



**British School  
Overseas**  
Inspected by Penta International

# **Inspection report Capital School Bahrain**

Date	18 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> February 2018
Inspection number	20180218

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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 academy's management on the overall effectiveness of the academy, 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 academy 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, 30- or part- lessons were observed by inspectors. Academy documentation and policies were analysed, and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, members of the board and a range of teachers, parents and groups of pupils.

The lead inspector was Colin Dyson; the team members were Sarah Shine and Andrew Wyeth.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

Capital School Bahrain meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas accreditation.

### 3. Overall effectiveness of the school

Capital School Bahrain has only been established for 3 years. From a start of only 8 pupils in January 2015, it has grown to successfully to accommodate 529 pupils between the ages of 3 and 12+ years. Overall the quality of teaching is good, and a significant number of lessons were outstanding. Pupils make good progress and standardized tests demonstrate that most are at least meeting expectations. The school is beginning to collect data on progress over time, but this is limited at the moment due to the short period it has been in operation.

Pupils are well supported through effective pastoral care and the implementation of good welfare, health and safety policies and procedures. The school runs well on a day to day basis. Parents and pupils value the British nature of the curriculum and respect the values promoted by all teachers in their sons' and daughters' education. From September 2018, the school will no longer include year 7 pupils.

#### 3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths, which include the following:

- A strong community has been established that is highly valued by pupils, parents and staff.
- The Principal has successfully nurtured the establishment of the school from its start, giving a high priority to developing positive relationships between all stake holders.
- Quality of teaching across the school is consistently good with examples of outstanding practices. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed.
- Behaviour of pupils is excellent. There are highly positive relationships between pupils, staff and parents.
- The pupils enjoy their learning and are proud of their school.
- Middle leaders are committed to supporting the development of the school.
- Under the guidance of the Principal, teaching and non-teaching staff, the school displays a high level of operational efficiency.
- The commitment of all staff, including administrative and ancillary staff, to the well-being of all pupils.
- The school site is well-maintained and effective use has been made of limited facilities.

## 3.2 Points for improvement

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

- Establish a clear curriculum plan that ensures consistency across the school and relevance for children in Capital School.
- Develop the assessment, marking and tracking practices and procedures to positively impact on raising the achievements of every pupil.
- Ensure leadership is effectively distributed across the school by equipping Middle Leaders with the skills and resources to successfully undertake their roles.

#### 4. The context of the school

Full name of school/college	Capital School				
Address	Block 331, Road 20, Building 84 Zinj, Bahrain				
Telephone number	1700880				
Fax number	17003330				
Website	www.capitalschoolbahrain.com				
Email address	info@capitalschoolbahrain.com				
Head	Mr. Joseph Moyster				
Chairman of Board of Governors	Mr. Adel Al Safar				
Age range	3 years to 13 years				
Total number of pupils		Boys	275	Girls	226
Numbers by age	0-2 years	0	11-16 years	19	
	3-5 years	111	16-18 years	0	
	5-11 years	399	18+ years	0	
Total number of part-time children	0				

Capital School Bahrain is a British Curriculum school that officially opened in January 2015 with 8 pupils on roll. The school has grown considerably over a short period of time and now has 529 pupils attending from Foundation Stage (FS) to Year 7.

The school is a non-selective, international, co-educational school. It is not licensed to accept pupils with significant learning difficulties.

The school has identified the challenges of assessing the ability of all pupils on entry, since over 44 different nationalities are represented with at least 19 different first languages being spoken.

The majority of teachers are native English speaking and most Assistant Teachers are Bahraini graduates. The school requires all teaching assistants to complete a conversion course at the University of Bahrain if their original degree is not in education.

The school is housed on a purpose-built site on the outskirts of Bahrain City. The site includes out buildings for administration, canteen, prayer room and storage. The adjoining Al Ahli Sports Club is located directly adjacent to the school and is issued to provide a broad range of physical education activities.

The school has plans to build a new campus in September 2020.

The school has identified the need to ensure consistency and consolidation across its operation due to the significant development in pupil numbers, increase in staffing and ensuring compliance with Ministry of Education requirements.

## 4.1 British nature of the school

The appearance, nature and ethos of the school are recognisably British.

The National Curriculum of England has been adopted throughout the school from Early Years to Year 7.

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. The leadership structure of the school is based on a British model with head of school and middle/phase leaders. The school is actively looking to appoint a deputy headteacher to further enhance the senior leadership team.

The school seeks to adopt UK practices and keeps up-to-date by monitoring developments from the Department for Education. Assessments are based on national standards from the UK. Resources are sourced from the UK and teachers offer a broad educational experience which reflects the practices of the UK independent school experience.

British practice is evident in approaches to performance management, staff target setting and annual review meetings. These initiatives have only recently been implemented and the school identifies the need for further development to ensure consistent approaches across the school.

All communications from the school to families and pupils are provided in English, as are all school publications, reports and letters and the website. The school recognises the importance of extra-curricular provision including clubs and school trips. At the moment the development of these initiatives are limited due to ensuring MOE requirements are fully met. English is the common language of instruction throughout the school, apart from in Arabic, Islamic Studies and modern foreign languages.

Parents believe that the school is 'very good' and identified that the children are happy and confident and 'love' coming to school.

## 5. Standard 1

### The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided by Capital School fully meets the requirements of the BSO Framework.

Teaching is good or better; the curriculum meets the standards, and assessment strategies are being implemented appropriately.

#### 5.1 Curriculum

Capital School Bahrain follows the National Curriculum of England, which provides a framework for teaching, considering the local Bahrain requirements. The curriculum provides opportunities for the linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human social, physical, aesthetic and creative development of pupils. Pupils also develop an understanding of the Arabic language, the history and the cultural development of Bahrain. The school recognises the need to further develop the curriculum so that it is fully relevant to pupils in Bahrain and provides a range of cross-curricula links to enhance the learning.

Extra-curricular activities were temporarily on hold as the school was still awaiting approval from the Bahrain Ministry of Education.

The principal language of instruction is English, and teachers insist on this during lessons and around the school.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) staff are developing a broad and balanced topic-based program which provides a range of educational experiences. Teachers give an appropriate priority to the development of speaking and listening skills in English. The curriculum is being developed to encourage the curiosity of the children. However, some activities are directed rather too much by the teachers, consequently some opportunities for the children to be creative and imaginative are sometimes limited.

In nearly all the early years classes, children make progress in the acquisition of oral language particularly those who start school speaking little English. Children develop confidence in communicating, counting and mark making. As they mature, children learn to form letters correctly, write sentences and read basic text. Children are happy and enthusiastic learners: they are keen to learn both indoors and outdoors and make good use of the activities provided for them.

Across the primary years the staff use Active Learn - a range of online schemes plus teacher material to teach English, mathematics and science, however, there is not a consistent approach to planning for foundation subjects. The school has yet to identify and implement a fully contextualised curriculum relevant to the pupils in Bahrain. On occasions, pupils were

given opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. In these lessons, the children were encouraged to develop higher order thinking skills, for example a group were challenged to programme Bee Bots, which engaged their interests and provided a high level of challenge. Whilst the Active Learn resources are effective in the teaching and learning of core English and mathematics skills, the drive to cover the content of the curriculum appeared to limit opportunities to enhance pupils' curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

Planning and assessment documentation exists through these online resources which details how pupils in KS2 are challenged and supported through the lesson content. Regular assessments are used to monitor pupil progress based on the online resources.

The primary curriculum is also enhanced by specialist teaching in PE, music and French. All pupils have access to a designated ICT classroom and have a timetabled lesson at least once a week.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

Teaching is good across all year groups with some aspects which are outstanding. Assessment strategies and practices are satisfactory and being developed in-line with the school's development.

The pupils in the foundation stage classes benefit from a flexible approach to teaching. For example, pupils were able to choose their own occupations during a dress up day, this was followed up by a range of learning activities which were well organised by the teachers. Children effectively used interactive whiteboards. Teachers encourage children to ask questions and to develop independence in their learning. By the end of FS2, children are developing and working towards achieving expected levels.

In the primary years, lessons are well planned and effectively delivered. Teachers demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught. The use of Teaching Assistants is not consistently targeted effectively to support pupil engagement or progress in all lessons. Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to learn and make progress. Further development of the curriculum would enable teachers to help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life as global citizens and modern-day life in Bahrain.

Behaviour is managed well, and the vast majority of pupils take pride in their work. In the best lessons, teachers use a range of strategies to assess pupils understanding, for example, "Do you understand? Yes, no, maybe so?" and "Green to go - work, amber or red, come to the carpet." As well as this, a number of teachers use effective questioning and give time for pupils to discuss and process their learning. However, these formative assessment tools were not consistently used throughout the key stage.

Lessons are well planned with a good variety of teacher resources delivered through the online bank. Teachers demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught. Marking is frequent and up-to-date, however, responsive comments to enhance pupil's learning are minimal. Verbal feedback given in lessons is regular although assessment for learning opportunities are not a systematic feature of Capital's pedagogy.

The relationship of teacher to pupil is effective and enhances learning. Pupils are responsive and behaviour for learning is outstanding. In a Year 3 French lesson, pupils' level of understanding and application was outstanding. Pupils were inquisitive and fully engaged in the progressive and challenging activities based on inspiring practice.

The use of active learning and interactive whiteboards (IWB) is proficient across all key stages and a good stimulus for class activities. Pupils are equally adept at their use. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were engaged in a series of differentiated challenges through the IWB that enhanced learning accordingly.

Progress in lessons is apparent where pupils are engaged with differentiated tasks, but this is not consistent across all lessons. In the best lessons Teaching Assistants are effectively engaging with pupils prompting an enhanced learning state. In an Arabic lesson the teaching assistant (TA) was effectively interacting and prompting pupils who had not grasped fundamental aspects of the content.

The use of 'Socratic' to encourage pupils to share their understanding by answering formative assessment questions in a variety of formats: quizzes, quick question polls, exit ticket, space races and probing questioning techniques, apparent in the best lessons.

Collaboration between pupils is good where mixed ability and grouped ability tasks are appropriately set. In the best lessons pupils are able to share their ideas with their partners, before sharing more collectively.

Across the school pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. They approach learning with enthusiasm and positive attitudes. In many lessons, pupils were encouraged and challenged by the learning: however this was not consistent across all.

Classroom resources are of a good quality and range. Generally, they are being used effectively by teachers and teaching assistants to effectively support learning.

### 5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

The school is working towards developing an effective framework to assess pupil progress in learning. Teachers collect a range of evidence of progress in learning from observing children and recording key learning steps. This evidence base is now being electronically stored and used to indicate progress in learning. Teachers recognise that developing the effectiveness of monitoring and assessment is a priority for the coming year.

The school's evidence from standardised assessments shows that KS1 and KS2 pupils are broadly in line with UK national averages. The development of effective tracking systems will enable the school to identify progress more clearly in the future.

Pupil progress in writing and maths is evident from 'book looks'. Marking is up to date. However, formative comments to enable the pupils to clearly understand the next steps in their learning and pupil engagement with feedback is inconsistently used. In the best lessons, teachers had prepared activities to meet a broad range of learning needs, but in KS1, it was often limited to worksheets.

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

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

Pupils across the school demonstrate empathy for the needs of others both in lessons and around the school. This was celebrated by the pupils as one of the school's strengths. With pride, the pupils described their school as "friendly." Pupils at Capital School have respect for the range of different cultures represented in the school. Special events like International Day are being developed with enthusiasm and offer good opportunities for the school to work with the wider community.

Capital School's ethos and climate promotes tolerance and respect for human differences, including different lifestyles: this is embedded in the culture and character of the school. Citizenship values are displayed around the school and brought alive in a number of ways with the pupils, for example, through the various celebrations of achievements. Shared high expectations of conduct are evident in the school and there is a genuine sense of collective responsibility for a positive learning environment. Pupils show a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them. Conversations with the pupil representatives show that children at Capital School are able to reflect about values and identify how they can contribute to the positive atmosphere of the school.

The pupils' communication skills are excellent, for example, different pupils from FS1 to Y6 readily engaged with the inspectors and were able to talk politely about their school. In these conversations, the pupils showed a genuine sense of enjoyment in school life. The positive behaviour demonstrated by pupils throughout the inspection is evidence that Capital school's pupils are able to recognise the difference between right and wrong and are able to apply this understanding in their own lives. Staff/pupil relationships are outstanding: consistently, adults nurture positive behaviour and enable the pupils to understand the impact of their actions. When necessary, procedures for individual behaviour support plans are in place. Routines have been clearly established to support children in understanding the high expectations placed upon them. As a result, the pupils appear safe, happy and healthy.

There are systems and procedures in place to facilitate the pupil voice. The Pupil Council is effective and there is evidence that pupil leaders have a genuine impact on the day to day running of the school, for example the development of the Stair Monitor responsibility post. Annually the pupil voice is collected, with data analysed and actions taken.

Pupils are able to use of a range of social skills in different contexts, the Head Boy and Head Girl explained how they use problem solving strategies to support positive play during break times. The discussions with the pupil representatives show that the pupils are proud of the role they play in their school, in fact, when asked about what they would change, they commented, nothing, it is the best school already.

Whilst no Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs) were observed, a previous term's ECA schedule and pupil feedback on it, are evidence that the school can offer a range of activities. Pupils value these opportunities and the school is working with the Ministry of Education to resume the ECA provision. There are a variety of extracurricular activities that have positive effects on the school, for example, school trips and events like the book fair. The Year 6 pupils demonstrated entrepreneurialism with the fund-raising work. Such initiatives teach the pupils about Financial Literacy.

The school enables pupils to develop their self-confidence, self-esteem and self-knowledge; pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show an awareness, appreciation and respect for each other, the wider world and other cultures.

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

The welfare, health and safety of pupils are good with outstanding examples of operational performance.

Capital School places a high priority on ensuring that the security of all pupils is of the uppermost importance. Staff develop effective relationships with parents and this aids the young children to join the school confidently. As they move through the school, parents and pupils value the effective contribution made by all teachers.

The school effectively promotes good behaviour by all pupils. The school has an effective written policy to prevent bullying. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that they have a trusted adult in the school whom they can turn to when the need support or advice. The School Councillor and Principal work in collaboration with the MOE to ensure the safeguarding of pupils.

There is a clear policy for the safeguarding of pupils which the principal oversees as the nominated person for child protection. Teachers have a clear understanding of the lines of communication and how to report concerns.

The school site is kept immaculately clean throughout the day. Maintenance staff are effective in the application of their duties. Classrooms and corridors are of a suitable size. Several areas outside classrooms are well used for activities in the Foundation Stage.

There are regular meetings with the head of maintenance and the principal. The principal has an effective working relationship with this team and takes an obvious lead in this area. More rigour needs to be applied to planned, preventative maintenance and the recordkeeping of these tasks.

Fire drills are regularly undertaken with relevant reviews. Fire extinguishers are maintained in accordance with local ministry requirements.

Transport safety is on the whole effective, although the bus nannies did not always ensure seatbelts were applied securely.

From a day-to-day basis, operational health and safety was good, although there is lack of systemisation with formatted documentation and processes. Although risks were appropriately identified across the physical site, this was not evident for activities including PE lessons, playground and classroom activities.

Pupils are supervised effectively at the beginning of the school day, during the day and at breaktimes as well as at the end of day and pick-up.

Registers are taken both in the morning and afternoon, and any missing pupils are contacted via the school office.

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

The suitability of the proprietor and staff meets the standard required for accreditation.

The board, through the senior leaders and administrative staff, ensure that required checks are in place to confirm that staff are suitable to work with children and that they have the right to work in Bahrain.

Clear operational protocols now need to be established. The role of governors is embryonic in terms of steering the school's future development. Clear guidance on roles and responsibilities need to be implemented to ensure all governors can be fully effective.

The Board and senior staff have implemented effective working practices that enable the day today management of the school to be efficient and effective. Responsibilities with regard to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils are understood and effectively discharged. There is a central list maintained of all staff and volunteers who currently work in the school. Staffing levels are 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.

Staff recruitment policies and practices are in place and policies for pupil's health and safety are available for parents to see.

The recent expansion of the school has identified the need to enhance the provision for leadership. Middle leaders are effective but do not always have the resources to fully support school development. The school identifies the senior leadership team needs to be enhanced further. Clear operational protocols now need to be established.

## 9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are good with some outstanding features.

The school buildings are fit for purpose and maintained to a good standard. The AstroTurf area, however, is a cause for concern with apparent trip and fall hazards creating dangerous risks. There is optimum space for breaktime activities based on a staggered approach.

Washrooms were sufficient in number and well maintained. Classrooms are maintained in a tidy, clean and hygienic state. Classrooms are sufficiently acoustically insulated to allow effective teaching and communication. Toilet and washing facilities for the sole use of children of different gender are available.

The drainage system allows for the effective disposal of wastewater and surface water.

There are appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill with a qualified nurse present throughout the school day. When ECAs recommence, it is essential to extend coverage to this time.

AC units are effective, and the temperature is conducive for effective learning. Decoration is generally good and furniture and fittings appropriate for relevant ages. The Year 7 classroom, however, is rather dark, lacking natural light and is musky due to poor ventilation.

The school meets all national regulations regarding the safety and maintenance of the facilities. Security inside and outside the school building is effective and the dropping off and picking up routines are efficient and safe. The school monitors the use of the adjacent sports facilities to ensure pupils are safe at all times.

## 10. Standard 6

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

The provision of information provided by the school to parents, prospective parents and its wider community is excellent.

A comprehensive range of important information is provided by the school in the Parent Zone of its web-site and published documentation. The school mission and aims, contact details, curriculum information, key policy documents relating to admissions, health and safety, bullying and safeguarding & child protection are easily accessible. The complaints procedure is clear, along with details of the staff employed by the school.

A focus group of parents were highly positive about the level of communication offered by the school. They commended the use of the 'Digital Campus,' whilst it is in its infancy, it is further enhancing effective home/school communications. Letter and newsletter information ensure parents are fully informed about school events, curriculum, trips and activities. Many parents stated that they chose the school primarily for its English system of education and/or because of the openness and positive character of the Principal. Parents reported that they were very happy with the education provided for their pupils, the standards achieved and the educational opportunities available to them. They acknowledge that the school is working hard to provide their children with a range of Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs) but appreciate the difficulties relating to the Ministry of Education approval which impacts on ECA provision.

Interviewed parents stated that the school fully engages them in their pupils' education. The new Capital Mums Committee, (democratically elected,) has created a constitution with committee members adopting key roles & responsibilities e.g. phase link communication links. The committee members spoke enthusiastically about both their plans for the future and the support they have received from the Principal. The focus group mums believed that parents' views are regularly sought, both informally and formally. The school administers annually a parent questionnaire in order to seek their views. A summary of the report is shared via the school's newsletter, with paper copies available on request. The results of the parent survey are analysed, and actions taken to address areas for development, for example, in the 2016-17 parent survey, parents identified that school communications could be enhanced, in response to that the school investigated and invested in Digital Campus. The parents are confident that the school listens to them.

New Parents commented that they were helped to understand the English curriculum and their children settled quickly into the school routines. Parents reported that the school was like a family. The school has rigorous procedures in place to monitor and follow-up absences: parents are pleased, albeit surprised, by the immediacy of text and telephone calls when their child is absent from school. Parents indicated that the school responds quickly and appropriately when issues are raised by parents.

Reporting procedures are clear and the school reports termly to parents on the attainment of their pupils. As well as this, there are termly Parent Teacher Meetings ensuring that parents are confident that they know how well their child is doing and how they should improve.

## 11. Standard 7

### The school's procedure for handling complaints

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 pupils. The procedure consists of four stages and mirrors the school's management structure. The complaints procedure allows complaints to be made and considered initially on an informal basis. There is a clear timescale.

Ultimately parents have recourse to the Ministry of Education. Correspondence, statements and records of complaint are secure and confidential.

Parental feedback indicates a high degree of satisfaction with both the speed of response and the outcome of any concern or complaint.

## 12. Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school

Leadership and management of the school are good.

The Principal is held to account by the owner and governors. They display a strong desire to improve attainment and achieve the highest levels of progress for all pupils within a caring and supportive learning environment. Governors are beginning to make a significant contribution to the school's success and are developing as genuine critical friends. They are supportive, attending many events held during the year. The role of governors now needs to be clarified to enable them to be fully involved in the monitoring of educational excellence.

Feedback from stakeholders is sought actively and used to further improve the school performance. The development of 'Capital Mums' has been effective in providing a strong opportunity for the parent voice to be heard.

The school's arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are good with outstanding elements.

The quality of teaching is good or better: overall, no unsatisfactory lessons were observed.

Collectively the leadership and management teams demonstrate a strong commitment to raising standards achieved across the whole school. The school needs to ensure resources are used to enhance and develop the effectiveness of senior/middle leaders to fully support the Principal. At the present time, the lack of non-contact time for middle leaders has a negative impact on their success as they feel they are not able to drive through school improvement fully.

School leaders understand that a well-trained and supported team leads to good and outstanding outcomes for pupils. The Principal has been proactive in providing a range of development opportunities and mentoring programs to support some teachers. Through a more accurate performance management system the school could identify outstanding practices and use these to support the further development of all staff.

The whole school runs well on a day-to-day basis, in part because of the high quality of the administrative and support staff. Their skill and work allow teachers to concentrate on teaching.

## 13. Standard 9 The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable.