



**British School
Overseas**

Inspected by Penta International

The International School of Flanders

**Waterloo/Tervuren
Belgium**

Date: 7th - 9th June 2023
Inspection number: 20230607

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1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

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

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

The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's management on the overall effectiveness of the school, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent schools in the United Kingdom. The inspection and report will cover the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation (including boarding); and the school's complaints procedures. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for students and students' achievements.

This inspection was completed by Penta International. Penta International is approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the English Department for Education (DFE) on the extent to which schools meet the standards for British Schools Overseas. During the inspection visit, 62 lesson observations took place. School documentation and policies were analysed, and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were seen in lessons, and discussions were held with the staff, parents and informally with students. The inspection took place over three days.

The lead inspector was Simon Sharron. The team members were Philip Holden and Sharon Percy.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The International School of Flanders (ISF) meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

ISF provides a high quality of education in an exceedingly stimulating and safe learning environment. The relationships at all levels are warm, professional and caring, which further supports strong learning.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including:

- a high quality of education delivering good academic standards
- inspirational and compassionate leadership from the board and senior leadership team
- a safe and secure learning environment where safeguarding and child protection are paramount
- the embedding of British values of tolerance and democracy within a culturally diverse community
- a genuine sense of community based on strong personal values, modelled by staff and embedded in the school
- the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students
- a climate where students are happy and enjoy learning
- a culture of inclusion meeting the needs of most able children and those who may find the curriculum challenging
- the teaching of French by stage and not age so that bilingual and foundation learners make excellent progress
- promotion of and respect for student voice
- the information provided to parents
- the provision of a varied programme of enrichment activities during the school day.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

- i. Ensure that all lessons are consistently good or better and meet the standards of the best lessons seen in the school.
- ii. In EYFS and Key Stage 1:
 - a. consider following the EYFS statutory framework for assessment and completing the phonics screening check in Year 1.
 - b. consider ensuring that at least one staff member on the Waterloo and Tervuren sites is qualified in paediatric first aid.
- iii. The school may wish to consider having a discrete and prominent section on its website dedicated to its policies.

4. The context of the school

Full name of School	International School of Flanders ISF Tervuren Campus and ISF Waterloo Campus				
Address	ISF Tervuren Campus Stationstraat 3 3080 Tervuren, Belgium ISF Waterloo Campus Chaussee de Waterloo 280 Rhode Saint Genese, Belgium				
Telephone Number/s	ISF Tervuren- +32 27673098 ISF Waterloo- +32 23585606				
Website Address	www.isftervuren.org www.isfwaterloo.org				
Key Email Address	office@isftervuren.org office@isfwaterloo.org				
Headteacher/ Principal	Belinda Yates				
Chair of board/Proprietor	Kaisa Sorjonen				
Age Range	2.5-11 years- ISF Tervuren 2.5-18 years- ISF Waterloo				
Total number of pupils	286	Boys	155	Girls	131
Numbers by age	<i>0-2 years</i>	7	<i>12-16 years</i>	76	
	<i>3-5 years</i>	55	<i>17-18 years</i>	16	
	<i>6-11 years</i>	151	<i>18+ years</i>	1	
Total number of part-time children	0				

The International School of Flanders (ISF) is a non-profit school, located on two campuses, one in Waterloo and the other in Tervuren. Both are within easy reach of the very cosmopolitan conurbation of Brussels which is home to the institutions of the European Union and many other large international organisations. While only 5% of children are British, the school's student population fully reflects the rich internationalism and cultural diversity of the communities around it. ISF provides English medium education delivered through a British

curriculum. The larger ISF Waterloo campus is an all-through school for children and students aged 2-18 years, while the ISF Tervuren campus has only pre-school, foundation and primary classes. As well as providing wrap-around before and after school care for children whose parents require it, ISF has established at both sites 'Daycare' for babies from the age of 6 weeks. ISF belongs to a network of English medium and other international schools that operate in the area. It is an accredited member of the Council of International Schools (CIS) and the Council of British International Schools (COBIS).

4.1 British nature of the school

ISF's organisational, curricular and pastoral structure reflects what you would see in a typical British school from Early Years to Year 13.

The British nature of the school is explained to parents on their children's arrival. This includes information on how its UK curriculum works. The school's values are closely aligned to British values and attitudes towards tolerance, democracy, respect for freedom of expression and other human rights. Displays around the school in both primary and secondary sections recognise and actively promote these. Children in the younger years have superhero characters assigned to the values so that they are more meaningful and accessible. The UK curriculum, particularly in subject areas such as English literature, history, global citizenship, constantly reinforces these values.

The school's ethos and mission emphasise the importance and centrality of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its students. Many curriculum topics relate to Britain such as the Anglo Saxons and Vikings and the use of British Ordnance Survey Maps in secondary geography lessons. The primary school uses schemes of learning and approaches to teaching which have been developed in the UK. ISF is an accredited exam centre for UK examination boards offering IGCSEs and A Levels.

There is a wealth of British and English language literature in the school library. Information about the school and communication to parents is written in English. All staff undertake rigorous safeguarding training in line with British standards. ISF is a member of the British Council of British Schools. Many teachers are UK trained and the school's programme of professional development is underpinned by suppliers based in the UK.

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

The quality of education is good and fully meets the standard.

5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

The quality of the curriculum is good and has many excellent features. Above all, it has the flexibility to meet the needs of all the 286 students on roll across the Waterloo and Tervuren campuses. This may be to help very able students access careers in civil aviation and in theology. Or it may be to empower and equip students who find academic learning difficult with the necessary knowledge and skills to embark on less academic but rewarding vocational pathways beyond school.

The early years curriculum is closely aligned to the UK's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and follows the DfE's 'Development Matters' agenda. In primary and secondary, the school bases its curriculum offer on the English National Curriculum. This ensures a good breadth and balance of core and foundation subjects which enable students to acquire the requisite knowledge and skills in preparation for the next stage in their academic development. In Key Stages 1 and 2, accredited schemes of work, which are widely used in the UK, support the teaching of literacy and numeracy as well as thematic and inquiry-led learning. The range of options for IGCSEs and A-levels is commendable given the current small size of the upper secondary classes. Creatively, the school is developing its own online school to be able to offer minority secondary options where course requests are not viable.

The school fosters inclusion by adapting and customising the curriculum, where it can, for students with additional English language or special education needs. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is supported by an excellent, timetabled personal, health and education (PSHE) programme throughout the school. This is supplemented by assemblies linked to the school's core values and a range of extra-curricular activities organised during the school day. There are several innovative curriculum initiatives such as being a 'Google School' and the secondary subject 'project management' which both aim to develop critical thinking, entrepreneurial and organisational skills. The ISF curriculum is compliant with the Belgian host country requirements, a particular strength being its teaching of French on the Waterloo campus and its offer of French or Dutch on its Tervuren site

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The school fully meets the standard and is good.

This is because the majority of lessons observed were good or better and the school has established systems of assessment that operate extremely well to measure and track students' progress and attainment over time and against potential. Action plans are developed to support students who are identified as underachieving. Overall, there is room to improve effective teaching through consistently good classroom management. This will provide a launch pad in all lessons for engaging activities, independent learning, targeted differentiation and constant challenge. These characteristics were the hallmark of the very best lessons seen by the inspection team at ISF.

The ISF foundation or pre-school classes offer good free-flow provision whereby children can move independently between the indoor and excellent outdoor play areas. For example, on the Tervuren site, younger children were playing in the sand tray outside confidently, whilst some children were engaged enthusiastically in their own learning inside. In a very effective phonics lesson, all the children were equipped with torches to engage the children actively in practising the vowel sound 'o' as they chanted 'on, off' to flashing lights and then this learning was then consolidated with a lively rendition of a an 'o-song' provided by a well-known phonics programme. Children in pre-primary or reception were seen working successfully towards their early learning goals of language and communication as well as expressive art and design, as they busily made a car for Father's Day, explaining how many wheels they needed to paint and why they were making it. To strengthen assessment and tracking and thereby aid the teaching of early reading across both campuses, the school would do well to follow UK guidance on assessment within the EYFS and Key Stage 1, notably the completion of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile at the end of pre-primary and phonics screening in Key Stage 1.

Nearly all lessons are well planned to structure the teaching and make learning effective. In the best lessons, teachers use a wide range of pedagogical approaches and activities ensuring an appropriate pace and excellent student engagement. This maximises learning opportunities and provides for differing learning needs. In an excellent lesson on poetry in a combined Year 5 and 6 class, the terminology of poetic devices and extension of language given to the children was expansive and challenging. However, differentiation and support were given to enable all children to complete the task with confidence and enjoyment. The teacher had excellent subject knowledge and provided purposeful verbal feedback to the class.

Expectations of classroom behaviour, personal responsibilities and achievement are high. In the best lessons, teachers provided students with many opportunities to learn and work collaboratively with peers. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, students

worked collaboratively on a presentation on Anglo Saxons. In a year 5 English lesson, students took it in turns to present biographies that they had written about people who they considered to be their role models. The rest of the class was kept engaged because they were asked to peer assess the presentations, which they did politely, honestly and constructively. One student applauded the choice of role model because the person donated lots to charity. Another was praised for speaking confidently but criticised for talking “a bit too fast”.

Good and better lessons were often marked by the effective integration of information technology. Many teachers used the interactive whiteboard to set out clearly the lesson objectives and structure as well to project lesson content with which students could interact and demonstrate their learning. In an excellent Year 10 French lesson, the teacher used an online educational testing tool in an innovative way to teach grammar and assess students’ strengths regarding gender endings across a wide variety of vocabulary. ISF is a ‘Google Reference School’ and as such students make excellent use of classroom and personal computer devices to access lesson content and support independent and often collaborative, inquiry-led learning. This was evident in a Year 9 ‘Google’ lesson where students were being guided to explore the internet to examine the reliability of information and the importance of acknowledging the sources of information in their own work.

A significant strength of many lessons was the quality of assessment for learning which allowed teachers to judge student progress and be reactive at a class or individual level. In a Year 12 AS-Level English Language lesson a student was observed giving expert analysis of a sample answer to a question, explaining to her peers in the class what elements of the sample work were strongest and why they met the assessment criteria. Similarly, students in an English Literature IGCSE revision lesson were asked to present to the rest of the class their analysis and grading of mark scheme responses to previous exam questions. In Year 7 and 8 classes, computer tablet screens were held up to show the teacher at a glance the students’ understanding of a targeted teaching point.

While teachers have a good understanding of the prior attainments and assessed potential of their students, especially those who speak English as an additional language, lesson planning could be enhanced by explicit differentiation strategies to promote the continuity of personalised learning.

5.3 Standards achieved by pupils.

The standards achieved by students meet the standard for BSO and are good overall.

In light of the school being entirely non-selective with student mobility sometimes exceeding 30% annually, the standards attained are exceedingly commendable and a considerable strength of the school. Over the period that they spend in the school, students clearly make very good progress and the attainment of some students at significant summative assessment points often surpasses the outcome that prior attainment and cognitive ability tests have predicted. According to the school's own analysis, during the 2021/2022 academic year, 77% of secondary students made expected progress or higher and, in the primary classes Years 4-6, this was 73% of students. Above all, standards are good because teaching and assessment is generally effective, and teachers' planning ensures that there is good progression from lesson to lesson and year to year. This was also evidenced in the high quality of most students' work.

In foundation classes, it is difficult to benchmark standards accurately against those achieved in similar schools following a UK curriculum. The school is considering following DfE guidance on the use of the EYFS profile to establish the number of children achieving a 'Good Level of Development' within the 5 areas of learning relating to: communication and language; personal, social and emotional development; physical development; literacy; and mathematics. Similarly in Key Stage 1, phonics screening at the end of Year one may help the school track and improve early reading development. However, it is important to state that by the end of the primary phase, despite student mobility issues and its very comprehensive intake, Year 6 students at ISF are achieving standards in reading, writing and maths that are globally above the average in the UK.

In June 2022, at the end of Key Stage 4, 66% of Year 11 students achieved IGCSE grades A*-C. Although the IGCSE cohort at ISF is small, these results were above the UK national average for that year. The proportion and quality of pass grades in recent years demonstrates persistent high standards. Since all IGCSE candidates achieve a good pass in French, they all achieve the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc) which is valued by some leading UK universities. The small size of Key Stage (KS) 5 renders year-on-year comparisons of grade percentages unreliable but results confirm the highest standards can and are often attained. KS5 students have scored top grades in recent years accessing prestigious universities in the UK and internationally.

The excellent student behaviour around the school is a key strength of the school. Students understand the school's code of conduct and therefore what behaviour expectations the school has and the consequences that poor behaviour can have. Student attendance and punctuality are both good, although the school is keen to reduce the number of unauthorised absences.

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

The standard is judged to be excellent.

ISF is a happy school. Students are positive, confident in their learning environment; they feel safe and secure and part of a community. Students are polite, curious and ready to learn.

The school's guiding statement of "Rich in Diversity, United by Values" is strongly reinforced and highly visible around the school. The students, staff and parents know this statement and believe it accurately describes and supports daily life at ISF. Many students voiced to inspectors their appreciation of how the school makes it easy to enjoy the otherness and similarities within their cosmopolitan and multilingual community. The school values, including the importance of community, mutual respect, honesty, and open-mindedness, are tangibly evidenced by students as they move about the school, work together in lessons and relax or play during breaks.

Students have ample opportunity to partake in democratic processes through electing house captains and student council representatives. Each year group elects two representatives to the student council which can put forward suggestions and requests that have originated from the students. Students are positive about their democratic voice. They are represented on the school advisory board and have been instrumental in obtaining the school's agreement regarding the organisation of International Day, the availability of microwave ovens to warm food in the winter and the establishment of cross-country running. The strong sense of community felt by students is reinforced by the pastoral house system and additional student leadership positions such as house leader, student buddy or even classroom helper.

Students are active in their awareness and respect for their natural world and the urgency for its protection. Wall displays inform students of the school's quest to become an Eco-School and how they can minimise negative environmental impact through their own behaviour. Students articulated that they were proud and grateful for this drive on environmental protection and considered it important. The school encourages students to grow fruits and plants within both campuses and there is a clear parallel being drawn between growth of plants and the growth of the children. This stimulates spiritual reflection on human development in the organic and physical world which surrounds them.

All students follow a Global Citizenship Development programme and are encouraged to complete their Global Perspectives passport through working towards and displaying active awareness on its themes.

In PSHE lessons, students engage in age-appropriate activities and guided discussions on related themes. A practical exercise relating to respecting personal space was observed in a highly effective Year 10 PSHE lesson where students learnt that different cultures can anticipate differences in personal space boundaries. This lesson successfully enhanced their cultural awareness.

Cultural sensitivities are respected. The school celebrates a number of religious festivals across different cultures and faiths. Wall displays around the school further reinforce the international cultural awareness of all students. The school allows students to wear head dress if that is a cultural requirement and is sensitive to students' requests. One Year 12 boy requested permission to wear traditional headdress during winter months when he discovered winter cold caused his dreadlocks to stiffen and become brittle. He expressed immense admiration that the school researched his request and deemed his desired headdress appropriate in the context of national attire and allowed him to wear it in school.

Students are alert to their duty to ensure the quality and inclusiveness of their social interactions and tolerance. Friendship benches in the playground, initiated by the student council, are one example of the determination by students to care for one another as part of a single community. One Year 8 student on a friendship bench expressed her pride and delight that she knew all students in the school. All students that inspectors met felt cared for and happy and proud to be part of their multilingual, multicultural, diverse school community.

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

The provision for welfare, health and safety for students is excellent and fully meets the standard for BSO.

The welfare, health and safety for students is given high priority and several policies underpin the school's exemplary practice in this vital area of school life. Students feel safe, listened to, cared for and valued. All staff are encouraged to contribute to the day-to-day safety of the students. Creating an embedded culture of care, safety and security that runs throughout the school. Great effort is made to promote healthy eating and lifestyles.

Attendance registers are routinely taken and the information is recorded. All visitors to the school are asked to sign in and out on entry to the building.

There are effective arrangements in place for safeguarding the students on the school's two campuses. Guidance and procedures are set out in a Safeguarding Handbook for staff and parents. The school staff have all been trained in varying levels of safeguarding both online and in person and know what to do if they have a concern. There is a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) across the two campuses and all staff partake in sufficient safeguarding/ child protection training. The school may wish to consider having a trained designated safeguarding lead permanently on both campuses.

The school has a rigorous health and safety system whereby current policies and records are reviewed annually. Records are kept securely and monitored regularly. There are monthly maintenance checks on the buildings and grounds. All indoor and outdoor play apparatus meet requisite safety standards. The school keeps meticulous records of first aid interventions. Importantly, like all schools in Belgium, the area of welfare, health and safety is also overseen by third party specialist companies.

On both school sites, fire safety equipment is maintained with a clear record on each unit. The exit and evacuation points are labelled throughout the school and fire safety processes are in place to ensure students are accounted for in the event of a fire or drill. The school complies with all local fire safety regulations and rigorous inspections by the authorities take place regularly. A school lock-down procedure is in place and practised.

Both schools keep chemicals used in science and for cleaning locked securely. There is an inventory for both in case of emergency.

The school has a written behaviour policy which details levels of behaviour that can trigger consequences. The behaviour policy is implemented well with very minimal behaviour disruptions observed. Pupils talk positively about the work, the value of the week and what it means. Students have very active approaches to show kindness to others in school,

recently purchasing two friendship benches for the Tervuren campus. Effective policies are in place for the prevention of bullying and positive behaviour management is strongly encouraged. Instances of bullying and other forms of harassment are rare, and the school deals swiftly and effectively with any instances that do occur.

The school ensures a calm environment for learning through promoting good behaviour. There is a strong pastoral element in the school and effective systems are in place to provide students with the support they need. Behaviour in the school is excellent. Expectations are reinforced in the classrooms, with visual reminders and classroom displays encouraging the children to make the right choices. Playtimes are very well supervised. The atmosphere is calm and purposeful. Students feel confident that an adult will help them resolve issues, should they arise.

Students are encouraged to bring healthy snacks and lunch. Each classroom has a microwave to allow the heating of lunch food in the classrooms.

Risk assessments for the school sites, hazardous activities and trips are in place. Buses used for school trips and home to school collection are maintained regularly by local enforcement agencies.

Attendance and punctuality expectations are clear. A system is in place to monitor and follow up instances of repeated absence or persistent lateness.

Indoor and outdoor supervision of students is excellent. This was evidenced by the observation of several teacher and student interactions on the playground that arose due to small incidents occurring.

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

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

The board and staff within the school have all undergone rigorous identity and safeguarding checks that meet and exceed UK and local Belgium requirements. The SCR is completed and regularly updated whilst also overseen by at least two members of the Human Resources department. The safeguarding procedures include local and international police checks and these together with identity checks are renewed and reverified every 2 years. The school is aware that in the future it will have to monitor visa requirements for staff coming from outside the EU including the UK.

Staff working with the youngest children as well as some maintenance personnel have undergone medical checks. Safer recruitment procedures are fully in place and all newly recruited staff have their qualifications and references rigorously checked by the school before they can take up their appointment. The school may have to consider risk assessing appointments where not all these details are available before a member of staff needs to begin work.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The school fully meets the requirement for this standard. The premises and accommodation are good overall with many outstanding features. The school makes excellent, creative and student-friendly use of the facilities available to it.

The school buildings and sport facilities provide a green and stimulating environment which enhances the learning experiences of students. Outdoor facilities are excellent, as there is an abundance of play spaces for students with a variety of natural and man-made activities. At both campuses there are large outside natural spaces for children to relax in shaded and sunny areas and socialise with peers. Outdoor sports facilities are available at the Waterloo campus with a multi-purpose sports area utilised by the children.

Both campuses have a large indoor sports hall which includes climbing equipment that is externally checked and certified by local enforcement agencies. The sports hall on the Waterloo site is an immense multi-purpose space used at the time of inspection as an exam hall. With its retractable seating, it becomes an auditorium used for whole-school assemblies and theatrical productions.

The school perimeter on both campuses is secure. There are safe on-site entry and exit areas for students, parents and staff. On the Waterloo site, however, those with reduced mobility would be restricted to ground floor spaces only. Access control and security on both campuses is excellent.

The classroom environments are welcoming with good ventilation. Large windows, fitted with appropriate locks for safety allow the circulation of air during the warmer months, and, in some classrooms, skylights are fitted. Corridors are well-lit and allow for efficient and safe movement around the school. Classrooms contain age and stage appropriate furniture for all children. Some of the classroom areas are quite small, but space is well utilised. They are well equipped with IT and other teaching aids.

Specialist teaching rooms and libraries are of a good standard. The Waterloo campus is moving to an online library borrowing service in the secondary school to expand their range of non-fiction books for students.

There are age-appropriate washroom facilities in the school which are located very close to the classrooms for the youngest students. These facilities are separate to staff facilities, both of which have clear signs. The changing facilities are clearly separated for boys and girls near to the sports hall. Drinking water is freely available on both sites.

Corridors are wide and generally uncluttered. Movement inside the school is calm and orderly, with the corridor areas allowing for fluid movement of students and ease of

passage. There are no obvious hazards, security problems, or significant lapses in hygiene. Cameras are located at points around the campus and there is 24-hour security on site. Fire alarms, surveillance and emergency equipment are installed throughout the campus and regularly checked.

Parents especially appreciate the green and spacious grounds around the campuses. These are maintained to a high quality by onsite maintenance teams and external companies.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information provided by the school to parents, carers and others meet the standard required for BSO.

The name and address of the school and the identity and contact details of all key leadership staff and the Board of Directors is easy to locate online and freely available from the school itself. The school website is clear and easy to navigate. The school admissions policy and procedures are clear and easy to find on the school's websites.

School policies, although not listed on the website in their entirety, are emailed to all parents at the start of the school year and parents are asked to acknowledge their receipt. Prospective parents can request copies of the school policies with ease.

Parents receive regular information regarding the progress of their child at the school. Two detailed reports are compiled and sent during the school year and parents are invited to two parent-teacher afternoons. Parents were at pains to repeatedly stress their appreciation of the availability and accessibility of all school staff from leadership to teachers. This led to parents feeling they were always able to troubleshoot problems and be aware of school events, news from the day. They appreciated too that information related to their child was communicated promptly and clearly.

The school works hard to educate parents as to how the school functions. A parent-student handbook is issued to all parents and students at the start of the year. This communicates a large amount of descriptive and explanatory information which effectively ensures parents are aware of both UK educational structures and processes developed within the school. Parents particularly valued the information disseminated at points of Key Stage transition.

Clear signs, notice boards and displays around the school further cement a clear transmission of information from school. A panel of parents were unanimous in their praise of the clarity, speed and comprehensiveness of the information they received about the school and the progress of their children.

The school might consider creating a page within the website specifically dedicated to the display of collected policies. This would aid quick reference to policies while also contributing to the availability of information about the school to prospective parents.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school's procedures for handling complaints fully meets the standard.

The school has produced a clear and detailed complaints policy which sets out the procedure by which parents can raise their complaints with an expectation their concern will be dealt with promptly and appropriately. The procedure consists of three distinct stages: informal resolution by the teacher of section leader; a formal complaint and resolution by the Executive Leadership; and, finally, if the complaint is not resolved, it would be heard at a panel hearing presided by the chair of the school board and supplemented by an independent sitting member unrelated to the school hearing. The school finds that most complaints are settled at the initial informal stage and there has never been recourse to the panel stage.

Complaints from within school directed at leadership are anticipated to be resolved informally, but staff are advised to proceed directly to Stage 3 if required.

The Complaints Policy does not appear on the school website, but it is sent to all parents at the start of the school year. Parents unanimously agreed that they were aware of the policy for raising complaints. They also acknowledged that the accessibility of teachers and leadership rendered resort to the policy as unnecessary whenever they had felt the need for clarification or explanation on any matter.

It is noteworthy that the school also has a comprehensive whistleblower policy encouraging the school community to report wrongdoing in a responsible and confidential manner.

12. Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school fully meets the BSO standard and is judged to be excellent.

The executive headteacher is a leader whose commitment and devotion to the school is inspirational. The senior leadership team, which is highly experienced, is fully supported by the school board. The close collaboration between the school board and senior leadership team drives the school forwards with a constant focus on the quality of education. The executive headteacher and the chair of the board are in almost daily contact discussing strategy development and risk management. Other board members have direct responsibility for safeguarding and reviewing all the school's policies.

The school operates and thrives on a clearly articulated vision which is genuinely shared by the whole school community. Its aim is to provide inclusive, high-quality English language education based on strong positive values that promote responsible global citizenship and tolerance for human diversity. The UK curriculum, the focus on global perspectives and the cohesive family ethos of the school have clearly translated this vision into the everyday reality of the school.

The school has been successfully led through a series of organisational changes and the school's growing popularity as an English medium international school is leading to further expansion and potential for greater whole school improvement.

The quality of education is very good and has many excellent features. The school leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of their school well. They value the processes of school evaluation. The school enjoys opportunities for organisational learning through its accreditation to the Council of International Schools and the Council of British International Schools. The ISF leadership and management team also participates in termly best practice meetings with the many international schools in the Brussels region. Their self-evaluation for this BSO inspection was rigorous and offered inspectors an outstanding analysis of the school.

The leadership and management teams, including those in finance and administration, have created a safe, secure, happy and stimulating environment in which learning can thrive. Performance management and professional development are central to the implementation of the school's relentless focus on improvement and the highest standards for its students. The personal and professional development of staff is promoted and encouraged at all times. There is a growing team of middle-leaders who make a strong contribution to the school's development plan and its implementation. They are fully part of the school's quality assurance systems.

There is much evidence that the family community ethos of the school owes much to the compassionate style of leadership and management and this is also an immense strength of the school.