



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

**Modern English School
Cairo**

Egypt

Date 25th – 27th February 2019

Inspection 20190225

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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, over 149 lesson observations took place, as well as a series of learning walks. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, and a range of teachers, parents and groups of students. The inspection team were in school for three days.

The lead inspector was Colin Dyson. The team members were Sharron Barr, Craig Halsall, Wayne Howson, Daniel Roberts, Dwight Weir and Andrew Wyeth.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

Modern English School, Cairo meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

Modern English School (MES) Cairo, provides an outstanding quality of education complemented by an outstanding standard of student care.

The quality of learning and teaching is good with significant outstanding features. The outstanding leadership ensures that students thrive. Parents fully support the vision and direction of the school. They recognise the excellent contribution the school makes towards the development of their children's lives. The school is held in high regard by the wider community and parents. The students are proud to be members of the MES Cairo community and value the opportunities it provides.

3.1 What the school does well

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

- The school successfully create a sense of community, with bonds of friendship and mutual support within a family atmosphere.
- MES Cairo provides an education with academic rigour at its heart and a desire for each student to excel.
- The school successfully provides a quality British style education which promotes independence and the uniqueness of each individual student.
- The hard work, energy and passion of the school board has ensured a high quality and harmonious learning environment.
- The premises are very well maintained, providing spacious accommodation which inspires the learning of all students.
- Staff provide high quality pastoral support and are very effective in identifying and supporting students' needs. As a result, students feel very safe.
- The commitment of the owners to support staff during transition into Egypt and whilst in the country is a strength.
- Tenacious students who are determined to learn and are passionate both about their school and the subjects they study.
- The leadership and management are highly effective in ensuring MES Cairo is an efficient school providing high quality outcomes.
- There are high standards of behaviour and these are rigorously maintained across the campus.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

- Through continued and effective monitoring identify that teaching which requires further support to ensure it meets the school's high expectations (as recognised in the school's development plans).
- Provide further opportunities for active learning and student choice within lessons.
- Having implemented assessment for learning (AFL) now ensure it is consistently applied to effectively meet learners needs within the classroom and through formative judgements on outcomes.
- Through the strategic monitoring of whole school formative assessment data; ensure data is more systematically embedded into the school's improvement cycle.

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4. The context of the school

Full name of School	Modern English School, Cairo				
Address	South of Police Academy New Cairo PO Box 5, Tagamoa, Khamis, 11835 Egypt				
Telephone Number/s	+20226189600				
Fax Number	+20225379400				
Website Address	www.mescairo.com				
Key Email Address/s	mescairo@mescairo.com				
Headteacher/Principal	Nicola Singleton				
Chair of Board of Governors/Proprietor	Sawsan Dajani				
Age Range	3 – 18 years				
Total number of students	2,192	Boys	1,158	Girls	1,034
Numbers by age	0-2 years	0	12-16 years	803	
	3-5 years	401	17-18 years	51	
	6-11 years	937	18+ years	0	
Total number of part-time children	None				

Modern English school Cairo was established in October 1990 as a British curriculum international school. From a school with just 27 students, the school has grown to accommodate over 2,200. MES Cairo is an independent school offering international curricula taught by an international, predominantly British staff.

The school is situated in a modern suburb on the eastern fringe of Cairo. In 2000 the school relocated to a purpose-built facility.

The student roll comprises predominantly children of Egyptian nationality.

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The school is required to satisfy Ministry expectations with regards to the delivery of Arabic language, religion and social studies at all levels of studies. All students identified as 'Arab' (the majority) must complete national examinations in these subjects in Year 6 and Years 9 and 12. Key features of the school include the following:

- The school has a clear focus on its mission statement and an unswerving commitment to care for, challenge and inspire every learner.
- Learning opportunities beyond campus are scheduled regularly to contextualise skill development and ensure that learning is exploratory and engaging.
- Across the school all students take compulsory PE and personal social health education.
- On graduation many students extend their learning at top universities across the world: many graduate from top universities in the UK.
- The school celebrates students' achievement alongside sporting, artistic and cultural talent.
- MES Cairo values the performing and visual arts. Students take part in a wide range of musical productions and art exhibitions.
- Students at MES Cairo are provided with the opportunity to take part in a wide range of sporting opportunities including football, volleyball, basketball, netball rugby and swimming.
- The MES Cairo house system encourages the full engagement of students and is highly valued by parents for the contribution it makes to their sons and daughters' lives.
- The school community link with agencies in Cairo are very strong and the school supports a wide range of British community initiatives.
- All teachers have subject and teaching credentials from the UK universities or recognised as legitimate qualifications to teach in the UK.
- The school provides a full school-centred initial teacher training programme (SCITT).
- The NQT programme is comprehensive and aims to replicate the quality of provision accessible by teachers in the UK.
- The school is a fully accredited member of the Council of British International Schools
- The school has successfully developed a mutually respectful relationship with the National Ministry of education, the British Council, exam boards and universities in Cairo and beyond.
- Annual audits by the Ministry of Education (MoE) highlight that the school is compliant to all regulations.

4.1 British nature of the school

MES Cairo prides itself on the British qualities that are clearly reflected throughout the school. The Britishness of the school is highly valued by parents as ‘the best international curriculum’.

- It provides the national curriculum of England.
- GCSE, A-level and Cambridge English examinations are offered.
- British values are clearly displayed throughout the school.
- Year group assemblies cover a variety of UK themes, ranging from British values to aspects of British culture.
- Personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons give due regard to discrimination and inclusion.
- Social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) lessons include consideration of British culture and a wide-ranging understanding of others.
- All lessons (apart from modern foreign languages and the Arabic MoE curriculum) are in English.
- All in-service training (INSET), including that which is on child safeguarding, follows British Schools Overseas (BSO) and Department for Education (DfE) guidelines.
- All staff that are in regulated activities are Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checked or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) (as appropriate, in relation to recent changes in legislation).
- All UK Government guidelines are followed, provided there is no direct conflict with Egyptian law.
- MES Cairo alumni are currently studying at Oxford University, UCL, Imperial College London, University of Sussex, Leeds, Manchester, Bath and Kings College, amongst others.
- MES Cairo celebrates students’ sporting, artistic and cultural talents. All musicals and school productions are in English: annual music productions broaden students’ experience of British culture.
- The school fully supports a range of British community initiatives including the annual Remembrance Day observance and the British Embassy Christmas Carol Concert.
- MES Cairo is a long standing and active member of the British Schools in the Middle East (BSME).

5. Standard 1

The quality of education provided by the school

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

5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is excellent.

The National Curriculum of England provides the framework for teaching and learning for Key Stages (KS)1-4, and A-Level and IB for KS5. The school provides an in-depth, broad and balanced curriculum fulfilling age-related expectations and supported by a range of extra-curricular activities, ensuring that all national requirements are met. The curriculum provides for the academic, moral, physical, creative and social development of students and caters for students who have SEN and EAL needs. The Egyptian Ministry of Education ensures that compliance is met for national requirements. The language of instruction is English.

The school has detailed written key stage curriculum policies which are available to parents and students. This is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work. Planning is a real strength of the school.

Students in Foundation Stage (FS) 1 and 2 follow the EYFS Early Learning Goals. Lessons offer a range of experiences. A commercial scheme is used for the teaching of phonics. The school makes good use of the outside environment, with timetabled opportunities for learning to continue outside the classroom. Across the primary years the curriculum is adapted to include the local context as a starting point. Children in Year 2 have been learning about the geography of China and have compared living in Cairo with living in Beijing.

The school ensures that children with additional needs receive support to help them make appropriate progress.

In KS 2 the school's curriculum is suitable for the ages and attitudes of the students. A clear curriculum policy outlines the purpose and aims of the curriculum as well as coverage and provision. A thoughtfully and collaboratively planned curriculum ensures an adapted National Curriculum meets the students linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological human and social needs. The curriculum policy is supported by appropriate schemes of work and planning. The programme of study places appropriate emphasis on the acquisition of English language skills as well as mathematics and computing. Where appropriate, subjects are taught through cross-curricular links. Provision goes beyond the curriculum requirements with opportunities to appreciate and develop knowledge of local history, geography

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and develop a broader set of skills through the opportunity to engage in curriculum additions such as debate and independent learning.

The primary curriculum is enhanced by specialist teaching provision in Physical Education, Music and Modern Foreign Languages. The inclusion of Arabic language is required by local regulations. The curriculum is further enriched by regular visits and outings, taking full advantage of the extensive range of the opportunities Cairo offers. Students' educational experiences in the broad programme of extra-curricular activities enables them to further develop their interests and skills.

The curriculum reflects the school's aim of enabling students to thrive emotionally, socially, physically, morally and spiritually. Students acquire good speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. Lessons are planned collaboratively and effectively. Good use is made of lesson time ensuring that tasks for the students are varied and demanding. In the best lessons, teachers have clearly reflected on their students' needs and adapted year/ group teaching plans to more successfully ensure each student is appropriately supported.

The curriculum in KS3 is wide and diverse and planned in detail. In addition to the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science students follow courses of study in History, Geography, Arabic, French, Spanish, Art, DT, Drama, PE, Computing (ICT), PSHE and Music. Students are taught in mixed ability groups. Global Perspectives is a skill-based programme and embedded into the curriculum to enhance learning and provide an opportunity to develop transferrable cross-curricular skills. Of necessity the curriculum has been condensed into two years; in Year 9 students begin their IGCSE courses. The curriculum is supported by a varied programme of school trips and visits including representation in overseas BSME competitions.

The curriculum in KS4 is wide and diverse. Students have 21 different IGCSE options from which to choose 6 electives only in the extended tier. All students take at least one science, PE, HRCF and Egyptian MoE curriculum (Arabic, Religion and Social Studies); they are also encouraged to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities such as Model United Nations (MUN) and International Award to ensure balanced academic, social and personal development. The curriculum provides opportunities for students to apply and incrementally develop their intellectual, physical and creative selves and conjure intrinsic motivation.

From their commencement in secondary, the students may choose from three different pathways: a British style A-Level programme, the IB Diploma Programme (IDP) and the American section. In KS5, this inspection was necessarily focused on the A level and IB programme. A wide range of subjects are offered in the British section of the school. The students can choose from 17 subjects and the school has made the decision to run courses despite some quite small numbers, illustrating their determination to meet the needs of their students. The IDP offered also includes a wide range of choices.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching is good with outstanding features. Most lessons were good or better; a significant minority were outstanding.

In FS1, children's progress is very good. The school makes good use of the outside environment, with timetabled opportunities for learning to continue outside the classroom. Most lessons are at least good, with significant numbers outstanding. The learning environment is extremely well equipped, with resources of a high quality used imaginatively in lessons. Both classrooms and the 'pods' around which the classes are situated, offer a range of activities, for example Numicon was used well in maths activities. There is an emphasis on language development; most children have English as a second language and make excellent progress in developing their English language skills. The environment is rich with language, and activities offer opportunities for the children to work collaboratively. Although many children will only have started to learn English on entry to the school, almost all converse effectively in English, including with each other at playtimes. Behaviour is excellent; children learn to take responsibility for their behaviour, with children moving their picture up and down on behaviour charts.

Most teachers show an excellent understanding of EYFS teaching and use a variety of methods in their teaching to ensure all children make at least good progress. Classroom assistants have been well trained, with timetabled CPD lessons and opportunities for external qualifications.

Children's progress is recorded using Classroom Monitor against Early Learning Goals and teachers have regular meetings with senior staff to review progress. Interventions are put in place where needed, with a designated LDD teacher for Early Years, as well as the Head of EYFS.

In Years 1 and 2 the quality of teaching overall is at least good and frequently outstanding. In the best lessons, there is a range of activities that allow children to make significant progress through exciting tasks that encourage independent learning. Children are able to select from a range of tasks that challenge them and extend their learning. In other lessons, teaching is carefully planned to support learning, but tasks are sometimes too limited and prevent children from making as much progress as possible.

Lesson planning is detailed, and plans are annotated daily to ensure that activities are adapted so that every child is suitably challenged. Children receive excellent verbal feedback on their work and in most classes can articulate what their next step targets are and what they need to do to improve. Most classrooms, including specialist rooms, make excellent use of displays to support learning and to give children a range of strategies to use when needing support.

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The quality of teaching of the local curriculum of Arabic, Islamic, Christianity and social studies is good with a consistent approach to lesson planning and delivery. The quality of teaching of specialist subjects such as computing, music and PE is excellent, lessons are active, challenging and engaging and children demonstrate a love of learning in these lessons.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. In most lessons' children are actively engaged and follow instructions quickly and efficiently.

In KS2 teaching and assessment are mostly good with significant examples of outstanding teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge, explaining new learning well and often use questioning effectively to consolidate students' understanding and extend their thinking. In the best lessons, the pace is brisk, and teachers have high expectations of students learning and behaviour. Centralized and collaborative planning, supported by effective use of ICT, ensures high quality and consistent lesson planning that further ensures efficient transition between tasks that meets students' needs.

Teachers provide adequate time for practice and to embed the students' knowledge, understanding and skills securely. For example, in science students discussed and evaluated, what reflection was before testing their hypothesis through practical investigation.

Teachers provide students with effective feedback, in line with the school's assessment policy, about what they can do to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. Many students demonstrated how assessments in their books helped them to achieve their next steps in learning. Teachers consistently expect and encourage all students to work with positive attitudes so that they can apply themselves and make strong progress. The use of discussion groups and well-structured question and answer sessions supports the students' acquisition of language skills and develops personal confidence and self-esteem. Effective discussion and questioning were evident across most subject areas. In IT, students demonstrated a high level of problem solving as they investigated coding.

Teaching assistants are effective. They work well in partnership with teachers, so students have access to a broad range of learning support. In the best examples, teaching assistants were confident and effective in supporting any low-level behaviour issues. The school's teaching assistant training programme is effective and ensures consistency of provision across the primary school.

Students are encouraged to investigate aspects of learning independently and to articulate their outcomes to others. Respect for their ideas and the ability of adults to listen to and engage with them also played a big part in the best teaching outcomes. There was excellent use of iPads and collaborative discussion as students carried out group research on the history of the toothbrush.

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There was a strong correlation in the most effective lessons, with teachers who had adapted plans to reflect closely the needs of their individual students: outcomes were enhanced. This supported a good level of personalisation which ensured tasks and activities were appropriate and provided effective challenge. This close match between the student needs and the adaption of tasks successfully developed the interest and depth of the students' learning.

The quality of teaching and learning in KS3 is good with some outstanding lessons observed. In other outstanding lessons, there was a common theme of strong leadership where behaviour for learning was excellent. In an outstanding lesson in English, students were challenged with the leadership of the lesson through a Socratic seminar end of unit assessment. In the best lessons active learning was very apparent where students were challenged through differentiated tasks and constant responsive feedback. In other subjects collaborative planning, supported by effective use of ICT, ensured outstanding and consistent lesson planning. This was a real strength across KS3.

Marking and feedback in exercise books is inconsistent within and across some departments. The use of Google Classrooms is extensive and used effectively as a means of setting homework tasks in some subjects. In the Google Classrooms which were observed there were some excellent examples of teacher feedback and ongoing dialogue between student and teacher.

The quality of teaching in KS4 is generally good with some outstanding, particularly in English, drama and history. Lessons that were less than good were too teacher-led and lacked AFL or differentiated activities or approaches. Students appear very confident, knowledgeable and focused on tasks when they are allowed to carry on with independent and group work.

Students generally work well in lessons and respond well to teachers and their peers. Very little off task behaviour was seen. Effective formative marking in English and history clearly outlined what students have done well and things they need to do in order to improve. Questioning was frequently a feature in many lessons. When used well, teachers were able to skilfully assess student's knowledge and move on.

In KS5, most lessons were good or better, and many were outstanding. The teachers used small class sizes effectively to challenge and support students ensuring that sound progress was made. The teaching enabled students to gain new knowledge and make good progress each according to their ability. Their understanding and skills develop well across the subjects offered and this is confirmed by the school's results when compared to UK averages for A Level and world averages for the IB.

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5.3 Standards achieved by students

Academic attainment combined with an excellent condensed curriculum, good and outstanding teaching and high-quality care means that the standards at the school are very high. Overall, the progress achieved by students in all phases of the school is well above UK expectations.

Students in the EYFS are assessed on entry. The school has implemented an effective process for monitoring and measuring students' progress against the Early Learning Goals. Nearly all students make good progress, and many achieve a 'good level of development' from a much lower starting point, as some have low English language on entry. Teachers observe and record students' progress effectively, as they work and play. Regular meetings between staff focus on the evaluation of achievement evidence. By the end of EYFS, most children are working at the expected standard.

Standards in KS1 are significantly higher than expected with most children working at age-related expectations. The percentage of children working above expected levels is higher than in the UK. Trends over time show that children make rapid progress to achieve high standards in the core curriculum of English, maths and science and notably in PE and music. Children who join KS1 without having attended FS in the school tend to have lower attainment on entry. The school works effectively to support these children to ensure they make accelerated progress and by the end of the key stage, the majority of these children are attaining at the same high levels as their peers.

Work in books shows the children are working at particularly high standards with their writing – as there are plentiful opportunities for the children to write at length across the curriculum.

In KS2, student performance is assessed against National Curriculum Levels. Attainment levels and other grades are routinely recorded and reported to parents in all subjects. Data from summative assessment and teacher observations are compared to averages derived from externally accredited UK based assessment benchmarks. The information from these assessments is beginning to impact on lesson planning.

Classroom Monitor has been introduced to support teachers in the effective formative assessment, tracking and reporting of student progress. Teachers, group leaders and phase leaders use data collated by *Classroom Monitor* to inform weekly planning. Scrutiny of schemes of work in all subjects, approaches to delivery, assessment and feedback is suitably uniform throughout each year group, within and between phases. A robust and systematic approach to quality assurances ensures a consistent approach to assessment. Reading was assessed during a guided reading session when the

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teacher considered not only the level of comprehension, but the skills used in describing and appreciating the text. This consistency of practice is attributed to high quality collaboration between teachers coupled with clearly articulated, high expectations lead by key responsibility holders.

Students continue to make good progress across KS3 and 4. Threshold targets are set for students in all subjects. Students learn with enthusiasm and enjoy their lessons. In the best lessons, observed students were actively engaged as independent learners demonstrating the ability to think for themselves.

Data for GCSE, A-Levels and IB show students attainment above UK results, particularly based on a condensed curriculum where students are entered for public exams a year early compared to their UK counterparts and the EAL determinants. Assessment data shows that nearly all students make at least expected progress and significant numbers make above expected progress. The results are consistently and significantly above their challenge grade in KS4 and 5 based on their CAT 4 predication.

School data demonstrates standards achieved are well matched to UK expectations. Headline statistics for external examinations are consistently high amongst students in the British Secondary Section. Academic year 2017/18: IGCSE/GCSE A*-A grades at 32% across English, Maths and all subjects taken (UK 21.4%). Academic year 2017/18: IGCSE/GCSE A*-C grades (pass) at 85% across English, mathematics and all subjects taken (UK 69.2%).

In KS5, the standards achieved by students are above UK averages for A Level and world averages for the IB. In A level the UK average A*-A was 26% whereas 37% of grades achieved by MES students were at that level. The world average point's score for the IB in 2018 was 29, yet MES Cairo students achieved 33 points, on average.

The school monitors attendance effectively . It is evident that there are dips in secondary attendance which the school is addressing. Pastoral staff react promptly to absenteeism with an effective policy and process of response. Registers are taken for each lesson. Despite the local challenging traffic conditions students arrive on time for school each day.

English is by nature a second language for nearly all MES Cairo students, however this was far from obvious in lessons and assemblies observed. The students' command of English was outstanding throughout the school and in relation to age related expectations.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) of students is outstanding: it is a key strength of the school.

There is a clear focus on SMSC throughout the school, starting with the school's mission statement which is to 'care (for), challenge and inspire' every member of the student community. This is supported by a range of activities and opportunities which promote SMSC such as lead learners in primary where students despite their ability support the learning of their peers and athletic mentors in secondary, who run after school activities for younger students and visitors from local orphanages. A great example of cross phase collaboration and community action.

The school provides opportunities for students to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence through various curriculum and after school activities. Students speak highly about the impact of after-school activities on their development. Some examples of these opportunities are assemblies, the International Award, Pioneers programme, MUN and the school council. In the primary section of the school, they work towards the Graduate Profile using the 5Rs which are positive learning behaviours; *Resilient, Resourceful, Reflective, taking Risks* and developing good *Relationships*. The students are outstanding ambassadors for the school. All students are treated fairly and equally regardless of their backgrounds.

The school through its policies and practices ensures students understand and can distinguish right from wrong and to respect the law. This is seen in how students respond to the behaviour for learning policies and practices in both primary and secondary. There is a positive and supportive learning environment across the school. The use of a restorative system is seen as positive in managing differences among students. In primary, a good example of how the school builds a culture of complicit behaviour is through 'The Golden Rules'. The school behaviour policies set out the different stages of responding to serious behaviour concerns and is designed to be supportive to all members of the school community. Through CPD and collaboration 'Secondary ELEMENTS' was developed to help secondary students manage their learning behaviours and create a positive learning culture. The impact of this is seen in lessons.

There are several student leadership opportunities such as the school council, golden buddies in EYFS, environment mentors and KS4 athletics and peer mentors. Students and staff find these very effective as these avenues give students a chance to develop and launch their own initiatives such as the Community Service Scheme. The school has organised charity events which has raised funds for the less fortunate in the community.

The curriculum promotes global mindedness along with a range of opportunities for students to develop their general knowledge and sense of citizenship. Every year the school commemorate 'Remembrance Day' on November 11th with a group of students attending an event held with other International Schools in Cairo. The occasion is marked in school by

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selling poppies and explaining to the children their significance. The school participates in other British Embassy events, such as the combined schools' Christmas Concert.

The school enables students to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures, in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions. The school actively promotes tolerance and respect for human differences. This is embedded in the culture and ethos of the school.

There is a zero-tolerance policy of any behaviour that is perceived to be negatively prejudicial about anyone with a background or circumstances that might determine the perception that they are 'different'. Students ably speak about zero tolerance when it comes to bullying and that staff act speedily to resolve any issues if they arise.

The school has professional support for students who need support in making sense of their own identity. Students are very open-minded, respectful and accepting of each other. They speak articulately about school being a safe place. They often use the word family when they describe each other.

In primary, students are taught about different cultures as well as their own through Topic schemes of work, as well as through the study of local and international artists in art and music lessons.

Overseas residential experiences offer other opportunities to develop cultural understanding and respect. These trips are often to Europe and the middle east, with a cultural exploration element built into the itineraries.

The school promotes a general knowledge and understanding of modern British life including UK attitudes towards tolerance, democracy, respect for freedom of expression and other human rights. Tolerance and respect are covered in the PSHE/HRCF curriculum. The school has an ongoing commitment to an organisation called 'Right to Life', which supports community members with mental impairment including downs-syndrome.

Democracy is shown in classrooms, as well as in the election of representatives to join the student councils. There is democratic process for choosing class representatives for this council. Secondary students complete a rigorous election campaign to encourage the student body to vote for them after being nominated by their peers; all children have an opportunity to have their say.

Faith lessons are offered in both Islamic and Christian religion which fulfils the MOE requirement regarding the teaching of religious education. Respect for the rule of law is promoted in a variety of different ways, including encouraging students understanding of the need for rules to govern a civilised society. The school has invited students to participate in the process of creating rules.

Students are exposed to British history, culture, tradition, customs as a natural consequence of their studies in English and Humanities. International mindedness is promoted throughout

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the curriculum. Secondary student homeroom initiatives linked to the UN Global Goals project allows students to develop further their understating of diversity and values.

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

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of the students is outstanding.

The school has prepared and implemented the full range of required written policies to safeguard students. They are updated on a regular cycle. School policies regarding health and safety meet local requirements and are closely aligned with the requirements in the UK. The maintenance of the school facilities is very impressive and helps ensure the safety of staff and students. This is achieved both by effective, swift reactive work and also a planned schedule of maintenance. The site is safe with a secure boundary, there is plenty of shade and the plant and other electrical facilities are safely isolated from the students. The swimming pool is secure, and students are not permitted within the pool areas without supervision. This rule is enforced by the presence of a security guard and the pool area is overlooked by the PE office. However, the school may wish to consider locking the access to the pool during the day when the pool is not in use and tasking the security guard with unlocking the door as required. The school should continue to ensure that lifesaving equipment in the pool area is well maintained and accessible.

Educational visits are carefully risk assessed following a detailed risk assessment policy. The policy ensures that each trip is appropriately staffed and that activities are risk assessed carefully. The welfare of students is clearly a priority for the school with access to outstanding medical care in school as well as a counselling service. The pastoral system in the school is strong. Students were always able to identify a range of teachers and leaders in the school who they could approach with any concerns they have; this included their form teacher, their subject leaders as well as the leaders in their particular section of the school.

The behaviour of students at the school is very impressive. This was noticeable during breaks when a positive camaraderie between students was in evidence. This behaviour is a result of the high expectations that the school has of its students. Furthermore, the students were very well supervised during breaks and at the end of school by a significant number of staff who are assigned an area to supervise by a duty rota. The school has behaviour policies in both the primary and secondary school and these are applied consistently. The school keep thorough records of behavioural issues and any sanctions that are applied. The school has successfully trialled a “restorative justice” approach to behaviour management and this has now been extended to Years 5 and 6. The school has prepared and implemented an effective bullying policy. Mutual respect and the importance of kindness is embedded into the school’s curriculum from the primary school and into the more senior years. The bullying policy and associated sanctions are enforced consistently. The role of peer mentors has been further developed. The training provided to these students has allowed them to intervene effectively to support students facing difficult situations.

The school has a comprehensive fire policy and the school fully meets the Egyptian fire regulations. Fire evacuation routes are clearly identified in every room and classroom and are

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monitored so that they remain unobstructed. Fire extinguishers are available and are correctly maintained. Fire drills take place regularly and students could confidently explain what they should do in the event of hearing the fire alarm or finding a fire.

The school has a detailed first aid policy and impressive medical facilities and staffing which includes three qualified doctors and three nurses on site. In the event of an accident or if a student becomes unwell, high quality effective medical care is available. The onsite doctors can then arrange for parents to collect a child or arrange for the transfer of the student to hospital if required, these hospitals are within minutes of the school campus.

The school maintains an admission and attendance register on the school's information management system and on paper which conform to local regulatory standards. Secondary students are registered in each class and only permitted to leave class during lesson time with an "out of class slip"

The welfare, health and safety of the students is clearly a priority for the school. The students feel safe and are well cared for.

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

The suitability of the proprietor of the school and of the staff appointed to work there is excellent. The proprietor is fully mindful of the requirements for safeguarding and safer recruitment.

The board of directors oversee school policies, ensuring all local requirements are met. They do not interfere with the management of the school; there are clear lines of demarcation. The role of the Board as supportive critical friends is a strength of the school.

Regular briefings by the school's leadership team aim to ensure all board members have a clear insight into the working of the school throughout all key stages.

Prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all MES Cairo staff (including volunteers), appropriate checks to confirm their identity, medical fitness, right to work in Egypt, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references are made. Such information is taken into account in determining whether appointments are confirmed.

In most respects, it is the principal who takes day-to-day responsibility for this. The latter takes the role of deciding on overriding principles, discussing and approving documents produced and receiving reports.

Appropriate checks on suitability to work with children, including a British enhanced criminal record check, or ICPC where applicable, are made by the school in respect of all members of staff appointed. There are appropriate checks in the host country 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.

All teaching staff have teaching qualifications and experience in teaching in British schools. The leadership structure is shared with all staff and all are aware of their line manager and understand their roles. Job descriptions are provided for all teaching roles. All staff are trained and/or experienced in the provision of age-appropriate education and support.

The school keeps and made available to inspectors, a single comprehensive list of all staff and volunteers who currently work 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 at the school since the date of the last inspection.

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The proprietor and board members have a clear understanding of their individual and collective responsibilities. The effective collective contribution of the board adds significantly to the continual process of improvement at MES Cairo.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are excellent.

All areas of the school are very well maintained and a safe, secure and vibrant place for children to learn. Excellent use is made of the four main buildings and outdoor space to accommodate the large number of students in the school. The school has a range of spacious classrooms, specialist laboratories, music and computing rooms, a swimming pool, multipurpose field and spacious courtyards. The use of the shared pod areas between classrooms is excellent in supporting collaboration, learning and creativity. The excellent school theatre is well used for assemblies and theatre productions. There is a beautiful prayer room with suitable ablution facilities for Islamic children and staff.

The safety of the children is given the highest priority. Security staff are on duty at all external and many internal doors and systems are in place to only allow authorised visitors to enter the school. The extensive facilities team ensure that the school site is always clean and well maintained. There is a rolling programme of improvements and upgrading – including replacing worn furniture, replacing the seating in the auditorium and repairing damaged marble flooring. The in-school team of technicians ensure that light, air conditioning and ventilation systems are very well maintained.

The learning environments are bright and stimulating. Excellent use is made of displays to support learning and to celebrate achievement. This is especially good in the EYFS areas where a range of stimulating areas are used, for example children in FS1 loved learning in the farm role play area – where they were able to wash a sheep and milk a cow! Outdoor learning areas for FS children are spacious, stimulating and attractive with a range of permanent and changing activities to promote learning in all areas of the curriculum.

There are suitable toilet facilities for the sole use of children. Particular attention is given to the cleanliness of toilets and washrooms with ‘toilet nannies’ on duty to ensure the highest levels of cleanliness are maintained at all times. Showers are available after sporting activities and the school has regulating systems and regular checks in place to ensure the water temperature is appropriate. The school has specialist medical rooms with three doctors on duty.

While most children bring a packed lunch, food is available for children to purchase – arrangements for hygienic preparation, storage, serving and consumption are suitable. The school regularly practices evacuations and is able to evacuate and register the whole school and then return to class in just over twelve minutes. There are currently 2 students with additional physical needs, who require (and have) special building access arrangements.

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.

Contact details of the school and information and contact details about the school's governing board are available on the website; these details are also available on school letterheads and assorted publications.

The school's mission and aims are clearly communicated on the school website and the school's motto, 'studiis gubernatio' is highly visible around the school.

The school works hard to ensure that parents are well informed. The school website, available in English, is easy to navigate and contains comprehensive information for parents and prospective parents. Parents can also securely access a 'Family Portal', which contains their child's school reports, information on clinic visits and other medical information, transportation and parent contact details.

Parents are able to access information about key school policies on the website, Google Classroom (primary) and in student planners (secondary). This includes information about the school's policies on child protection and safeguarding, arrangements for admissions, and discipline and exclusions. The complaints procedure and most recent inspection report are also available on the website. The learning development department (LDD) provides a copy of their policy to the parents of children receiving extra support, and individual education plans (IEP)s are shared with the parents of children on the LDD register.

Curriculum information is available on the website. This includes information about how the curriculum is organised across the school, including key information for secondary school parents to download.

Primary parents are kept informed with information specific to their child's key stage through a weekly newsletter, sent electronically but also available on the website. The school also uses social media to inform parents of school events and successes such as public examination results. The school magazine, 'Messenger', is published three times per year, and celebrates students' achievements and showcases some of their work. Some events are streamed live to parents, for example graduation ceremonies for those unable to attend.

School and parents are able to communicate through a variety of formal and informal ways. Teaching staff are highly visible at the end of the school day. However, as the majority of students are transported by bus, a 'link book' is used in the primary section to communicate with parents and the student planner for secondary students. Parents are invited to termly parent-teacher consultations and receive formal written reports each term. They suggest that they find the reports easy to understand and informative. They feel the written reports are

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personal and show that the teachers know their children well. Parents feel confident that they know how well their child is progressing.

Parents think very highly of the school. They feel the school listens to any concerns and acts upon them; parents describe several examples where suggestions or concerns were raised with the school, which were dealt with effectively. Parents describe the school as being 'like a family'. They appreciate the close links they have with their child's teachers and feel they can approach staff through the school's 'open door' policy.

11. *Standard 7*

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The MES Cairo procedure for handling complaints is effective and fully meets the BSO standard. Complaints are rare, but the school has a detailed written policy and appropriate procedures in place, which reflect good practice from the UK.

It is transparent, effective and meets local regulatory requirements. The policy aims to reassure parents and others with an interest in the school that any complaint against the school will be dealt with in a fair, open and responsive way, with the aim of achieving a speedy and satisfactory resolution. Complaints are rare, but the policy allows for complainants to be parents, guardians, grandparents, neighbours of the school or anyone with an interest in the work of the school.

Complaints may be made by telephone, e-mail, in person or be written. A complaint is defined as any issue causing 'you as a parent some anxiety'. The procedure deals with specified day-to-day complaints against the management and/or operation of the school. Records of all conversations and meetings with parents to resolve formal complaints are kept. Heads of school keep a file of hard copies of any formal complaint. The policy is available to parents of students and prospective students and sets out clear timescales for the management of the complaint. It also allows for complaints to be made and considered initially on an informal basis.

The school aims to resolve the concern in a speedy and effective way. However, if the concern is not resolved immediately and a complaint is confirmed by the parent, the opportunity to discuss the matter with the school principal is a further option as stage 2. If the parent concern procedure stages 1 and 2 has been exhausted and no satisfactory solution has been found, the complainant is asked by the member of staff dealing with the issue whether s/he wishes the complaint to be considered formally at stage 3 of the procedure.

At stage 3, a review panel will be convened to review the concern and the school's response. The review panel will consist of the managing director plus two other directors. The concerns review panel's purpose is to reconsider the original concern and the school's response to it. The panel would communicate its findings to all parties within 25 days of the letter requesting a review.

12. Standard 8

Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are excellent at all levels.

Leadership capacity at senior and middle leadership levels have been developed effectively since the last inspection. The senior leadership team functions as a unified group and this permeates positively through the school. They are committed to having even greater cohesion: there is a stronger feeling of MES Cairo being 'one school' than has been evident in the previous inspection. This has been a key strategic intent of the whole school principal who has been in post for 2½ years.

The board continues to provide effective support and challenge to the principal and the school's senior and middle leaders. The school has met, or at least made good progress, towards the three recommendations outlined in the previous inspection report.

The school recently revised its leadership structure. New middle leader positions have been added, senior roles redefined, and more clearly defined job descriptions issued. An effective staff appraisal and professional development model ensures staff are held to account to challenging appraisal targets. Careful planning and revisions to the school timetable provides appropriate time for staff to engage in collaborative and more tailored curriculum that ensures curriculum planning meets students' needs. This is welcomed by teaching staff and teaching assistants throughout the school.

There is strong commitment to the school's mission statement 'Care Challenge Inspire' throughout the school. The mission statement is visual throughout the school and many examples of how this drives decision making and informs dialogue amongst staff were observed during the inspection. The school board's enthusiasm and commitment to the 'care' element of the school mission statement is unequivocal, infectious and ensures a strong community spirit prevails at all levels. Staff and students feel safe and valued. A positive and supportive relationship between the board, the principal and the senior leadership team ensures a truly whole school ethos and approach has been adopted across the primary and secondary schools. Strong evidence of a collaborative team ethos and collaboration exists at all levels ensuring student care and wellbeing is excellent. This is further supported by the provision of excellent, high quality and bright accommodation. High standards are set and there is a commitment by academic, administrative and maintenance staff to further developing all aspects of the school environment. The impact of effective leadership ensures high quality pastoral care and academic outcomes for all students.

A collaborative approach to the self-evaluation process ensures a thorough, well informed and accurate assessment of the school's strategic priorities. A manageable whole school development plan informs the primary and secondary school development plans respectively and ensures a consistent whole school approach to school improvement is adopted. The school has been effective in the commitment to ensuring consistently high-quality effective

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teaching, developing middle leaders, developing a positive school culture based on its mission statement and enhancing student engagement and outcomes. Robust line management, appraisal meeting structures ensures an effective commitment to continuous commitment and improvement towards its aims.

The board and senior leadership team are clear and agree that staff recruitment and further developing the curriculum to meet the future needs of students whilst maintaining the highest standards, remain the main future challenges for MES Cairo. The school has taken an innovative approach to ensuring high quality staff recruitment including, but not limited to, developing a successful program of teacher training, enabling the school to recruit and train newly qualified teachers. A strong induction and professional development program further support this process and improves staff retention. School leaders are highly enthusiastic and committed to further developing the school curriculum, a strength of the school is to ensure it is continuously reviewed and amended to meet students' needs.