



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

Newton International Academy

Qatar

Date
Inspection number

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1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

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

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

The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's management on the overall effectiveness of the school, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent schools in the United Kingdom.

The inspection and report will cover the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation (including boarding); and the school's complaints procedures. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching and care for pupils and pupils' achievements.

This inspection was completed by Penta International UK. Penta International is approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the English Department for Education (DFE) on the extent to which schools meet the standards for British Schools Overseas.

During the inspection visit, 86 full or part lessons were observed by inspectors. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team and a range of teachers, governing body, parents and groups of students. Two and a half school days were monitored.

Lead inspector was John Cranfield. The other team members were Justin Blakebrough, Ciprian Ghisa, Alya Muflihi and Silvana Murphy.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

Newton International Academy meets all the standards required for British Schools Overseas accreditation.

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

Newton International Academy provides a good standard of education. Overall the quality of teaching is good. Senior leaders have a clear vision for the future. Students, parents and staff are committed to the school. Nearly all students make good progress as they move through the school.

Students are well supported through effective pastoral care and the implementation of robust welfare, health and safety policies and procedures. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of students is good. The curriculum is broad and balanced; enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities.

The school is well on its way to achieving its vision of developing: “An international community of learners striving for excellence and celebrating success”.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths. They include:

- The passion and commitment of the proprietors in their pursuit of excellence.
- The principal and his deputy are highly effective in building and maintaining a visible culture of mutual respect, tolerance and support.
- The Heads of School including Early Years, have a clear philosophy, resilience and determination to succeed.
- Middle leaders are cohesive, capable and committed to improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising student attainment.
- The dedication, commitment and willingness of nearly all staff to do their best for the students, is evident across the school.
- The behaviour and the positive attitudes of students. They are treated equitably and with respect. The use of positive reinforcement encourages students to take risks and learn from their mistakes.
- The school effectively nurtures confident and responsible global citizens.
- The school has a strong sense of community.
- Administration and premises staff are effective in supporting the smooth running of the school.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

- i. Implement a programme of rigorous lesson observations and focussed CPD that ensure the following lead to more active engagement in lessons and support life-long learning.
 - a) enquiry-based activities
 - b) critical thinking
 - c) problem solving
 - d) independent learning
- ii. Refine leadership roles, responsibilities and systems, to ensure greater accountability at all levels, that result in raising the quality of all teaching to that of at least good.
- iii. Develop a succinct and evaluative whole school strategic development plan that focuses on raising the quality of teaching and learning, and individual students' attainment.

4. The context of the school

Full name of School	Newton International Academy		
Address	Barwa City Doha Qatar		
Telephone Number/s	+974 4001 6401		
Fax Number	+974 4001 6404		
Website Address	http://niabarwacity.newtonschools.sch.qa/		
Key Email Address/s	williamsonp@newtonschools.sch.qa		
Headteacher/Principal	Paul Williamson		
Chair of Board of Governors/Proprietor	CEO: Mrs. Afaf Al-Meadhadi Chair: Dr. Jabr Al Noaimi		
Age Range	3-19 years		
Number of Pupils	Total: 1,864	Boys: 1,032	Girls: 832
Pupil Numbers by Age	0-2 Years 0	3-5 Years 382	6-11 Years 878
	12-16 Years 454	17-18 Years 137	18+ Years 13
Total Number of Part-Time Pupils	0		

Newton International Academy (NIA) is a private international school for students from the ages of 3 to 18. Secondary school students are taught in gender groups. The school opened in 2013 to meet the educational needs of the growing international expatriate community. The school currently has 1,864 students on three campuses, two Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and a primary/secondary campus. Over 70 nationalities are represented in the student body. Qatari students comprise the largest group. The vast majority of teachers are from English speaking countries including UK, Irish Republic and Australia in addition to English speaking teachers from South Africa. NIA has recently undergone a successful Qatari Ministry of Private Education inspection.

NIA is the fifth Newton school to be opened. It is one of the nine schools comprising the Newton group, founded by Mrs. Afaf Al Meadhadi and Dr. Jabr Al Noaimi.

4.1 British nature of the school

The ethos, nature and appearance of the school are recognisably British. The school is organised according to the structures used in English schools. Classroom management, displays of work, a 3-term year and age-related year groups contribute to giving the school a British feel. The leadership structure of the school follows British convention.

The curriculum is based on the English National Curriculum 2014 and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), adapted to meet local requirements for Arabic, Islamic Studies and Qatari History, supported by a pastoral care structure, similar to those found in UK schools. Secondary school students follow courses of study leading to IGCSE and AS level examinations offered by CIE and Edexcel. Assessments are based on national standards from the UK. The house system provides opportunities for leadership and competition. English is the common language of instruction throughout the school, apart from in Arabic and French language lessons and Qatari history lessons for Arabic students. The school is named after the British scientist Sir Isaac Newton.

All information about the work of the school is communicated to families and students in English, as are all school publications, reports, letters and the school's website. Information and documents are translated into Arabic as required. Texts, materials, educational equipment and software are mainly UK sourced. The School Council, Eco-Warriors, and school prefects are in keeping with British practice. Displays around the school celebrate royal events and provide information on British parliamentary democracy.

The importance of extra-curricular provision including a wide range of clubs and school trips are in line with best British practice. Interviewed parents valued highly the British nature of the curriculum.

5. Standard 1

The quality of education provided by the school

Overall, the quality of education provided by Newton International Academy is good and fully meets BSO requirements.

5.1 Curriculum

There is full-time supervised education for students of compulsory school age. The curriculum is based on the National Curriculum of England, adapted to meet the requirements of the Qatar Ministry of Private Education. The school follows the EYFS Framework, the National Curriculum for England for Key Stages 1 to 3, leading to IGCSE and AS level qualifications offered by CIE and Edexcel. Arabic is taught to all students in the school whereas Islamic Studies is taught only to students of Islamic faith. The subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of students, including those with learning difficulties. It does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. All students have the opportunity to learn and make progress.

The school has a written curriculum policy which is supported by detailed plans and schemes of work. The policy is implemented effectively, enabling students to acquire skills in speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy. The curriculum gives students experience in a wide range of areas of learning, including linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. The absence of music and drama lessons in the secondary school is a missed opportunity to enhance aesthetic and creative provision. The school has introduced Philosophy for Children (P4C), which is supporting the development of critical thinking skills. A wide range of curriculum experiences helps to prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) reflects the school's aim and ethos. It is planned and delivered during tutor group time. Students who do not attend Islamic Studies attend lessons in Citizenship. There is also an option to take GCSE Global Citizenship. The school is in the process of further developing the PSHE programme of study and linking it into the rest of the curriculum.

The school has an inclusive entry policy and thus caters for students with a wide range of abilities and proficiency in English. The school provides appropriate support for

students for whom English as an Additional Language (EAL) is a significant issue. At present, 'More Able' and 'Gifted and Talented' students are identified but not tracked. However, these students are encouraged to enter a range of national and international competitions. 'More Able' students can also sit some IGCSE examinations earlier, but the benefit of this is not clear.

The school organises careers and university fairs for the Sixth Form and Year 11 students. Key Stage 3 students visit *Kidzania* to experience different careers. The school gives excellent support to individual students in applying and choosing university places. Training for IELTS and SAT tests are also provided to Year 12 students.

The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of after school clubs and activities, including archery, Model United Nations, debating and gardening. Students are encouraged to enter national and international competitions such as Destination Imagination and Enterprise Qatar. There are numerous overseas visits, including a recent ski trip to the Dolomites and a Year 12 trip to Laos to undertake volunteer work.

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

5.2 Teaching and assessment

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning are good.

Teaching enables students to acquire new knowledge, and make progress according to their ability, increasing their understanding and developing their skills in the subjects taught as they move through the school. Most teaching encourages students to apply intellectual, physical and creative efforts, to show interest in their work and learn and think for themselves. Time in lessons is used productively and students focus well on their learning because teachers reinforce expectations for behaviour and set clear tasks.

Nearly all teachers showed a good understanding of the aptitudes, cultural background, the needs of English as Additional Language (EAL) learners, and the prior attainments of the students. They mostly ensure these needs are taken into account in the planning of lessons. Nearly all teachers across the school demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught. However, in some lessons more rigor is required when planning activities in order to further encourage students to apply intellectual and creative efforts and learn to think for themselves.

The quality of teaching and learning in the Early Years Campuses is good or better. There is an appropriate focus on developing the whole child. Teachers and support staff have a detailed understanding of individual student needs. This understanding is underpinned by a culture of high quality care and respect that enables every student to flourish and grow. Individual needs are met through differentiated activities. If required, developmental and intervention plans are implemented to ensure that progress is made. Teachers are passionate and skilled practitioners. Nearly all students are actively involved in their learning. They are given the opportunity to work collaboratively, independently or as part of a focus group identified within teachers' planning. Integrated learning is achieved through matching appropriate activities and tasks to learning objectives. Spacious well-equipped classrooms also provide access to a safe outdoor area to play and learn.

Good teaching pervades the primary school. In the best lessons, enthusiastic teachers demonstrate an acute awareness of individual student capabilities and plan effectively to meet their needs. Across Key Stage 2, group and pair work is used to good effect. For example, in a Year 4 humanities lesson on 'settlements', students were encouraged to move around the room, read other students' work and then use that information to improve the quality of their own work. The use of e-teaching is also integral to many lessons. In a Year 4 science lesson, the teacher used 'Boardworks' to distinguish between materials that are conductors from those that

are insulators. The students enjoyed using the interactive whiteboard to drag and drop their choices into the circuit and predict the outcome. In the best lessons, teaching assistants effectively support students with their learning. The quality of support however is inconsistent.

Overall the quality of teaching in the secondary school is good. In the best lessons the learning objective(s) and success criteria are shared with the students. They are sufficiently differentiated to provide challenge for different groups of students. Learning objectives and success criteria are revisited during or at the end of the lesson. This enables students to reflect on what they have understood and what they still need to do to achieve mastery. In addition, the feedback informs the planning of the next lesson. Effective use of a range of assessment for learning (AfL) strategies ensure students made good or better progress. In a particularly effective Year 8 English lesson, the teacher encouraged the students to deconstruct the text in order to gain a deeper understanding of the literary message behind the words. The use of pair and group discussion in this lesson further enhanced student understanding.

Across Key Stage 4, students are generally motivated, well behaved and on task. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. Inappropriate behaviour in lessons is often due to lack of challenge and/or lack of engaging activities. Many lessons across Key Stage 4 and nearly all across Key Stage 5 focused on revision for forthcoming external examinations. There were many examples of well organised and structured revision lessons with the teacher providing effective one-to-one support with students self and peer assessing their responses to past-paper questions. Some students had decided not to avail themselves of the high-quality support available and chose to revise at home. In less effective lessons, students' intrinsic motivation provided the driver for engagement. Nearly all students are aware of their 'working at' and target grades. In addition, they know what to do to bridge the gap.

While oral feedback to develop students' learning is well embedded, the assessment of students' work in books is inconsistent between subjects and teachers. Opportunities are missed for students to reflect on their own learning.

Classroom resources are of a good quality, quantity and range. They are generally used effectively. The behaviour management strategies in place throughout the school ensure that nearly all students remain on task and focused during the lessons, thereby maximising learning time. Teaching does not undermine fundamental British values. There is a respect for individual human differences.

The school has a framework in place to assess student performance regularly and thoroughly. In EYFS, teachers use base line assessments to provide a starting point

for tracking individual student's personal and academic development. The use of Tapestry software enables the teacher to record a range of assessment data. In primary and secondary a range of formative and summative assessments are used to inform 'Raising Attainment Plans' which are reviewed each term. Throughout Key Stages 4 and 5, ongoing assessments are linked to external examination criteria. Attainment results are reported 3 times a year to parents through formal written reports followed by a parent consultation evening.

5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

Nearly all students make good progress as they move through the key stages.

On entry, most students are second language English speakers. They are baseline tested after 6 weeks. There is little significant difference in terms of ability between cohorts, year on year. The school has implemented a comprehensive data tracking process to monitor individual progress against the Early Learning Goals. In 2017, 85% of students attained a 'good level of development' at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, compared to the UK national average of 71%.

All students are baseline tested in English and mathematics on entry to Key Stage 1. As in EYFS, individual student progress is closely monitored. By the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is broadly in line with UK national expectations. Good progress is maintained across Key Stage 2. The school has recently introduced GL assessments from Year 1 to Year 6 in order to better track, monitor and evaluate student progress. Recent end of Key Stage 2 results indicate that attainment in English and mathematics is broadly in line with UK national expectations. There is no significant difference between the levels of attainment of boys and girls. Attainment data from the last three years indicates increasing cohort value added. The school is introducing SIMS to provide opportunities for more detailed and extensive recording, analysis and dissemination of progress and attainment data.

On entry to Key Stage 3, students are baseline tested in English, mathematics and science. Students are given summative assessments on a regular basis. In order to better prepare them for the formality of external examinations, they sit a termly examination in the hall. Secondary cohort data indicates value added year on year. In 2017, 67% of students attained 5 A*- C grades in IGCSE subjects. This is an increase from 61% in 2016 and 49% in 2015. The percentage of students obtaining the equivalent of 5 A* - C including mathematics and English, compares favourably to UK national expectations, 66.3% and 60% respectively. 65% of boys attained A*- C grades in 2016 compared to 45% in the previous year.

The percentage of students attaining 2 AS levels with grades A-E increased from 27% in 2015 to 73% in 2016. The school intends to offer courses at A2 level from September 2018.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is good.

Students develop their awareness and understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) dimensions through the taught curriculum which includes subjects such as Philosophy 4 Children (P4C), citizenship, global citizenship, general papers and Personal Social Health and Economic Education (PSHE). In addition to the formal curriculum, SMSC is promoted through assemblies, National and International days, the extensive extra-curricular provision, fieldtrips, community work, guest speaker talks, and displays throughout the school.

Students at NIA are generally self-assured, happy and confident. The P4C programme encourages students to see the value in their own and other students' ideas. In secondary, PSHE, global citizenship and citizenship programmes of study enable students to learn about coping with examination stresses, manage their future finances and develop a respect for their own and other cultures.

Students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them in terms of behaviour. The self-esteem and confidence of the students is actively promoted through the new approach to the Behaviour Policy – 'Positive Behaviour for Learning' (PB4L), which has been applied in the primary school, beginning with the principles of restorative justice. This approach is a key strength of the school and demonstrates its commitment to encouraging positive behaviour rather than constantly focusing on sanctions and punishment. The well attended 'Merit Award' trips are a testament to the success of this initiative.

Throughout the school, students are provided with opportunities to exercise initiative and leadership. These opportunities include but are not limited to house captains, prefects, environmental representatives and class monitors. The Student Council has an important profile in the school. Its members are elected by students themselves, mirroring the respect for democracy seen in the UK. Members are involved in several school projects such as, Interviewing the New Teachers Project which supports the new staff induction process, animal rescue fund raising projects and the organisation of some school events. The school house system is another avenue for students to exercise leadership qualities.

Students show an appreciation and respect for each other, the wider world and other cultures. This is promoted through International and National Days, Qatari traditional dances and plays organised by the Arabic teachers. School trips, such as a recent one to Lagos in Nigeria to carry out community work, broaden and deepen students' cultural and social understanding.

Rich curriculum experiences ensure students acquire a good general knowledge of, and respect for, public institutions and services in the UK in addition to the responsibilities of citizenship in the host country.

The school actively promotes tolerance, a respect for human differences and acceptance of a range of lifestyles: this is achieved within the laws of the host country. These values are embedded in the culture and ethos of the school. Partisan political views are precluded in the teaching of all subjects. Information is presented in an impartial way with an appropriate balance of opposing views where applicable.

7. Standard 3

The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

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

The welfare, health and safety of students is a priority. The school fully complies with the relevant health and safety laws in the host country. An effective written policy relating to the health and safety of students in school and on activities outside school, is in place. In addition, effective procedures for fire safety are in place. Evacuation drills are scheduled a minimum of three times a year and subsequently evaluated by staff and members of the Health and Safety Working committee, which includes a designated Health and Safety Officer. Emergency exits are clearly visible throughout the school buildings. Arrows in corridors guide students to the quickest and safest evacuation route.

The site is secured by guards and CCTV surveillance. In addition, visitors to the school are required to sign in at the reception area and wear an ID badge. The school is aware of the need to ensure end of day arrangements are rigorous in terms of safeguarding.

The cleaning and maintenance staff work effectively to maintain high standards of cleanliness and safety throughout the school. All academic departments complete risk assessments of their areas. A rigorous whole school risk assessment is conducted at the beginning of the new academic year. On the Early Years campus, risk assessments are completed on a weekly basis to ensure a safe working environment for the youngest students.

The school's procedures for the health and safety of students are effective. Students are well supervised during breaks by staff who are highly visible in their fluorescent, reflective jackets. The ratio of teachers to students in the playgrounds and canteen areas is high. 'Control of Substances Hazardous to Health' (COSHH) registers are methodically maintained by the science department technicians. All experiments are risk assessed and carried out in purpose-built, well-designed laboratories.

There is a comprehensive first aid policy. Three well-resourced and spacious Nurse's Stations across the 3 campuses are staffed by 5 qualified nurses. The nurses provide first aid, administer medication and are responsible for keeping detailed records on all students, including those with allergies who require an Epipen. The nurses are also responsible for relaying this information to staff and providing them with lists of students with specific medical conditions particularly during school trips. The nursing team also ensure that all local regulations are met.

Robust policies and procedures ensure safe internet access. The whole school network is filtered to prevent inappropriate site access. Cyber-bullying is addressed through the pastoral curriculum and in ICT lessons.

Although the school uses an outside company to provide food, it ensures that mainly healthy food is served to students. The cleanliness of the canteen areas is of a high order. A comprehensive duty rota ensures that students are well supervised at all times.

There is a comprehensive Behaviour Policy which is implemented effectively. Student behaviour across the school is very good. Students show respect for their teachers, each other and the school environment. Examples of inappropriate lesson disruptions are rare and low level. A record is kept on sanctions imposed on students for serious misbehaviour. The school counsellor is actively involved in supporting students' social and emotional development.

An admission and attendance register is maintained which conforms to local regulatory requirements. There is a clear focus on continuous improvement in terms of student attendance and punctuality. There is regular and effective communication to parents. Attendance is recorded at the start of the school day for all students in addition to the start of lessons in the secondary school.

Attendance since the start of term was 94% for the primary school and 88% the secondary school. Nearly all students arrive at school on time. The main reasons for lateness are traffic or medical appointments. The main reasons for absenteeism are illness or accompanying parents travelling outside the country.

Nearly all students are thoughtful, well behaved and motivated learners. By the time they leave school, they have the personal and social skills needed to move successfully to the next stage of their education.

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

The suitability of the proprietors and staff is of a high order. The proprietors are not barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. They do not carry out work in contravention with section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 or section 142 of the Education Act 2002. The proprietors ensure the school meets the safety, care and guidance requirements for all students.

A 'safer recruitment' policy is in place. Prior to the confirmation of staff appointments, appropriate checks, including police checks in the country of origin, are carried out to confirm their identity, medical fitness, right to work in Qatar, previous employment activity, character references and suitability to work with children.

There is a list maintained of all staff and volunteers who currently work in the school. This shows when they started and stopped working in the school. Staffing levels are more than adequate for the successful delivery of the curriculum. All teaching staff have qualifications appropriate to their role; some staff have further academic or teaching qualifications that enhance school development.

There is no evidence that any member of staff or volunteer who carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school is in contravention of any local, overseas or British disqualification, prohibition or restriction.

NIA recognises that discrimination is unacceptable. The Newton group has a formal policy to ensure no job applicant, employee or worker is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin or religious belief. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the UK Equality Act (2010).

9. Standard 5 The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are outstanding.

The school provides a safe and welcoming environment for all its students. There are three sites, two for EYFS students and a larger campus for primary and secondary. They are located in close proximity with one another. Students benefit from access to an indoor heated swimming pool. The pool hygiene and water cleanliness are maintained by a private pool company, specifically contracted for this purpose. Shower and changing facilities are available in the sports areas. The school is currently planning for pool side spectator seating to be installed with electronic lane timing for swimming galas. Suitable outdoor space ensures physical education is delivered in accordance with the school curriculum and facilitates outside play.

The buildings and grounds are very well maintained, clean, spacious and attractive. Classrooms are well resourced, with either an interactive white board or digital projector and screen. Classrooms have been designed to be light and spacious. The corridors are shared, spacious and large enough to encourage groups of students to use them as additional learning areas. A large tiered stairway/auditorium facilitates effective drama rehearsals and productions. The furniture and fittings are appropriate for the age and needs of all students. Both primary and secondary libraries are well stocked, light and engaging. Around the school, sound insulation, air conditioning units, lighting and acoustics allow for effective teaching and communication. The flooring is in excellent condition throughout the school. The school has lifts for the use of wheelchairs, a ramp in the swimming pool area and wide corridors which aid movement.

The school provides a safe environment for all its students. Security arrangements for the grounds and buildings are given a high priority. Appropriate security measures are in place at the main external gates, the surrounding wall and in the outside parking lot. Procedures are carefully monitored and adhered to. The school complies with all fire safety requirements. Emergency evacuations are held regularly and monitored for effectiveness.

The local community uses the school on certain evenings. They are given limited access to the building and are informed of the school's policies and procedures regarding health and safety. External lighting ensures that visitors can safely enter and leave the premises.

The buildings and the water supply meet local regulatory requirements. The school provides appropriate toilet and washing facilities in each key stage for the sole use of students. There are separate toilets for boys and girls. Staff have their own washrooms. Toilets and urinals have an adequate supply of cold water; washing facilities have an adequate supply of water

and soap. Drinking stations are located inside the school on every floor. On occasions during the visit they were found to be empty.

There are well-resourced and staffed medical rooms. Each room has washing and toilet facilities. Provision for short term sickness is excellent.

10. *Standard 6* Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The quality of information provided by NIA for parents, prospective parents, and other interested parties is outstanding.

There is a clear statement of the ethos and aims of the school on the website in the form of the school's vision and mission. The school's vision, "An international community of learners striving for excellence and celebrating success" is prominently displayed throughout the school and on key documentation. The school's website includes the school's contact details, the name of the principal as well as others in the Newton group. The proprietors are contactable during term time and holidays, care of the school.

Admissions are governed by the school's policy and are advertised to prospective parents on the school website. In addition, particulars relating to policies on attendance, behaviour including exclusions, health and safety and first aid are available for parents and prospective parents. On admission, parents and prospective parents are well-informed about the school's provision for students with special educational needs and the support given to students for whom English is an additional language. Support options are discussed at this point.

The complaints procedure is on the school web site. The number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, is available on request.

Past external examination results are displayed in the school and are available on request. Reports on the progress and attainment in the main subject areas are provided for each registered student at the end of each term. Parents felt that the format of reports was very clear and informative and that comments were also phrased in a positive manner. There are regular Parent Evenings in addition to opportunities to meet with teachers at the end of the day. Parents are welcome to arrange additional meetings with individual members of staff.

There are strong communication links using letters and email. In the primary school, good use is made of 'Class Dojo'. The school has an open-door policy for parents. A focus group of parents stated that teachers and senior leaders are very approachable, often going out of their way to respond quickly.

Any issues with regard to attendance and punctuality are reported to parents promptly and where there are genuine reasons for absence, these are dealt with sympathetically.

The school provides workshops and curriculum summaries to keep parents up to date. Parents are invited to a range of school events both during and outside school hours. Parents said they felt involved in their child's education and felt part of a strong family community.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

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

Complaints are rare. Wherever possible, concerns are dealt with quickly by the most appropriate member of staff. There is a detailed written formal complaints procedure that is transparent, open and effective, and takes into account local laws and regulations. It is made available to parents of students and prospective parents. There are clear timescales set for the management of complaints. The handling of complaints mirrors the management structure of the school. Nearly all cases are dealt with by the class teacher or tutor on an informal basis. Parents have easy access to senior leaders at the start and end of the school day. If parents are not satisfied with the outcome of an informal approach, they are able to submit a formal written complaint. If a formal complaint has not been resolved by the principal, the parent(s) can contact the proprietors for a formal review. There is provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the owners consisting of at least three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint. One panel member is independent from the running of the school. Parents may be accompanied.

A copy of the findings and recommendations are made available to the complainant and, where relevant the person complained about, the proprietors and principal. The policy allows for written records to be kept of all complaints indicating at which stage they were resolved. All correspondence, statements and records of complaints are treated confidentially and kept securely.

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

Leadership and management of the school are good.

The proprietors oversee school policies, ensuring all local requirements are met. They ensure sufficiency of resources through robust financial management. They do not interfere with the management of the school; there are clear lines of demarcation. There is a positive relationship between the principal, senior leadership team (SLT), the CEO and Chairman of the Newton Group of Schools. The CEO recognises her role as a 'critical friend' and maintains a high level of school accountability, facilitated through weekly reporting by the principal. The CEO chairs monthly principal meetings attended by members from the Standardisation and Quality Assurance teams. These discussions provide a forum for sharing ideas and good practice. Feedback informs decision making and ultimately strategic planning.

Whilst the school improvement plan provides a road map for future development with clear targets and timeframes, success criteria do not focus sufficiently on improving the quality of teaching and learning or raising student attainment. There is an absence of numerical data against which progress can be measured.

The school runs well on a day to day basis. Operational procedures are established and understood. The principal is well supported by his senior leadership team. Collectively they have a clear vision for the development of the school. Through the self-evaluation process, the senior leadership team have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Whilst overall, the quality of teaching is good, this is not consistent across the school. Although the school has implemented a performance management process, it is insufficiently rigorous to secure consistent improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and raising individual student attainment.

Effective policies ensure that most students make progress at least in line with their ability. The school's curriculum provides organised and effective opportunities for groups of students to learn and make good progress. The school has a highly positive impact on student behaviour, in addition to their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

The proprietors are successful in securing and supporting sufficient high quality staff and ensuring their suitability to work with children. The school's arrangements for safeguarding students are robust. The school works well with parents and carers.

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

Not applicable.