



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

PORG International School

Ostrava, Czechia

Date **14th – 15th June 2023**
Inspection number **20230614**

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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, if appropriate); 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, all years groups and a wide range of subjects were observed. A series of lesson observations and learning walks took place. School documentation, data and policies were analysed and reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, and a range of teachers, parents, and groups of students. The inspection team was in school for two days.

The lead inspector was Dr Mark Evans. The team member (online) was Helen Searle.

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 PORG International School Ostrava, Czechia, provides a good all-round education for its students. It has many good and some excellent features. The staff work well together to provide a family atmosphere that supports learning and ensures the students are having fun, too. The school is led with energy, determination and enthusiasm.

3.1 What the school does well

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

- The school has improved even more, despite the difficulties of the past few years, and has significantly increased in size, the number of students on roll almost doubling;
- There has been effective progress made on the recommendations of the last BSO report;
- The students are very proud of their school and enjoy their learning;
- Teaching English as an additional language (EAL) is effective: provision is a central part of learning and teaching for all;
- Teaching staff are committed to PORG and enjoy working at the school;
- The administration team continue to provide strong and effective support to the senior team, teachers, students and parents at the school.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

- i. Further improve the quality of learning, teaching, and assessment, so that all matches that of the best;
- ii. Develop further the focus on data analysis to challenge and support learning;
- iii. Continue to develop strength in the middle leadership team, to secure the school's further progress.

4. The context of the school

Full name of school	PORG International School		
Address	Rostislavova 7, 703 00 Ostrava-Vitkovice		
Main telephone #	+420 777 355 157		
Website	www.porginternationalschool.com		
Email	primary@porg.cz		
Principal	Ms Barbora Gazdova		
Chair of board of governors/proprietor	Ms Dagmar Dluhosova		
Age range	5-11 years		
Number of pupils	Total = 27	Boys = 14	Girls = 13
Pupil numbers by age on date of entry	(0-2 years) 0	(3-5 years) 0	(6-11 years) 27
	(12-16 years) 0	(17-18 years) 0	(18+ years) 0
Total number of part-time pupils	NA		

PORG International School was established in 2017, as an international school following a British-style curriculum. Located in Ostrava in the eastern part of the Czech Republic, close to the Polish and Slovak border, it is in an industrial area with many foreign companies. The school provides a service to families who otherwise would have been split with the mother often staying in Prague.

There are currently 27 students from a range of countries, including Korea and the Czech Republic. It is accredited by the Ministry of Education in Korea.

The goal of the school is to provide students with a British type of education. This allows students to follow the IB Diploma Programme at PORG Secondary School, or A-levels at other UK oriented schools. The school seeks to provide a well-balanced curriculum encouraging students to be independent learners, a friendly atmosphere, well equipped classrooms, professional teaching staff, respect for all the educational needs of every child, good overall development of a child and challenging educational experience.

4.1 British nature of the school

The ethos, nature and appearance of the school are recognisably British, for example:

- The school is organised according to the structures used in most English schools;
- Classroom management, displays of work, the two-term year and age-related year groups contribute to a British feel of the school;
- Teachers, many of whom are British, deliver the curriculum in English (other than modern foreign languages);
- There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of correct English;
- The school offers a broad educational experience, just like a UK independent school;
- Resources are UK sourced, as far as possible;
- Communications from the school to families and students are provided in English (translated if required), as are all school publications, reports, letters and the website;
- The importance of extra-curricular provision, including clubs and school trips, are in line with British practice.
- The National Curriculum for England is implemented, carefully adapted to suit the Czech context;
- Students are supported by an effective pastoral care structure, which is very similar to that found in many UK private schools;
- The school is a member (compliance) of COBIS;
- It supports British initiatives, including celebrating the recent coronation of Charles III.

5. Standard 1

The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided is good. The school fully meets the standards for BSO.

5.1 Curriculum

The curriculum at PORG International School is good and developing well.

A wide range of subjects and after school clubs were observed, including English, mathematics, science, music, social studies, history, PE, Czech language, Czech language for foreigners, coding, Rubik's Cube, martial arts and football.

The curriculum is underpinned by the year group objectives from the National Curriculum for England. There is a written curriculum policy, supported by the identified objectives set out in the primary years guide. The broad and balanced curriculum provides opportunities across a wide range of subjects including linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, physical and creative.

The curriculum prepares students for the next stage in their learning well. All year 6 students who entered passed the entrance exam to the nearby grammar school.

The curriculum supports the development of fundamental British values and not undermining the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different beliefs and faiths. The school are proud of their inclusive ethos creating a tolerant, supportive 'family' for the international community it serves. Students are encouraged to participate in the organisation of community events, including making products for the Christmas market.

The school uses Cambridge University Press learning schemes for mathematics, English and science to support learning, which is further enhanced by projects and trips. Real life experiences to contextualise learning are planned for, such as ordering pizza to deepen students' understanding of fractions and the recently launched financial literacy project "MonoPORGly" to enhance students' knowledge of financial independence and economics.

The principal language of instruction is English. Students' English language skills are assessed on entry, and the small class sizes and additional support before school and during break times ensure that they are fully supported. This results in rapid progress and increased accessibility to the curriculum. All students learn Spanish from Year 3, and there are two streams of Czech language education; one for nationals and one for

foreigners. As the demographic of the school continues to change, the school acknowledge a priority is to ensure English language learning provision continues to be adaptive to the individual needs of students.

The curriculum is enhanced by trips, residentials and extracurricular activities. Despite its small faculty, a strength of the school is its wide offering of extracurricular activities. There is a noticeable commitment of the staff to provide activities that are engaging and of interest to the students. The activity based on Rubik's Cube is particularly popular. The school also has partnerships with a local music school to provide access to paid-for music tuition, and all students attend an annual residential in the mountains experiencing 'Nature Learning'.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is good.

Activities and class time are managed well. The teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the students, and due to the small class sizes, they know the students very well indeed. They ensure that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons.

In the best lessons, there is clear and purposeful planning, strongly focused on learning objectives. Teachers use effective and sometimes innovative methods to encourage and develop learning. Teaching throughout the school enables students to acquire new knowledge and make progress, at least according to their ability. Teachers support the increase of students' understanding, developing their skills in the subjects taught as they move through the school. Teaching encourages students to apply intellectual, physical and creative efforts, to show interest in their work and to learn and think for themselves.

Another characteristic of the best lessons is the real excitement the teachers are able to create. For example, in a year three English lesson on creative writing, students worked in pairs linking pictures together to make up a story. This created a buzz of discussion and activity.

The other key characteristic of the best lessons is the strength of the relationships between teacher and students. For example, in a year six mathematics lesson on the fractions and percentages of a number (e.g. $\frac{1}{4}$ of 16), finding the correct answer led to the solving of a secret code. The whole lesson was based on very strong relationships between the teacher and the students and on the teacher's instinctive ability to differentiate as the lesson progressed. Students who showed that they could easily complete the main task went on to much more challenging activities.

A particular feature of some lessons was the creative approach to planning. In a Year 5 and 6 music/singing lesson, the teacher coached the students to sing in a style that reflected the mood of the lyrics. She made comparison between the music and different pairs of colours. This challenged the students to think deeply. There were wonderful relationships between the students and between the students and the teacher.

Teachers have a good understanding of the aptitudes, cultural background, needs of EAL learners and the prior attainments of the individual students. They generally ensure these are taken into account in the planning of lessons. Class time is managed well, with teachers employing a range of appropriate techniques to assess individual students' understanding. The clarity of how groups of students are attaining and progressing is less well formulated, because the individuals are known so well.

The staff work hard to provide a bright welcoming environment for the students who clearly enjoy being at school. There is often laughter in lessons, as teacher and students enjoy learning, for example in a Czech language lesson, using the local version of the song 'heads, shoulders, knees and toes'.

In the less success lessons, although still satisfactory, there is an over-emphasis on teacher-driven activities, such as worksheets, and not enough on student-led learning. This result is acceptable, but the teaching approach does not ignite students' excitement and passion for learning.

Classroom resources are of good quality, quantity and range. Nearly every classroom is equipped with an interactive whiteboard. Resources are generally used effectively: some teachers go out of their way to make the classroom itself fun and challenging, for example, by setting the clock to Zulu time. The use of IT as a learning tool for students is developing.

Teaching prepares students effectively for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of life in the UK and elsewhere and does not undermine fundamental British values. There is due respect for individual human differences. Teachers do not discriminate against students because of their personal differences and lifestyle choices.

The school has an appropriate framework in place to assess student performance regularly and thoroughly. Students' progress is recorded in a report book and also on the school's online system.

5.3 Standards achieved by students

Students' attainment is good.

The school keeps progress and attainment data aligned with internal standards. There is a data tracking system appropriate for a school of this size.

The high teacher: student ratio ensures that individuals are known very well, and summative assessments throughout the year are used to inform this. All entrants into the Cambridge FCE test passed, and all Year 6 children passed the entrance exam to the nearby Grammar School.

The school does not have any students with identified needs to track but does track the progress and attainment of girls and boys. All students meet the expectations in English and mathematics, although girls currently outperform boys in achieving the top two grades.

On entry, most children are speakers of English as a second language. The proficiency of this is assessed early and used well by teachers to enable rapid progress.

Attendance for the year to date was 91.5%. Reasons cited for attendance are families taking extended leave to travel to their home country.

Behaviour is exemplary, and these high standards are a strength across the school. Students are polite, they smile and have positive attitudes to school. The school rewards positive behaviours through certificates and recognition during assemblies.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is good: it is a strength of the school.

PORG actively promotes tolerance and respect for human differences. This is embedded in its culture and ethos. Fundamental values, British included, are instilled both explicitly and implicitly. Students learn about the responsibilities of citizenship in the Czech Republic, the UK and internationally through the topics they study (for example, in a Year 3 social studies lesson) and through the good role models provided by the teachers.

Main assemblies happen at the beginning of the new month. Every afternoon there are also assemblies as a part of the afterschool club. It is an opportunity for the students to learn and discuss the importance of the abovementioned values. These values are also part of the everyday educational process.

Since students often learn through differentiated experiences, they are taught to think critically, be curious, ask questions and continuously explore. This allows them to build their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. They have many different opportunities to develop, including creating presentations, preparing performances, and participating in competitions, like poetry recitals, Rubik's Cube, Spelling bee, football matches and coding. Through these activities, students receive direct experience, self-evaluate themselves and build their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Students are tolerant and supportive of one another. They enjoy the regular celebration of their own and each other's success. In a Years 3 and 4 PE lesson, for example, students were happy when they were successful and also pleased for their peers when their tennis ball activities were successful. Students throughout the school are confident in contributing ideas, responding to questions and engaging in discussions with their peers. They show a real sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them.

The school is very effective in enabling and encouraging students to distinguish right from wrong. Students are polite, respectful and good ambassadors for PORG. They demonstrate a clear understanding of what is expected of them in terms of behaviour. The moral development of students throughout the school is good. Teachers work hard to ensure that students understand how individual liberty, tolerance, and respect for school rules and each other contribute to a caring community.

Social awareness and cultural cooperation between students is evident throughout the school. Collaborative learning is a feature in many lessons. The school fosters and enhances a strong feeling of togetherness and 'family'. Cultural development through lessons and extracurricular activities is good. Partisan political views are precluded in the teaching of all subjects.

Cultural development is good. Students celebrate diversity in a range of local and international festivals throughout the academic year, including an international day. Students are aware of issues of need in the local community and have been involved in outreach programmes.

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

The welfare, health and safety of students is good. It is clear that the school views pastoral care as a priority and staff care unreservedly for the students in their care.

The school ensures effective arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of the students. There is an appropriate written policy which promotes good behaviour and manners and it is implemented across the school. There is also an anti-bullying policy available to parents.

The school meets all local health and safety requirements and is inspected by local Czech authorities. The building is checked regularly by these authorities. Comprehensive records of regular fire-drills were provided upon request. Fire standards conform to UK requirements, and to the Czech Act No. 262/2006 Coll., Labour Code, as amended.

There is a suitable health and safety policy: staff work hard to build a culture where health and safety is the responsibility of all. The teachers are trained or refreshed once a year on the policy.

There is an appropriate first aid policy in place that is followed by staff. There is access to medical support whenever necessary. First aid is administered in a timely and competent manner by one of the three trained members of staff. Students are appropriately supervised during the school day via a well organised duty rota.

All visitors are asked to produce a proof of ID in order to be issued with badges. An admissions register and an attendance register are maintained which conform to Czech regulatory requirements. The attendance register is taken each morning. Absence of a student is reported by the school to parents immediately. Risk assessments are completed for all school trips in line with the health and safety policy. Being part of the larger PORG campus, the risk assessment plan and the unplanned situation plan are created and implemented in cooperation with the bilingual school.

8. *Standard 4* The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The suitability of the proprietor and staff meets the standard for BSO, and are of a high order. The owner ensures the school meets the safety, care and guidance requirements for all students. In addition, she takes responsibility for the recruitment and checking of all staff credentials, supported by the highly effective office manager.

Teachers are hired from a variety of backgrounds. This approach has allowed PORG to build a varied but internationally experienced team. Host country law allows for staff checks to be completed within the first three months of employment, but the school now completes them before a person starts. Prior to the confirmation of staff appointments, appropriate checks, including police checks in the country of origin, are carried out to confirm their identity, medical fitness, right to work in the Czech Republic, previous employment activity, character references and suitability to work with children.

Attested copies of qualifications are required for all teaching staff. There is no evidence that any person barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 has been employed or used at the school.

The school does not employ supply staff. There is no evidence that any member of staff or volunteer who carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school is in contravention of any local, overseas or British disqualification, prohibition or restriction.

All the employees are trained in safeguarding. There is a single list of all adults who work in the school. This is regularly updated and shows when they started and stopped working in the school. Staffing levels are more than adequate for the successful delivery of the curriculum. Teaching staff have qualifications appropriate to their role; some have further academic or teaching qualifications that enhance school development.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation meet the required standard for BSO.

The school is located in a bright newly remodelled building, on two floors. The facilities, premises and accommodation meet the applicable Czech Republic legal requirements. For example, the acoustic conditions and sound insulation of each room are very good and suitable for educational needs. Internal lighting in each room is also good and the building is cleaned in accordance with hygiene and other law requirements of the host country.

External lighting is provided to ensure that people can enter and leave the school premises safely. It is a stimulating and well-maintained learning environment appropriate for students aged 6-11 years. There are currently no students with mobility issues, but the school is aware that the lack of an elevator is a weakness in the current building.

Suitable toilets and washing facilities, as well as changing rooms and showers, are available to students. Separate toilet facilities for boys and girls aged 5 and over are provided. The school uses a gym and playground located in the larger PORG campus, which is connected to the school.

PORG International School provides accommodation for short-term sick and injured students in the teachers' office, which includes a washing facility and is near a toilet facility. Suitable drinking water facilities are provided; toilets and urinals have an adequate supply of cold water, and washing facilities have an appropriate supply of hot and cold water. Cold water supplies that are suitable for drinking are marked as such, and the temperature of hot water at the point of use does not pose a scalding risk to users.

The facility meets the local requirements of health and safety.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

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

The new school website provides key information such as school day timings, school meals, admissions contacts and uniforms. Parents of students and prospective students are provided with the appropriate information, including the name and contact details of key personnel, the school's address, and telephone number. Prospective parents can visit the school for tours and to ask questions. The website provides a 'frequently asked questions' section which supports prospective parents. Hard copies of documents are made available in the school lobby and on request.

Parents are kept informed of upcoming events, recent celebrations and community notices through four newsletters a year. These newsletters are collaboratively created with all year groups represented. The principal also includes a termly message to parents communicating and promoting involvement in community events and key messages. These highlights are further promoted via social media. A dedicated teaching staff member has undertaken the role of a social media manager and ensures appropriate content is regularly shared with parents and the wider community.

A very detailed and comprehensive curriculum information document known as the 'Primary Years Guide' provides parents with an extensive overview of learning skills and curriculum content. Parents are regularly informed of children's academic and personal development through twice-yearly written reports and parent meetings. This is in addition to the many informal opportunities for parents to have discussions with class teachers, including morning drop off, afternoon pick up and ad hoc meetings when necessary. The school's small size enables very regular contact and informal daily communications. In occasional cases of student underperformance, a policy is in place to notify the parents both via telephone and in writing of the concern and the plan in place to support them.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The procedure for dealing with parental complaints continues to be robust, effective and transparent. Complaints are very rare. The written formal complaints policy is transparent and takes into account Czech law and regulations.

Nearly all concerns are dealt with by the class teacher on an informal basis. Senior leaders and teachers are available on specific mornings for parents to talk to and share concerns or escalated complaints if necessary. If a parent is not satisfied with the outcome of any informal complaint, then they can move to the formal process. There are clear timescales set for the management of complaints, and the roles of stakeholders are clearly communicated.

The policy is available on the school website, and documents to support this process are easily accessible. The policy ensures the escalation from informal complaints to formal complaints is explained fully with consideration for confidentiality and the involvement of appropriate persons.

If a formal complaint has not been resolved by the headteacher, the parent(s) can request a meeting with the proprietor for a formal review. Parents have the opportunity to be accompanied by a friend. A copy of the findings and recommendations are made available to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about, the owner and the head teacher. The policy allows for written records to be kept of all complaints indicating at which stage they were resolved, and these are stored securely.

The process of recording information throughout the complaint-handling process is detailed, and parents are made aware of their rights to access this information under the GDPR.

12. Standard 8

Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are good.

The PORG International School is part of the PORG schools' family with more than 30 years of tradition. The proprietor, supported by the headteacher and office manager, oversees school policies, ensuring all local requirements are met. She ensures there are enough resources through robust financial management and through the appointment of experienced and talented staff. The proprietor ensures the staff of the school consistently meets the responsibilities so that BSO standards are met.

The leadership and management of the school communicate the PORG aims and vision well, as well as actively promotes the well-being of students. At present, given the small size of the school, the management structure is still flat, which places pressure on the headteacher. Other leadership roles are gradually evolving.

At the beginning of the school year, the school's development plan is decided upon. It is discussed with staff during regular meetings held once a week. The school also has a more extended development plan (covering three years) to maintain the opportunity for more strategic thinking.

The school runs very well on a day-to-day basis. Operational procedures are established and understood. The office manager and administrative staff add significantly to the quality of the provision.

The school has implemented a performance management process, with appropriate emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and learning and on raising individual student attainment. Every opportunity for training to develop professional skills and knowledge further is taken. The school uses online courses, participate in conferences and share experiences and the best practice. Staff actively search for new methods of teaching. There has been specialised training for *Jolly Phonics*.

Employees have participated in different courses developing teaching skills in the English language, computing, for the Cambridge test preparation, ADHD, training for music teachers, first aid, health and safety, antibullying, online safety and blended learning.

PORG International School acts strictly in compliance with local regulations and laws as well as with British ones. The school rules are issued under Act No. 561/2004 Coll., Decree No. 48/2005 Coll. on Primary Education and other requirements relating to compulsory school attendance, Decree No. 13/2005 Coll. on secondary education, the labour code and other applicable directives of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports as amended, and following

the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, Convention on the Rights of the Child and other Czech law regulations.