms have already been adapted to facilitate larger group teaching, there is still work to be done. For example, the proprietor has short term plans for developing access to the outdoor area from the EYFS, to enable free flow between the classrooms and outdoor area.

Longer term plans to develop the multipurpose hall and library are also in place, for example a UK company has been commissioned to develop the provision of reading material for academic purposes.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information provided by LAR to parents and others is good: it meets the standard for BSO.

The school developed a comprehensive website that is both functional and informative. Through it, LAR shares key information and policies with parents and other stakeholders. In addition, parents and carers can access further and more detailed information through the VLE.

Feedback through surveys, meetings and parent teacher consultations demonstrates that parents are happy with the provision at LAR. A range of methods are used to engage with parent community from day-to-day hand over conversations, formal meetings, workshops and social events. This is in addition to the virtual learning environment (VLE) and class parent representative systems. Both academic and administrative teams aim to be as transparent and flexible when meeting with parents as possible: the former have provided curriculum workshops alongside written information about teaching and learning at LAR.

Parents commented on the significant progress the school has made in developing connections with the parent community over recent months. What they perceived as a former weakness has become a strength, thanks to strategic efforts to communicate. Parents feel an important part of the school community now, and are developing trusting, constructive relationships with school leaders.

The continued development of the class parent representative system has enabled the school to sustain engagement with parents and ensure communication and partnership is effective..

The VLE used at LAR provides parents with access to regular learning overviews, school events and information about their children's progress. The staff are confident in sharing information with parents in an appropriate and timely manner, ensuring there is a genuine working partnership for the best interests of the pupils.

The wider school community is engaged through charity and community events, most recently the launch of the first Moroccan *Brit Fest*. The student council have run several charity drives, involving pupils and parents.

LAR is one of a group of two private academies in Morocco and thus benefits from links across the two schools.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school has in place and makes available to parents a clear complaints policy, which meets the BSO requirements. Concerns are rare, but occasional parents may wish to raise issues with the school. In such cases, the policy makes it clear that they will be treated fairly and with propriety. Parents and prospective parents have access to this policy via the school website.

The complaints procedure is not limited to parents or carers of children that are registered at the school. Any person, including members of the public, may make a complaint to LAR about any provision of facilities or services provided.

The school aims to resolve all complaints at the earliest possible stage, whilst managing the process sympathetically and efficiently.

Any complaint or concern will be taken seriously, whether formally or informally, and appropriate procedures are implemented.

The policy has been created to deal with any complaint against a member of staff, or the school as a whole, relating to any aspects of the school or the provision of facilities or services.

There is a clear and defined difference between a 'concern' and a 'complaint'. Complaints are very rare. The vast majority of items raised are concerns and are dealt with informally, through discussions, meetings, support and or explanations.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns, and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints policy.

Complaints are taken seriously, and every effort made to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. There is a clear set of definitions and very appropriate timescales explained in the policy.

The three stages through which a complaint may progress, are (1) informal raising of a concern (2) formal complaint and (3) consideration by the chief operating officer (COO) with a panel. The decision of the COO and panel is considered to be final.

A written record are kept of any complaint made, detailing whether the complaint was resolved following an informal route, formal route or panel hearing. Other relevant information such as the date the issue was raised, the name of the complainant and, where relevant, their child, and a description of the issue

LAR is also clear about timescales, while it endeavours to resolve any matter as early as possible. A complaint must, in most cases, be raised within 1 week of the incident.

12. Standard 8

Leadership and management of the school

Leadership and management at LAR are good: the direction and expertise provided by the head of school is excellent. The school has gone from providing for 40 pupils to 144 pupils in 10 months, amidst the pandemic. The school recognises that critical to the school's continued success is a family feel, and the need for pupils to feel that they belong, no matter how new they are to LAR.

The proprietor and leadership team have an ambitious vision for the school: they share a sense of purpose and have set ambitious standards, in terms of pupils and staff performance. They have a clear vision embedded, focussing on the short-, medium- and long-term aspirations of the school.

The head of school leads work successfully and attentively. She has clearly defined roles and responsibilities; she is very supportive of the coordinators in leading the school. The school development plan (SDP) targets and drives school priorities, as well as allowing for the evaluation of impact and outcomes. A working 'leadership wall' helps target and prioritise weekly aims and goals to ensure efficient practice. Priorities have deadlines, alongside lead people for driving specific goals. As a developing school, there is a clear understanding of the importance of responsive and reflective practice. Thus, although the SDP has strategic intentions, there is also a shared view that it must respond to the growth and development of the school.

The school has made significant progress since its launch in August 2020 with clear structure and procedures which are understood by all stakeholders. The new performance appraisal system for self-evaluation focusses clearly on achievement, progress and impact. All procedures for safeguarding are rigorously monitored and applied rigorously.

Key leaders are encouraged to have weekly focused management time with their respective team leader. Their roles are well defined, and they are tasked with supporting staff in the endeavour to support and improve pupil progress, as well as monitor and ensure the maintenance of teaching and learning standards, influencing the performance and outcomes of the school. There is limited time available for most leaders to fulfil their duties.

There is a developing programme of continuous professional development (CPD), which is supported by leaders across the school, as well as by appropriate other staff. Development of the VLE, understanding and use of the iGCSE and planning for differentiated needs have been recent priorities. The school leaders deliver the CPD through staff meetings, mentoring and coaching sessions, with their focus linked to school development or identified staff needs. An internal open-door policy has been promoted at LAR, where staff are encouraged to share best practice, for example team teaching and triad planning.

The leadership team at LAR have worked hard to evaluate teaching/learning through lesson observations, learning walks, pupil progress meetings and analysis, performance management and 'book looks'. Analysis of this work is fed back into the mentoring, coaching and team-teaching model.