



Inspection report

EPG Salmiya School

Kuwait

Date
Inspection number

17th – 19th March 2019
20190317

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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 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 UK. 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, 40 full or part lessons were observed by inspectors. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, a range of teachers, governing body, parents and groups of students. Two and a half school days were monitored.

Lead Inspector was John Cranfield. The other team members were David Berry and Shannon Koga.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

English Playgroup Primary School Salmiya (PS SLM) meets all the standards required for British Schools Overseas accreditation.

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3. Overall effectiveness of the school

Whilst many lessons are good or better, this is not consistent across the school. Some lessons have yet to meet the school's expectations. Nearly all pupils make progress at least in line with ability, some more, as they move through the school. Pupils are well supported through effective pastoral care and the implementation of robust welfare, health and safety policies and procedures.

Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of pupils is good. The curriculum is broad and balanced; enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities. The school is strongly committed to achieving its vision 'be the best you can be' across all areas of the school. Pupils, parents and staff are committed to the school. The board are effective in providing strategic direction and support for the school. They increasingly hold the senior leadership to account.

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3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths. They include:

1. The continuing support of the governing body in supporting the development of the school.
2. The principal and senior leaders demonstrates care and concern for all the staff and pupils.
3. Middle leaders and teachers are cohesive, capable and committed to improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising student attainment.
4. The school is effective in enabling pupils to develop their personal skills and qualities. Most pupils are thoughtful, well behaved, treat others with respect and have well developed social skills.
5. The family feel of the school effectively supports the social, emotional and mental development of the pupil.
6. Pupils rapid acquisition of the English language across the school.
7. Parents are appreciative of the British style education on offer.
8. Administration and premises staff are effective in supporting the smooth running of the school.
9. Positive relationships between pupils and all adults ensure they feel secure and happy.

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3.2 Points for improvement

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

- a. Improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels so that:
 - leaders become leaders of **learning**
 - leaders do more monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility
 - leaders provide feedback to staff about what they do well, and what they need to improve and follow-up swiftly on areas requiring improvement
- b. Ensure the building remains a safe place to learn, particularly in the light of scheduled building developments.
- c. Ensure in all lessons that practice reflects school policy, for example: in teaching and learning for achievement, and assessment for learning.

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4. The context of the school

Full name of School	The English Primary Group - PS Salmiya		
Address	Abu Thur Al-Ghafari Street Block 12 Salmiya 20012 Kuwait		
Telephone Number/s	+965 606 01036 +965 256 10824		
Fax Number	None		
Website Address	www.epg.edu.kw		
Key Email Address/s	Primarysalmiya@epg.edu.kw		
Headteacher/Principal	Ms. Nancy Eldars		
Chair of Board of Governors/Proprietor	Yahya Albassam / Sulayman Yahya Albassam		
Age Range	3 years to 11 years		
Number of Pupils	<i>Total</i> 522	<i>Boys</i> 308	<i>Girls</i> 214
Pupil Numbers by Age	<i>0-2 years</i> -	<i>3-5 years</i> 142	<i>6-11 years</i> 380
	<i>12-16 years</i> -	<i>17-18 years</i> -	<i>18+ years</i> -
Total Number of Part-Time Pupils	-		

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PSS is part of a well- established international co-ed school with a sole proprietor, English Playgroup Educational Co WLL (EPG) in Kuwait. EPG was launched in 1975 and consists of 28 Early Years branches and 2 primary schools delivering education for around 8,500 children. The school generally follows the National Curriculum for England, with accommodation for subjects required by the Ministry of Education: Arabic Studies and Islamic Studies.

All pupils are English as a second language learners. 48% of students are Kuwaitis with the remainder expats from neighbouring Arab countries. 10% of pupils are from non-Arabic speaking backgrounds. The home language is Arabic. Boys make up 60% of the school population. English is the language of communication throughout the school, and in lessons. The school makes it clear to parents that it does not admit pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Barriers identified include the language barrier, restricted space and meeting all the requirements of the Ministry of Education of Kuwait.

4.1 British nature of the school

The ethos, nature and appearance of the school are recognisably British. The majority of senior and middle leaders are UK qualified. The school is organised according to the structures used in English schools. Classroom management displays of work, three term year and age-related year groups contribute to a British feel of the school. Pupils are organised into 4 houses: England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. Numerous displays around the school celebrate 'Britishness' and inform pupils about the traditions and institutions of the UK. The posts of head boy and girl, prefects and eco ambassadors all contribute to the British feel of the school. The youngest pupils follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Older pupils follow programmes of studies from the English National Curriculum Key Stages 1 and 2. Assessments are based on National Curriculum outcomes. British practice is evident in approaches to performance management. Resources are UK sourced. All communications from the school to families and pupils are provided in English, in addition to Arabic 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. English is the common language of instruction throughout the school, apart from Islamic and Arabic language lessons.

The school is a member of COBIS and takes part in KFSAC (Kuwait Foreign Schools Athletic Conference) meetings.

Interviewed parents valued highly the British nature of the curriculum.

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5. Standard 1

The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided by PSS meets the standard for accreditation with aspects of good practice.

5.1 Curriculum

The school has a written curriculum policy, supported by schemes of work which enable pupils to acquire skills in speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy. The subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including those with learning difficulties. It does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The principal language of instruction is English.

The curriculum provides opportunities for the linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, social, physical, aesthetic and creative development of the pupils. The curriculum is supported by a range of extra-curricular activities. The youngest pupils follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The curriculum on offer is appropriate to the needs of pupils in terms of personal, social, emotional and physical development. Multiple learning activities are planned to enable pupils to experience a variety of approaches to support their mastery of the intended learning outcome. Appropriate flexible grouping is clearly embedded in the learning activities. Language development across the Foundation Stage is strong. Present teaching and assessment practice does not fully mirror policy.

Schemes of work and topics across the primary school are reflective of British practice, for example: Community Superheroes in Foundation Stage, Famous Landmarks in Year 1, Great Fire of London in Year 2 and World War 2 in Year 6. Specialist teaching in PE, music, Art, social studies, Islamic Studies and Arabic enhance the primary curriculum. All pupils have access to the computing suite and library at least once a week. The application of new technologies to promote 21st Century learning remains under-developed. Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to learn and make progress. A range of curriculum experiences help prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern day Britain

The curriculum is enhanced by the provision of a range of after school clubs including choir, music, and football. Extra-curricular activities are carried out at the sister school Salwa in addition to the EPG Club in nearby Mariam Mall. Current

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transportation restrictions mean that pupils sometimes have to leave class early to attend activities in Mariam Mall.

The school ensures that the planning and delivery of personal, social, health and economic education reflects the school's aims and ethos, is relevant to the ages and needs of pupils in all key stages and encourages respect for human differences. British values including the fundamental values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths are implicit in the life of the school. The school works hard to ensure pupils study in an environment free from prejudice underpinned by a strong moral code.

The curriculum on offer takes account of the curricula and accreditation commonly used in schools in the UK. Pupils are able to enter or re-enter the UK educational system at an appropriate level without disadvantage.

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5.2 Teaching and assessment

Teaching and assessment meet the standard required with aspects of good.

Teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge, and make progress at least according to their ability, increasing their understanding and developing their skills in the subjects taught as they move through the school. Most teaching encourages pupils to apply intellectual, physical and creative efforts, to show interest in their work and learn and think for themselves. Most teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, cultural background, the needs of EAL learners, and the prior attainments of the pupils. They generally ensure these are taken into account in the planning of lessons. Class time is generally managed wisely. Overall, teachers demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.

The quality of teaching in Early Years is at least good when delivered by the recently appointed specialist teacher. Provision is not as strong when the trained teacher is not present and leading the teaching. At its best, teaching enables pupils' individual needs to be met through differentiated activities supported by appropriate intervention. The lack of suitable outside space is a challenge for the Early Years staff. Consequently, the school has identified appropriate facilities at a nearby location.

Across Key Stage 1, the teaching is broadly satisfactory with some aspects that are good. In the best lessons, pupils make good progress, deepen their understanding and acquire the necessary skills to flourish and grow. In addition, in these lessons, learning is made explicitly clear to the pupils with clear steps about how this learning will be acquired. The level of expectation is high and based on thoughtfully planned questions that allow pupils to reflect and respond. Most lessons were planned with clear learning objectives. In a small number of lessons, the lesson objective was confused and linked too closely to the actual task. When questioned, pupils struggled to explain what they thought the learning focus was and some talked about 'doing' rather than learning. In a small minority of lessons observed, teachers' questioning of pupils extended beyond the recall of prior learning. Rarely were pupils challenged to explain their answers by teachers or support staff. In some lessons the over reliance on teacher talk did not allow pupils the time to question or apply the new knowledge.

Overall the quality of teaching across Key Stage 2 is generally good and on occasions better. A significant minority of lessons however have yet to reach the school's clearly stated expectations. In the best lessons, pupils are set imaginative tasks, well matched to their learning needs, enabling them to learn both collaboratively

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and independently and make good progress. Pace is rapid and learning time maximized. Nearly all lesson plans made clear reference to lesson objectives. Whilst most teachers shared lesson objectives with their pupils, only in the better lessons did teachers specifically refer to them as part of assessment for learning (AfL). In an effective Year 5 science lesson the challenge of designing and building a parachute to protect an egg launched from a height captured the imagination and interest of the pupils. Interactive whiteboards are generally used effectively as a learning tool in many classrooms. Every class now has a teaching assistant. They are currently undergoing training. Those who have been in place since the start of the academic year have forged positive relationships with the class teacher, supporting targeted pupils with clearly identified learning needs. In addition, clear records are kept on the pupil's progress. This best practice now needs to be embedded. In less effective lessons, assessment for learning techniques, for example peer and self-assessment, use of plenaries and targeted high order questioning, have yet to be fully embedded. There is an overemphasis on teacher talk and pupils lose interest. Too often pupils ended the lesson without having time to reflect on their learning or inform the teacher of the extent to which they had mastered the learning outcomes.

Classroom resources are of a good quantity, quality and range. Every classroom is equipped with an interactive white board. Resources are generally used effectively. Provision for the use of IT as a learning tool for pupils is an area for development. The behaviour management strategies in place throughout the school ensure that most pupils remain on task and focused during the lessons, thus maximising learning time. Teaching effectively prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in the UK. Teaching does not undermine fundamental British values. There is great respect for individual human differences.

The school has a framework in place to assess pupil performance regularly and thoroughly. Strategies are in place to collate observations of the youngest pupils' learning, both planned and incidental, for example the use of learning journal books. In addition to 'Rising Stars', the school introduced Classroom Monitor to better track progress and attainment of pupils on entry to Year 6. The school now has a wealth of data. It is beginning to be used effectively to inform lesson planning and identify underachievement. The use of assessment for learning techniques, for example: self-assessment, peer assessment, strategic use of questioning, use of success criteria and plenaries are not consistent across the school.

Overall, the quality of feedback, including marking across Key Stages 1 and 2, is inconsistent. In the better examples, written feedback encourages pupils to respond and deepen their understanding. In other books, marking tended to be a series of 'ticks' with the occasional supportive comment. Recently, some teachers

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have begun to provide opportunities for pupils to extend their thinking, especially in mathematics, through the addition of reasoning questions as a form of feedback. Pupils, when questioned about this, responded positively and made it clear that they like it when their teacher makes them think deeply about a problem. The best feedback to support learning was observed in mathematics and English. The same level of expectation is not being replicated in the other subjects. In subjects such as science, geography and history, there is an over reliance of worksheets to assess student performance.

Parents receive regular detailed and informative reports.

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5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

Nearly all pupils make progress in line with ability, some better as they move through the school.

On entry, all pupils are second English language speakers. English language acquisition is rapid across the Early Years Foundation Stage. Nearly all pupils are working towards UK age related expectations in the dispositions comprising the Early Years curriculum. With the exception of reading and writing most pupils are working within 'developing' expectations. Overall attainment has yet to reach UK expectations.

School derived data shows that pupils continue to make progress across the primary school. In a baseline reading test held at the start of the school year, 10-40% of pupils across the primary school cohorts (Year 1 to Year 6) were working at or above the expected level in each cohort. By December this figure had risen to 50-75% across the cohorts.

In writing, September baseline assessment revealed that 0-75% across 5 cohorts (from Year 2 to Year 6) were working at or above the expected level. By December this figure had risen to 40-90% across the cohorts.

In grammar, September baseline tests indicated 20-80% of pupils across 5 cohorts (Year 2 to Year 6) were working at or above expected level. By December the figure had increased to between 75-80% across the cohorts.

In September 20-50% of pupils across the six cohorts (Year 1 to 6) were working at or above the expected level in mathematics. By December this figure had risen to 50-85%. School analysis revealed that Year 6 pupils in the lowest 50% had made little progress. However, pupils in the highest 30% had made expected or better progress. The school has now introduced streaming for Year 6 pupils for two mathematics lessons per week.

There is a clear focus on continuous improvement in terms of pupil attendance and punctuality. Attendance indicates an improving trend over the past three years. In 2016-17, it was 83.02%; 2017-18, it was 86.65%; and in 2018-19, it is currently 91.46%. The managing of attendance is highly effective with a systematic approach. The school fully understands the importance of attending school regularly and ensures that a consistent practice of working closely with parents is in place. Nearly

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all pupils arrive at school on time. The main reasons for lateness are traffic or medical appointments. The main reasons for absenteeism are illness.

The school is successful in helping pupils to develop their personal skills and qualities. Nearly all pupils are thoughtful and well behaved. They are acquiring the personal and social skills needed to move successfully to the next stage of their education.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good. They develop their awareness and understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects through a combination of themed assemblies, planned PSHE programme, extra-curricular activities, and the formal and informal curriculum as they move through the school. The school promotes religious and cultural understanding through the delivery of aspects of the Quran each morning along with the singing of the national anthem. A mosque is available on site for pupils who wish to utilize break times or class times to work on religious studies or take part in Islamic contests from the Ministry of Education.

Nearly all pupils are respectful and mindful of others and self, including teaching staff. The school enables pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. Pupils are trusted by teachers and by one another. PSS promotes living values at weekly assemblies. Themes include the importance of respect, tolerance, kindness and caring.

Pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them in terms of behaviour. The school effectively enables and encourages pupils to distinguish right from wrong. The school fosters and enhances a feeling of togetherness and “family”. Principles are actively promoted to encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour. They learn to show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the school locality and to society more widely.

The school actively promotes, in an age-appropriate way, British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect. Rich curriculum experiences ensure pupils acquire a good general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England and the responsibilities of citizenship in the host country. Partisan political views are precluded in the teaching of all subjects. Information is presented in an impartial way with an appropriate balance of opposing views where applicable. Pupils show an awareness, appreciation and respect for each other, the wider world and other cultures. This is particularly evident in lessons, on the playground, and through assemblies. They are encouraged to celebrate and share aspects of their own culture. On the last day of International Week, pupils are encouraged to attend school in their national costume.

Throughout their time at the school, pupils are developing high order personal and social skills, which enable them to make a positive contribution to the society in which they live and effectively prepare them for the next stage of their lives. Pupils readily accept responsibility and leadership roles as elected school council representatives and prefects. The school actively promotes tolerance, a respect for human differences and acceptance of a range of lifestyles: this is achieved within the laws of the host country.

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

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good. An effective written policy relating to the health and safety of pupils in school and on activities outside school is in place. Safeguarding practices are securely in place with policies that are up to date. The vice-principal fulfils the role of designated safeguarding officer. The social workers ensure that child protection procedures are robust, accurate and up to date. Equally, they provide an effective link between home and school, especially when the school has to raise any specific concerns. The quality of the record keeping is clear, concise and clearly acted upon. Although policies are relevant, there is a tendency for them to be too general and not specific to the school. For instance, the safeguarding policy did not refer to the social workers or their contact details. All staff undertake safeguarding training at the start of the school year.

A recent parents' survey supports the judgement that they are happy with 96.1% who responded, stating that their children 'are happy at school'. In addition, 98.84% of parents stated their children 'are safe at school'. This was reinforced by a focus group of parents. There is an effective anti-bullying policy, which is rigorously implemented. A record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour. A focus groups of pupils stated that any unpleasantness is dealt with immediately and effectively. The school is presently updating its anti-cyber bullying policy to reflect current good practice. A comprehensive policy is in place for promoting good behaviour among pupils and setting out the sanctions for misbehaviour. Assemblies are used to celebrate good behaviour as well as address inappropriate behaviour. The pastoral system is well developed and organised.

In keeping with the UK Workplace Health and Safety Regulations (1992) and Fire Precaution Regulations (1997), the school has implemented appropriate policies and procedures which fully comply with local regulations. Fire drills are held three times each year. Fire evacuation procedures are displayed in English in every classroom. Fire hoses have English and Arabic labels. Fire exits are not clearly displayed. A fire drill was organised during the inspection and the school demonstrated that effective procedures are in place. Chemicals are safely stored in a locked cupboard. The main electrical points are covered and are not blocked or obscured.

Transport safety is a high priority for the school. All buses are fitted with seatbelts and the use of these is enforced. Access to the school site is monitored by teaching and support staff across the school day but especially in the mornings and at the end of the day. Thereafter, other than the main entrance, school gates are closed. The site of the school is secure.

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The school nurse has comprehensive medical files, which is regularly updated. Information is distributed to all staff members concerning pupils' health or medical issues. She maintains clear records and evaluates any potential concern both quickly and effectively. The administration of medicines, again, is carefully maintained and reviewed. In addition, she contributes to the PSHE curriculum organised across the school. The school nurse manages all first aid issues and ensures that first aid boxes are appropriately stocked. In the event of her absence, the EPG group provides a relief school nurse. The Ministry of Electricity and Water carry out regular checks. Soft flooring and padding are fitted in all play areas.

Food hygiene is monitored annually by the Kuwaiti Ministry. Staff are trained in food hygiene and effectively monitor the dietary needs of pupils. PSS follows all local regulations regarding the Safety and Welfare of children, which include frequent visits from the Ministry of Education. The school follows COSHH guidance with respect to the use and storage of substances hazardous to health. In accordance with UK Electricity at Work Regulations (1989) all staff are required to take due care in the use of electrical equipment.

Admission and attendance registers conform to local regulatory requirements. They are appropriately maintained.

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

The suitability of the governing body and staff is of a high order. The board ensures the school meets the safety, care and guidance requirements for all pupils. In addition, they take responsibility for the recruitment and checking of staff credentials.

A safer recruitment policy is in place. 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 Kuwait, previous employment activity, character references and suitability to work with children. There is no evidence that any member of staff is in contravention of any local, overseas or British disqualification, prohibition or restriction.

The chair of the board is not barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. There is a list maintained of all staff who currently work in the school. This shows when they started and stopped working in the school. Staffing levels are more than adequate for the successful delivery of the curriculum. All teaching staff have qualifications appropriate to their role; some staff have further academic or teaching qualifications that enhance school development.

8. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The school makes the best use of limited space.

The school provides a safe environment for its pupils. Security arrangements for the grounds and buildings are given appropriate priority. The school is housed in a three-floor building with an additional covered rooftop area to provide play space. Classrooms are of moderate size and are re-assigned annually based on pupil numbers. Furniture in the classrooms is age appropriate. Sound insulation, air conditioning units, lighting and acoustics allow for effective teaching and communication. The flooring is in good condition throughout the school. The drainage system allows for the effective disposal of wastewater and surface water. Initial safety concerns regarding steps were dealt with swiftly. The building is locked and/or monitored at all entrances. Drop off and pick up times are closely monitored.

Implemented this academic year, parents and guardians must present their Transaction Cards before entering the premises. All utilities and premises are closely monitored by the Ministries of Health and Electricity for cleanliness and quality assurance. The school complies with all local fire safety requirements. While the immediate surroundings are well lit by streetlights and vendor lighting, the school has limited external lighting for evening access. There are currently no pupils with physical disabilities who would require additional facilities.

The school provides adequate toilet facilities which are clean and safe for use. No hot water is accessible in pupil toilets. Drinking water is available and clearly signed on the ground and second floor. There is a medical room, staffed by a qualified nurse with a bed for the use of short-term sick pupils. 16 housekeeping staff ensure the school remains clean and tidy during the school day.

Although limited in space, physical education is delivered in accordance with the school curriculum and facilitates outside play.

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

The quality of information provided to parents, carers and others by the school is good. There is a clear statement of the ethos and aims of the school on the website in the form of the school's vision and mission. Nevertheless, the school's website is not straightforward to navigate and requires a degree of patience in trying to locate the most relevant information. The school's admissions policy is published on the school website and is readily available from the school on request. Once parents have made contact with the school, they are well-supported and kept informed at every stage of the admission process. Particulars of policies relating to attendance and lateness, homework, behaviour, bullying, complaints, child protection, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and sanctions adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving are either posted on the website, school's intranet or available on request.

Additional provision for pupils requiring support is available from the school. The website provides the contact details, the names of the principal and members of staff. A focus group of parents were overwhelmingly supportive on the amount and detail of information provided by the school. On admission, parents are inducted and receive appropriate school information. During the school year, parents are kept well informed about the life of the school through email, leaflets, pamphlets and online. The school's reception offers a wide variety of information, including emergency plans, extra-curricular activities, child protection and other key policies, parental information and fee structure.

Parents are invited to attend class assemblies and various concerts. The school has an open-door policy. As one parent commented, 'This is a family school'. Written reports on pupils' progress are provided to parents twice a year. Reports detail not only attainment but attendance and how they are learning in school. Parents are offered twice yearly parent-teacher consultations and parent information evenings at the start of the academic year. Particulars of the school's academic performance during the previous year are provided on request.

10. *Standard 7*

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The procedure for dealing with parental complaints is robust and takes into account best practice.

Wherever possible concerns are dealt with quickly by the most appropriate member of staff. There is a detailed written formal complaints procedure that is transparent, open and effective, and takes into account local laws and regulations. It is made available to parents of pupils and prospective parents. There are clear timescales set for the management of complaints. The handling of complaints mirrors the management structure of the school. Nearly all cases are dealt with by the class teacher or tutor on an informal basis. Parents have easy access to senior leaders at the start and end of the school day. If parents are not satisfied with the outcome of an informal approach, they are able to submit a formal written complaint. If unresolved by the year leader or vice principal, the concern escalates to a complaint in writing to the principal. A meeting is convened within 24 hours.

If still unresolved the complaint is referred to executive principal. A meeting is arranged with the vice principal within 24 hours of receipt of the complaint. If unresolved by the executive principal, the complaint is escalated to the student liaison officer for resolution. The complaint is heard by the student liaison officer in head office within 24 hours. If still unresolved the complaint is heard within 14 days by a tribunal comprising a member of the Board, deputy managing director / managing director / chairman and a panel of two others as appropriate, e.g. executive principal, or one of the other principals not involved in the issue.

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 governing body and the executive principal. The policy allows for written records to be kept of all complaints indicating at which stage they were resolved. All correspondence, statements and records of complaints are treated confidentially and kept securely. The number of formal complaints during the previous year are available on request.

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11. *Standard 8*

Leadership and management of the school

Since the last accreditation visit there has been a change of senior leadership and a large number of teaching staff. In addition, 19 support teachers have been appointed in tranches since September. The senior leadership team have begun to address the recommendations of the last inspection. Through a programme of continuous development, middle and senior leaders have now been equipped with the knowledge and skills to discharge their responsibilities. The school now needs to monitor the impact of the training on school improvement.

The recommendations surrounding challenge for pupils in lessons and levels of accountability across the school are on-going. Overall the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and, in many cases, better. Whilst the school has implemented a performance management process, it is not yet sufficiently rigorous to secure consistent improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and raising individual student attainment. The SEF highlights the need for a more robust on-going self-evaluation process outside key inspection years.

Effective policies ensure that pupils make at least good progress in literacy. The school's curriculum provides organised and effective opportunities for groups of pupils to learn well and make progress. The recent introduction of a whole school tracking system enables the school to better track pupils' progress and attainment over time. The senior leadership team has recognised the need to support teacher assessments on progress with externally verifiable baseline data. To that end the school is introducing additional UK SAT test papers and CAT4 testing. The school ethos promotes positive behaviour and good personal development for pupils, including all aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school runs well on a day to day basis. Operational procedures are established and understood. The governing body is generally successful in securing, supporting and developing sufficient high-quality staff. Safer recruitment policies ensure teachers suitability to work with children. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust. The school works well with parents and carers.

12. *Standard 9*

The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable.