



Inspection report

King's Oak School

Bucharest

Romania

Date
Inspection

12th – 14th June 2017
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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 covers 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, the whole of the first day and much of the second day were spent in classrooms with the pupils and teachers. All teachers were observed and many learning walks took place during the visit. School documentation and policies were analysed and pupil data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the head, the senior staff, teachers, other school staff, representatives of the board of administration, parents and groups of pupils. The team was in school on three days.

The team was Dr Mark Evans (lead) and Sue Croft.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

King's Oak School, Bucharest meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

King's Oak British International School (King's Oak) is a good school with outstanding features. It provides a high quality of education and excellent care. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is outstanding. Parents, staff and students are very supportive of the school.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths:

- The school has made significant progress over the last few years;
- It is improving standards in all aspects, especially in meeting pupils' individual academic, social and personal needs.
- The multicultural nature of the school is embraced and valued: the pupils benefit from it;
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding;
- There is strong, focussed and effective leadership by the headteacher and her able senior management team;
- Some teaching is outstanding - engaging, briskly paced, humorous and with a clear emphasis on independent learning;
- Provision in Early Years is outstanding and is a particular strength;
- Throughout the school, there are positive and trusting relationships, upon which the provision of education and care are built;
- Policy and practice of health and safety are very strong;
- Plans for developing the school are ambitious and increasingly well considered;
- Parents are very supportive of the school and embrace the ethos wholeheartedly.

3.2 Points for improvement

Whilst not required by regulation, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

1. Improve the quality of teaching further so that all is as good as the best, for example by:
 - a) making opportunities to spread the excellent teaching practices throughout the school
 - b) ensuring the presence of two teachers in each room is used to maximum benefit in all classes
 - c) further embedding the PSHE programme
 - d) guaranteeing that differentiation is always closely allied to personalised learning, and does not inadvertently cap pupils' achievements.
2. Take the opportunity to refresh the aims of the school, as it prepares to expand to become an all-through school, for example by consulting parents, pupils and other stakeholders
3. Further develop the role of middle managers to support even more effectively the leadership of the school

4. The context of the school

Full name of school/college	King's Oak British International School				
Address	72, Petre Aurelian Strada Green Lakkes Bucharest				
Telephone number	+40 213 803 535				
Fax number	+40 213 803 535				
Website	www.kingsoakschool.ro				
Email address	reception@kingsoakschool.ro				
Head	Mrs Susan Eriksson				
Chairman of Board of Governors	Mr Danu Temelie				
Age range	6 months - 13 years				
Total number of pupils	122	Boys	64	Girls	58
Numbers by age	0-2 years	20	11-16 years	11	
	3-5 years	27	16-18 years	0	
	5-11 years	64	18+ years	0	
Total number of part-time children	0				

King's Oak British International School (King's Oak) is a not-for-profit organisation, operating under Romanian Law as 'the Association of the International School for Primary Education'. It was established in 1994 by a group of parents to provide an international nursery. It is co-educational, non-selective and a secular school.

The school's aims are to provide children with the skills to "discover their unique potential and to shine with confidence, to go into the world as resourceful, aspirational, tolerant and creative individuals who can play their part in society".

Over the last three years, the school has undergone a great deal of change. The previous headteacher and the senior teacher in Key Stage (KS) 1 left the school in the academic year 2014-15. The then newly appointed deputy headteacher managed the school until the end of the academic year. In September 2015, the current headteacher was appointed.

There have been many changes to the curriculum and school organisation since then, including:

- rebranding of the school as King's Oak British International
- introduction of English National curriculum
- introduction of standardised assessments for KS2
- introduction of half termly teacher assessments in literacy and numeracy
- opening of a creche and KS3

4.1 British nature of the school

The British nature of King's Oak is evident.

The language of instruction is English. 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 majority of the staff are UK trained and qualified. Most of the other staff hold qualifications recognised by the DfE.

The school's appearance including classrooms, displays and uniforms mirror those found in UK schools. It is organised according to pastoral structures and nomenclature found in UK schools. The house system is well established with children taking a keen interest in the house points during assemblies, house competitions and sporting activities. There is a student council with elected representatives.

The school encourages the children to support local and international charities both UK and European-based (e.g. Guide dogs for the Blind, Jeans for Genes). It is working towards the eco-award. Whenever possible, children take part in British competitions (e.g. Primary Maths Challenge). They enter COBIS competitions for British schools overseas.

Most children at the end of Year 7 usually transfer to other British schools in Bucharest. Parents are committed to following a British education, in English, for their children. King's Oak is a member of the British Romanian Chamber of Commerce and has close links with the British Embassy. Communication to parents and staff is in English.

The school follows the Early Years Foundation Stage document and the National Curriculum of England at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 for literacy and numeracy and refer to the recommended outcomes and skills in the foundation subjects.

This ensures that the international parents can be sure that their children could join a school following the British system anywhere worldwide without being disadvantaged. Time allocations for subjects meet and often exceed the recommended guidelines.

Children learn about famous British inventors and memorable people as part of their topic work. Assessments, both standardised and diagnostic are based on the UK national standards. Standardised assessments of pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3 are benchmarked using externally verified standardised scores. Every class in the main school has one native British speaking teacher and one Romanian trained. Within the nursery, following UK best practice, every child has a key worker.

Performance management, monitoring of teaching and learning, staff target setting and review meetings are based on best UK practice and DfE model policies.

The school is a member of the Bucharest Primary group and Early Years Group and shares good practice with other international schools. King's Oak links with other schools for continuous professional development (CPD), bringing trainers from the UK to Bucharest.

Extra -curricular activities and clubs are important in the life of the school and are in line with UK best practice. The school marks Remembrance Day, selling poppies provided by the British Embassy and laying a school wreath at the Commonwealth war cemetery in Bucharest. They also take part in the Guy Fawkes fireworks event each year and host the British Football School in the summer with links to UK football clubs.

Students in years 6 and 7 had a visit recently from the head of the Political section at the British Embassy Bucharest to support their understanding of citizenship. They have been involved with supporting a soup kitchen and food distribution to the less fortunate in Bucharest at Christmas.

5. Standard 1

The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided King's Oak is good with some outstanding features.

5.1 Curriculum

The curriculum is good, with some outstanding features.

It is broad and balanced, being based on the National Curriculum of England. It gives students experience in a wide range of areas of learning, including linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. It meets and reflects the needs of the diverse community from Bucharest, while promoting a love of learning. It takes into account curriculum and external examination accreditation commonly used in schools within the UK. This enables students to enter, or re-enter the UK educational system at an appropriate level, if they wish to do so.

There is an effective transition programme into school and between classes, including home visits and parental meetings. There is a parent and toddler group, and children and parents within group attend school functions, becoming familiar with school routines before their transition into the school. Every student in Early Years and the Foundation Stage (EYFS) has a key worker.

Staff undertake a transition day at the end of the academic year meet to pass on records and assessment information. Transitions through Foundation Stage to Year 1 and throughout the primary years is carefully handled with transition days planned where staff share assessment information. Joint pupil progress reviews are held in June.

Spanish, Romanian, drama, dance, PE and swimming are taught by specialist teachers. Intensive French is offered in 3 ability levels as a before school activity and 25% of the pupils take up this option. Other enrichment and challenge activities are developing, including through the Primary Maths Challenge, Romanian Maths Olympiad, COBIS literacy, art and poetry competitions, and local art and poetry competitions.

Year 7 follow an appropriate curriculum as a continuation to the scheme within primary. They have a specialist teacher for history and geography. Teachers across the school swap roles for the teaching of music and coding. Science is taught in collaboration with Year 6.

There is full-time supervised education for students of compulsory school age, meeting local regulations. The principal language of instruction is English. The school has a written curriculum policy which is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work. The policy is implemented effectively, enabling students to acquire skills in speaking, listening, literacy

and numeracy. There is a curriculum policy and this is backed by a topic overview for EYFS, KS1, 2 and 3, a calculation policy, and literacy planning overview of fiction and non-fiction writing.

The curriculum is suitably enhanced by cross-curricular links and trips. There is an appropriate cultural programme for non-native speakers of Romanian: it is engaging and the pupils enjoy the activities, but it is not entirely rigorous in terms of learning outcomes.

There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs: these are well attended by children across the age range.

Where needed, children with very specific needs are given additional individual input by the school psychologist. Differentiation within class enables children with additional needs to access the curriculum at their developmental level and enable them to make good or better progress. Sometimes planned differentiation of the curriculum is not sufficiently flexible to make this progress consistently excellent. In a few lessons, pupils who are in the lower attaining groups are not always sufficiently challenged.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

Teaching and assessment are consistently at least good; some teaching is excellent.

The quality and effectiveness of teaching is good: in the EYFS and in other parts of the school, it is often excellent. The teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge, and make sound progress according to their ability. In the best lessons, there is a strong emphasis on encouraging pupils to be independent. They increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects that are taught. Teachers encourage pupils to apply intellectual, physical and creative effort, to show a real interest in the work that they are doing, and to think and learn for themselves.

Lessons are well planned, teaching methods are effective, suitable activities are used and class time is managed effectively. Teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, cultural background, needs (including the needs of EAL learners) and prior attainments of the pupils. They ensure these are taken into account in the planning of lessons. They also demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter they teach. Teachers encourage pupils to behave responsibly.

The classrooms in EYFS are organised in such a way that pupils can go from one activity to another on their own or join with others. This allows them to pursue first steps in fine motor control, mathematics and English, for example. The outdoor areas are used to very good effect. Activities inside and out are organised by the teachers, and encourage questioning and learning.

Staff:pupil ratios are very high, so the pupils have easy access to their teachers for support, opinion and help. For example in a year 3 mathematics class, pupils had a girls vs boys competition. The teacher listened to the answers given, and questioned them about their answers and how they came to them. In a year 1 class, pupils participated in a teacher-led activity to reinforce their knowledge of odd and even numbers, and then developed the work in small groups.

Classroom resources are of an excellent quality, quantity and range. They are used effectively.

There is a suitable framework in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly. The information from this assessment is utilised effectively to plan teaching, so that pupils can make maximum progress. The framework in place helps to evaluate pupils' performance by reference to the school's aims.

Assessment and the use of assessment data to plan activities relevant for pupils is an integral part of learning and teaching: it is fast becoming a strength throughout the school. There is a detailed assessment policy and timetable of assessments throughout the year. All pupils in primary and secondary have targets set for them to challenge, and these are discussed at pupil progress meetings.

Pupils are used to reviewing their learning and progress towards targets: in EYFS they have learning journals and these are used on a weekly basis to inform planning and adult initiated activities. Tracking sheets for mathematics, writing and reading are used and updated half termly, whilst progress in phonics is tracked weekly. Pupil progress meetings are held termly for all, with the senior leadership team. Progress indicators are used annually for both PTM and PTE.

The styles of teaching, learning and assessment used at King's Oak equip pupils very well with the knowledge and skills necessary to enter (or re-enter) the UK educational system at an appropriate level.

5.3 Standards achieved by students

The standards achieved by students at King's Oak are good with some excellent features.

2015/6 was the first year that standardised assessments in literacy and numeracy were undertaken in KS2, and 95% of pupils were either at or above age-related expectations in numeracy and literacy. In 2016-17, the results were also excellent. The vast majority of pupils made more than expected progress.

Six pupils qualified for the Romanian National final for pupils studying French as an additional language. Standards of achievement across the school are high, with at least good progress being made by most students. Pupils identified as not making the expected progress are targeted for extra support, though this is more common for those attaining average or lower scores.

King's Oak is a non-selective school and where possible, the school admits children with additional learning needs. The school psychologist evaluates their needs to ensure they can be met within school. These pupils have a dedicated one-to-one assistant and a detailed therapy and learning programme. There is a fully equipped sensory room which is used by learning support for pupils with individual education plans.

The coordinator for pupils with additional learning needs (AENCO) plans a programme for working individually with children. This is shared and reinforced by work undertaken in class. She also provides pupil profiles for teachers to enable them to support effectively. Pupils with learning needs also made excellent progress in literacy and numeracy

More able mathematicians in KS2 undertake numeracy studies with older year groups and some work with KS3 pupils. Able linguists are entered for French Delph examinations and attain well above the levels expected for their age.

6. Standard 2

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is excellent: the diverse nature of the pupils' backgrounds is embraced and used as a resource and a driver for enrichment.

The school enables pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. Pupils display notable self-confidence from an early age because they are encouraged to develop their self-esteem and self-awareness in all they do. Teachers in EYFS encourage them to do their best at all times. They give positive and constructive praise, liberally. A love of learning is embedded in all aspects of school life and self-confidence is well supported. For example, in one EY class, a pupil was homesick and crying at the start of the day: the teacher sat with her, playing with her in the sand tray. The girl then went across the room to another teacher in the class, and by first break, was happily outside with another child, playing alongside one another, while the teacher went back and forth from the classroom, monitoring her well-being.

In another example of great self-confidence, a reception class pupil explained to the class how she learnt about adding on, using a play castle with knights and ladies to explain.

It enables pupils to distinguish right from wrong and encourages them to respect the law. It is effective in ensuring that pupils behave responsibly, show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life. The school has a consistent, approach setting age-appropriate school expectations: the pupils are involved devising their own golden rules or class charter. Parents reported they are happy with the overall policy of no tolerance of bad behaviour. They cited the meaningfulness of punishments like not being allowed to use a bicycle in the playground for a day.

The school provides pupils with a broad general knowledge of the responsibilities of citizenship in the host country, the UK and internationally, at an age-appropriate level. It helps pupils acquire an appreciation of and respect for Romanian and other cultures, in a manner that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions. Most classes are a noticeable mixture of nationalities and in many, teachers make a point of encouraging pupils to be proud of their nationalities by displaying their own flags. Pupils are often given the opportunity to explain to others about their customs, but always emphasising they are 'all one family'. Pupils are happy to continue saying *good morning* and *good evening* to the teacher in their first language, long after their English language is fluent.

Cultural development is very effective. For example, in a year 4 and 5 class, pupils were learning about Romania, looking at a slide show on the white board. Many referenced what they were seeing, (forests, churches monasteries, for example) to areas they had been to in their own countries. The others listened to them, and bounced ideas back and forth about their own experiences. Romanian pupils study their own language, while expatriates study the culture, for example decorating plates and doing traditional embroidery. Pupils and parents contribute to the school's community life with the 'Light into Europe' being a big part of the school.

At the same time, the school promotes general knowledge and understanding of modern British life, including UK attitudes towards tolerance, democracy, respect for freedom of expression and other human rights.

The school funds a guide dog and the organisation brings in puppies for the pupils to meet. Two members of staff also have guide dogs which they are training; these have also been brought in to school for the children to see. Pupils also filled shoe boxes for local orphans and underprivileged children: they reported enjoying writing their own note to enclose with the donation, for the receiving child. The school has also been involved with International Women Day, and run a book sale.

7. Standard 3

The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The welfare, health and safety of the students are excellent.

The school has prepared and implemented an effective written policy to prevent bullying. There are also successful written policies that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. For example, there are written policies relating to the health and safety of pupils on activities outside the school, and to promote good behaviour amongst pupils. The latter sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving. Others include safeguarding, risk assessments, trips and behaviour. These are written to be in line with best UK practice.

There is strong regard given to health and safety, and the school conforms to local regulatory requirements, including those of fire safety. There is an appropriate written policy on first aid which is implemented suitably.

There are dedicated staffing structures, ample resources and robust policies and procedures to ensure pupils at King's Oak are safe and happy. They are reviewed regularly, in light of evolving pupil need and best UK practice. The overall structure is very effective at meeting the needs of pupils: academic progress is very good. Focussed meetings allow the school to ensure pupils' needs are met and that each pupil is being provided with the appropriate support to achieve their full potential. School staff are deployed suitably to ensure the proper supervision of pupils. Written records of sanctions imposed upon pupils are maintained for serious disciplinary offences, which are very rare.

An admission register and an attendance register are kept up-to-date, both of which conform to local regulatory requirements.

Safeguarding is a key aspect of inset and induction, and there is an e-safety week each year, with relevant information published for parents. The school is fully compliant with all Romanian fire and safety permits, and carries out regular fire and earthquake drills. There are good links with the US and Israeli embassies who review safety at the school. The local police reviewed the school recently and praised both safety and security.

All staff have compulsory health and safety training and fire safety training annually, with a 3-monthly update in staff meetings. They also take food hygiene courses, online. There is a fully qualified nurse full-time in school; there is a comprehensive First Aid policy and all staff are trained in first aid. The school's child protection team has two members trained as designated officers. All relevant records are kept securely.

There is a competent team of cleaners: and the school is well looked after and cleaned thoroughly.

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

The school is not-for-profit organisation, operating under Romanian Law as the Association of the International School for Primary Education. It was established in 1994 by a group of parents. Recruitment procedures ensure that only teachers with the correct qualifications to deliver a British curriculum are employed. In-house and external professional development training focusses on best practice and safeguarding. All staff and volunteers have safeguarding checks and all teachers have undergone prohibition checks.

The school prides itself on a strong collaborative culture: Romanian and UK staff form teaching teams, working together to achieve effective education for all pupils. The school has a high staffing ratio with two qualified teachers per class. Although the maximum number of pupils per class is 20, most classes actually have between 12 and 15. There is a full-time nurse and a non-class based psychologist. In EYFS, there are two teaching assistants in addition to the 6 qualified teachers.

All staff have up to date job descriptions and have an annual cycle of performance management. Prior to appointment the school undertakes health and psychological tests and requests original qualifications. Appropriate checks on suitability to work with children, including a British enhanced criminal record check where applicable, are made by the school in respect of all members of staff appointed. There are appropriate checks in Romania and in overseas countries where the person lived, obtaining certificates of good conduct from the relevant embassies or police forces, where practical. There is no evidence that any member of staff or volunteer carries out work at school in contravention of local, overseas or British disqualification, prohibition or restriction.

The school does not work with any external providers currently. All members of the board have undertaken police checks. To allow the school to be registered with ARACIP (the Romanian education authority), all are also checked by the ministry. The school is registered with ARACIP for all educational ages within Bucharest.

The school keeps and made available to inspectors, a comprehensive list of all staff and volunteers who currently work in the school, or who have worked in the school, showing the dates when they commenced and ceased working in the school. It also keeps and made available for inspectors, records of all checks completed in respect of staff and volunteers who currently work at the school or who have worked recently at the school.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are good, but have some limitations.

The school premises are maintained well and they provide a safe and conducive environment for learning. They are compact and not overwhelming for younger pupils. The school is inspected regularly by independent consultants to ensure their safety and compliance with all legal requirements. The premises are clean and regularly checked.

The school is situated in a gated community and its external doors are controlled by a card system. All doors have CCTV cameras. The school is aware that the admin office is not well sited, being deep inside the building: as part of the re-organisation, this will be rectified.

Classrooms and corridors are well presented. Displays support and celebrate pupils' learning. Most are spacious, though one is small. The EYFS area is well designed to support all areas of learning. The whole school playground areas are well designed and encourage a range of play activities, although boys playing football take up a significant amount of space at break times.

The school is easily accessible for the pupils, being a short walk from the front gate to the main building. Most stairways (not all) are fitted with handrails, and nonslip mats are used when it has been raining and snowing. A specialist snow removal company is employed to ensure there is safe access to the school. King's Oak does not provide for pupils with poor mobility although there is a lift in the school. The school happily rearranges classes if necessary, to accommodate any pupil with temporary difficulties. The nurse has a well-equipped room with a surgical bed, but a lower bed would be more appropriate for the younger students.

The school has food delivered for lunch time, and pupils order what they enjoy. They can also bring in their own packed lunch. The food is served by staff who have certificates in food hygiene. Next to the dining room is a kitchen area with facilities to clean up after. Most of the classrooms have their own sinks and kitchen surfaces, so play-time water and snacks are easily dispensed. The water in the school is drinkable, but all classes are also provided with water coolers: all pupils have named drinking mugs and are expected to bring a named bottle from home. Water is supplied to the students at break and lunch times in jugs, which they dispense themselves.

Educational resources are purchased both locally and from the UK. The school has already identified a lack of ICT hardware to enrich and extend pupils' learning in their area. There is similarly an identified need to extend the facilities for teaching science and DT effectively in the senior part of the school.

At the end of 2017, King's Oak will expand into new buildings, creating more classrooms and dedicated specialist teaching areas, a gymnasium, on site kitchens and a dining room. There will also be a specialist provision centre for children with additional needs.

Security of the school site is strong. Colour-coded name tags are used to identify visitors, staff and parents. Access to the school is well controlled. Fire and evacuation procedures are clear and practiced regularly.

There is no reason to believe that the water supply does not meet local regulatory requirements. Drainage is appropriate for hygienic purposes and for the disposal of waste water and surface water, which is a common occurrence, given the weather conditions. There is no evidence that load bearing structures are not built with due regard to local regulatory requirements. The buildings provide resistance to penetration by wind, sand and dust, and have regard to temperature control (cooling). There is sufficient access for safe emergency evacuation, including for those students with special needs.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

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

The school's address, telephone number, and link to the website page are available on the school website. Information regarding the board's role is limited, but they can be contacted via the school office. The school hosts and is an active member of the Bucharest Early Years and Primary groups where teachers meet to share good practice, which parents are supportive of.

In general at present, parents are happy to be involved with learning-related activities, but tend not to join in social events. The school/parent relationship is being gradually developed well, for example in supporting the newly formed Friends association. More than 90% of children had someone from their family attend at the recent art gallery; parent consultation evenings are well attended with over 95% present last time. A recent 'stay and play' event in the nursery had an attendance rate of 96%.

Parents are now kept actively informed of their child's progress and learning. There are regular updates on activities within school, which are communicated weekly by email. Because the school is small, parents frequently discuss issues informally either before or after school with teachers, and use email as the main method of communication with them.

Each class publishes a comprehensive weekly email to parents. Both the headteacher and the deputy greet parents daily at the front door: parents are aware that there is an open-door policy both formally and informally.

There is a comprehensive procedure for inducting new pupils and parents into the school when they join the nursery: parents commented how helpful this has been to them. There is an active Parent and Toddler group who often join the school fully, as a result of coming to these sessions.

The school now undertakes a parental survey each academic year, which showed that 100% are happy with the school overall. The two areas of most concern were school uniform and whether the pupils work hard enough: both are being addressed.

11. *Standard 7*

The school's procedure for handling complaints

King's Oak has a clear policy that establishes a procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints relating to any provision of facilities or services provided. It is transparent, open and effective. It has due regard to local regulatory requirements and circumstances. There are clear avenues for parents to express concern over any issue and these are outlined in the handbook for parents. They aim to ensure any concerns are dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence. The procedure confirms that all concerns and complaints are looked into thoroughly, fairly and in a timely manner.

In reality, there have been no official complaints in the last year and only 3 times when parents contacted the headteacher directly with a concern: none progressed further.

The complaints procedure is sent to all registered parents, who can also contact the board direct via the office. If a complaint was escalated to a point where an outside person was required, the school has arranged to use their external HR consultant.

12. *Standard 8*

The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable.

13. *Standard 9* Leadership and management of the school

Leadership and management are good: the vision and direction provided by the headteacher and the senior leadership team are excellent.

There is a very positive relationship between the headteacher, the senior staff and the school's board. The latter are successful in securing, supporting and developing sufficient high quality staff and ensuring their suitability to work with children. They also provide opportunities for regular professional development.

The board supports the school with enthusiasm. They provide appropriate policies and procedures, review them suitably for effectiveness, and ensure sufficiency of resources through robust financial management. They see it as important to maintain a positive and productive partnership with the staff, parents and friends of the school. In this respect, they try to be available, but communication is not always as effective as it could be. Similarly, the vision for the school is not entirely apparent to parents.

The board of administration are very effective in their focus on financial and business development. They hold the school to account very ably for the staffing provision and financial management of the school. There is less clarity about how to hold the school to account for educational excellence, however.

The headteacher provides strong, effective and thoughtful leadership and direction for the school. She focusses strongly on the quality of education and the care of the pupils. With the able support of the deputy headteacher, she ensures that the school is a positive and constructive place to work. This has already had a significant impact on the quality of learning.

The senior leadership team has started the process of delegating more responsibilities to middle leaders, but this is not yet fully embedded. Further development in this respect, will ensure greater security and sustainability for the school.

Lead by the headteacher, the senior managers are very successful identifying priorities for improvement. They plan well to meet these, and implement decisions effectively, even when there is much to do. The school's self-evaluation document is impressively accurate. The on-going programme of self-evaluation can now be extended to all stakeholders within the school.