



**British School  
Overseas**  
Inspected by Penta International

**Inspection report**

**Scholars International  
Academy**

**Sharjah**

Date 28th - 30th April 2019  
Inspection number 20190428

28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

| Contents |  | page |
|----------|--|------|
| 1        | Purpose and scope on the inspection  | 2    |
| 2        | Compliance with regulatory requirements  | 3    |
| 3        | Overall effectiveness of the school  | 4    |
|          | 3.1 What the school does well  | 4    |
|          | 3.2 Points for improvement   | 4    |
| 4        | The context of the school  | 5    |
|          | 4.1 The British nature of the school   | 7    |
| 5        | <b>Standard 1</b><br>The quality of education provided by the school                 | 8    |
|          | 5.1 Curriculum   | 8    |
|          | 5.2 Teaching and assessment  | 11   |
|          | 5.3 Standards achieved by pupils   | 14   |
| 6        | <b>Standard 2</b><br>The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils | 16   |
| 7        | <b>Standard 3</b><br>The welfare, health and safety of pupils                        | 18   |
| 8        | <b>Standard 4</b><br>The suitability of the proprietor and staff                     | 19   |
| 9        | <b>Standard 5</b><br>The premises and accommodation                                  | 20   |
| 10       | <b>Standard 6</b><br>The provision of information for parents, carers and others     | 21   |
| 11       | <b>Standard 7</b><br>The school's procedures for handling complaints                 | 22   |
| 12       | <b>Standard 8</b><br>Leadership and management of the school                         | 23   |

28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

## 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, care for pupils and pupils' achievements.

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

During the inspection visit, over 50 lesson observations took place, as well as a series of learning walks. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, and a range of teachers, parents and groups of pupils. The inspection team were in school for three days.

The lead inspector was Sheila Smith. The team members were Susan Eriksson, Huma Raz and James Hornby.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The Scholars International Academy meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

### 3. Overall effectiveness of the school

The Scholars International Academy is a school that provides a quality of education and care that is at least satisfactory, and often good or excellent. Students' behaviour is exemplary; they are polite and keen to learn. The students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is a key strength of the school. Relationships between staff and students are good. Some progress has been made on issues identified in the previous report.

#### 3.1 What the school does well

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

- Students' behaviour is exemplary
- Students' attitudes to learning are positive
- Relationships between students are positive
- The spiritual, moral social and cultural aspect of the school
- The school facilities
- The organisation of the school bus system
- The work being undertaken in raising the profile of mental health
- Security
- Administration Staff
- Leadership in primary

## 3.2 Points for improvement

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

- Map the curriculum, particularly in Foundation stage and years 5 and 6 to ensure continuity and eliminate repetition.
- Implement effective assessment and tracking procedures to maximise the impact on students' learning through a greater clarity of purpose.
- Ensure that the senior leadership team analyse the current situation of the academy and clearly identify the future developments that will move it forward in timely fashion.
- Introduce more child-initiated learning, and train teaching assistants to facilitate this.

28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

## 4. The context of the school

|                                    |  |      |             |       |     |
|------------------------------------|--|------|-------------|-------|-----|
| Full name of school                | Scholars International Academy pvt school            |      |             |       |     |
| Address                            | PO Box 47425<br>Muwaileh school zone<br>Sharjah, UAE |      |             |       |     |
| Telephone Number/s                 | +971 065197000                                       |      |             |       |     |
| Fax Number                         | +971065355034  |      |             |       |     |
| Website Address                    | www.scholarsinternationalacademy.com                 |      |             |       |     |
| Key Email Address/s                | principal@scholarsinternationalacademy.com           |      |             |       |     |
| Headteacher/Principal              | Nigel Melen  |      |             |       |     |
| Chair of Board of Governors        | Aparna Verma   |      |             |       |     |
| Age Range                          | 3 years 8 months to 18 years                         |      |             |       |     |
| Total number of pupils             | 1,239  | Boys | 685         | Girls | 554 |
| Numbers by age                     | 0-2 years  | 0    | 12-16 years | 241   |     |
|                                    | 3-5 years  | 157  | 17-18 years | 42    |     |
|                                    | 6-11 years   | 790  | 18+ years   | 9     |     |
| Total number of part-time children | 0  |      |             |       |     |

Key features of the school include the following:

- Scholars International Academy (SIA) is eleven years old, having been established in August 2007, and is now in its 12th year. It is licensed, registered and approved by the Sharjah Ministry of Education, and is also an approved centre for the delivery of external examinations, including IGCSE, A Level and BTEC, through CIE and Edexcel. The school also utilises annual Progress Tests and CAT4 testing, as mandated by the Ministry of Education, to support the UK based results. The 'A' Level programme began in 2017/18, after the last inspection.
- Scholars International Group (SIG) is a consortium of sibling owners (three in number) who comprise the Board. There are five advisors to the Board whose tasks involve directing the administration, the operations, the auditing, the ERP and the communication, of three partner network schools
- Over the recent years, the leadership team of SIA has developed towards its current structure of:- Principal, Head of Secondary (Years 5 to 13), Head of Primary (Years 1 to 4), Head of Early Years (Foundation classes) and Head of Administration.
- The student roll has continued to grow healthily since opening in 2007, despite an economic downturn in the region.

|                   | Foundation | Primary<br>(Y1-Y4) | Secondary<br>(Y5-Y13) |
|-------------------|------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 2015-16 (Approx.) | 330        | 600                | 230                   |
| 2018-19           | 246        | 531                | 466                   |

- Much of this is due to natural rolling through of students from larger year groups and an addition of sixth form provision.
- SIA has over 50 nationalities at the school with the largest represented by India, Pakistan and Egypt. Overall, the mix is relatively even between boys and girls with 54% boys.
- The school is currently mixed from Foundation to Year 5 and all have a homeroom teacher.
- Year 6 and above are taught by specialist teachers although it is being proposed that Year 6 move to the homeroom model from 2019/20.

## 4.1 British nature of the school

The British nature of the school has developed since the last inspection and this appears to be well received by parents resulting in the gradual growth of the school.

- There has been a significant build-up over the last three years to a more expatriate, western staff and, over the last two years, a significant move in the direction of UK-sourced teachers (England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland).
- With the exception of Arabic, Islamic Studies and local Social Studies, the entire curriculum is delivered in English and based on the England national curriculum.
- English is the predominant medium of communication and predominantly the language of the playground and social activities.
- English is the language of the administration and is the fundamental language of communication used by the principal towards parents, both in person and electronically.
- All meetings are conducted in English and are only translated where appropriate.
- Textbooks and supplementary teaching materials are ordered from UK/British-based suppliers.
- Extra-curricular activities are plentiful and as good as, or better than, many UK school programmes.
- The academic senior leadership team are all British trained with appropriate qualifications.
- Head of primary and head of secondary have been trained successfully to be school inspectors.
- Organisation of classrooms and teaching styles are akin to UK styles.
- School pastoral system reflects the UK model.
- Parent voice is developing towards UK PTA practice.
- Recruitment process is thorough, robust, and supported by a UK based recruitment agency.
- Inter-sport competition with schools is supported by the parents and often through the BSME agenda.
- Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.
- House system that mirrors many British schools.



## 5 Standard 1

### The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided is satisfactory and meets the BSO standards.

#### 5.1 Curriculum

The curriculum meets the standards.

The curriculum throughout the school is broad and balanced and provides opportunities for the students to make progress and increase their knowledge and understanding. The school complies with local regulations in Arabic and Islamic studies and adheres to the UAE National Agenda. The curriculum is enriched through the provision of extra-curricular activities and the International Award (Duke of Edinburgh). Arabic is taught to all students from the Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Arabic first language learners have separate lessons. However, the Arabic second language curriculum is very challenging and is not at the appropriate level for the students within the school.

Throughout the EYFS the students follow the EYFS curriculum which is in use in England. However the vast majority of students within FS2 are six years of age by the end of the academic year and should be in Key Stage 1. Phonics is vertically streamed within year groups and delivered daily. Although good practice was seen within EYFS this was not consistent across all classes. The students in the early years do not have direct access (via free flow continuous provision) to an outdoor learning area; although a mixture of child initiated, teacher initiated and teacher delivered activities were observed, the curriculum is heavily weighted towards teacher-initiated activities. Opportunities to develop self-regulation and independence are missed and the curriculum in EYFS provides little opportunities for challenge.

Within the primary and early years sections, the curriculum is delivered through a thematic approach. Whilst the primary (Years 2-4) deliver a 2-year rolling cycle of topics to ensure there is progression and no repetition, they do not link with the EYFS and during the visit the same topic was observed being taught in FS1, FS2 and Year 1.

The principal language of instruction is English. The majority of students do not have English as a first language but throughout the school there are many planned opportunities for speaking and listening activities. The school provides a British style of learning experience; in the secondary, this is evident in display work and

28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

students' workbooks. For example, there is coverage of the issues facing the Normans during the conquest of England, and traditional British stories being used as a stimulus for learning in primary and EYFS. In English throughout the school, students are exposed to many opportunities to develop their vocabulary. This is linked to the National Curriculum and the use of creative and challenging language in their writing.

Students have equality of opportunity in their learning, although from Year 6 upwards the students are taught mainly in single gender classrooms.

Transitions throughout school day are well managed and many examples of students of all ages moving around the school site very responsibly were seen. The school has systems in place for prompt and accurate identification of students who have special educational needs (SEN). These are recorded on specific registers. Students are categorised into three levels of support wave 1 to wave 3 and SEN children are identified through admission tests, benchmarking, baseline assessments, PTM, PTE and CAT 4 etc. as well as teacher referrals. Information gleaned in this way is collated and shared with all appropriate staff and parents, and the registers established are updated regularly. The small learning support team are well deployed and led, and provide both in class and withdrawal support as necessary. Early learners who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are identified and receive specialist support again either through withdrawal or in class, dependent on their needs.

Evidence of differentiation in teaching and planning was seen in the lessons observed in primary (years 1-4). This was also present in some secondary classes but was inconsistent. Students who have a standardised score of above 121 are identified as academically more able and students who display particular aptitudes in other areas (e.g. music and sport) are also identified.

In the secondary section the curriculum is modelled on the National Curriculum for England. The school has only recently moved away from using the Cambridge curriculum. Within Key Stage (KS) 4 and KS5 students are given the opportunity to take the IELTS examinations. In Year 6 although the students are taught by subject specialists, they follow the KS2 curriculum. KS3 consists of Years 7, 8 and 9 and preparation for iGCSEs takes place in Years 10 and 11. This leads to a range of A level examination subjects, although this section of the school, whilst growing, is still small.

There is a robust system in place for supporting university applications, ably led by the head of KS5, with staff mentoring and supporting students with personal statements, UCAS applications and references. This personal development programme enables older students to enhance their applications whilst

28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

supporting the younger students throughout the school, for example by enhancing the EYFS environment, being first aiders and by acting as reading mentors.

The school undertakes examinations and assessments commonly used in schools in the UK, including IGCSE, standardised GL assessments and end of EYFS assessments. However due to differences in the classes students are assigned to, and when these key assessments are undertaken, should children leave and enter or re-enter the UK educational system they may be at a disadvantage. For example children leaving FS2 are assessed against the early learning goals, but are outside of the 60 months age range but are not assessed against Year 1 outcomes.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

The BSO standards for teaching and assessment are met.

The teaching is based upon the expectations of development matters in the EYFS. The learning environment reflects this curriculum and the lessons are divided well into different workstations. The teachers and the teaching assistants work with focus groups of children, whilst the other children move to directed but independent learning activities. Lessons seen throughout the Foundation Stage lacked challenge and opportunities for the children to explore. Activities set out for the children were too directed, children were given the resources they needed and were unable to show or develop their decision-making skills. The children were not challenged within these lessons sufficiently; this was specifically evident in phonics across the stage.

In focused writing sessions the students were not provided with writing prompts, instead the students copied over text written by the teacher, more opportunities for emergent writing would have developed students further. In many sessions, students were heavily directed and many opportunities for learning were missed. In one lesson the teacher quickly identified the lack of challenge in her activity and was able to adapt the lesson accordingly. A lack of outdoor continuous provision prevents the students from being able to explore their physical development other than in weekly PE sessions.

In Foundation Stage (FS), the assessment takes place through an online highlighted document which relates to the early learning goals. As a team, the teachers have broken down these goals into manageable chunks. There was no evidence of student observations being recorded. In some lessons, teachers had a method of monitoring the focused activities. However, teaching assistants did not record such information.

The FS staff recognise the importance of developing student's self-assessment skills and at the end of lessons students are encouraged to share their work with the class and this continues to be an area of focus for the school.

In primary year groups, classes are taught core subjects by class teachers. The quality of teaching was variable. Lessons plans were provided along with detailed information about the class including SEN information. Planning in FS and primary takes place under the direction of the heads of year. Each teacher has the opportunity to plan subjects and share these plans with colleagues. Although the planning process is shared the delivery of these lessons varies from class to class. In some classes the standard of spoken English being modelled to the children is not high enough.

28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

The positive attitude and behaviour of the children is a real strength and means that the teacher can focus on ensuring that learning takes place with little evidence seen of any negative behaviour in Primary and Foundation Stage. Learning Objectives were clear with success criteria shared and discussed to support assessment strategies. There was some evidence of high order questioning and evaluation although this was inconsistent.

In most lessons, clear differentiation and challenge was evident. Support for the students in English and mathematics is shared amongst the year group, coordinated by year heads. In the best lessons, this differentiation was evident in the class, with the lesson being delivered at a suitable pace engaging the students and offering challenge at all levels with the teacher's enthusiasm and subject knowledge obvious. Where the teaching was at a lower standard some students were unable to access the content and there was not enough support being offered. In some lessons although activities were differentiated, the children were all directed to start at the same point. The support provided by the teaching assistants in Key Stage 1 was varied throughout the lessons.

Projectors were used to integrate presentation into lessons. In some lessons use was made of the interactive element whiteboards and audio/video to enhance the learning. There was no evidence seen of students using individual technologies in the classroom.

A range of assessment strategies were observed in class, with peer assessment and feedback effectively used. Marking is becoming more consistent with next steps and evidence of children responding to comments. Students in primary are assessed using GL, CAT4 and regular internal assessments. Over time, this will provide a clear indication of achievement against expectations. Internal moderation of data is being developed to ensure the integrity of this data.

In the secondary year groups, some good teaching was observed across years 6-9. Teachers have good knowledge of their students as individuals and the relationships between adults and students are good. Teachers' questioning skills are mainly effective and some very good examples of differentiated, open ended questioning were observed. This was seen in Year 6 English, Year 8 history and Year 8 science. Although some examples of engaging and active learning were observed, this was inconsistent. In less successful lessons, tasks were more routine and did not always inspire or engage students. Differentiation was not always evident and students were not always stretched or challenged and became passive learners.

Books were presented to a very high standard and showed progress in all subjects. Behaviour management within secondary is a strength and in the vast majority of

28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

classes the students' behaviour and attitude within class was exemplary. Within the secondary the CAT4 assessment data is used to set targets and identify learning needs, however this is the basic target not the more challenging target.

There are examples within secondary of focussed, formative marking comments. However, these are not consistently read and acted upon by the students, so opportunities to improve their work are missed.

The teaching in KS4 and 5 is good or better. Students' attitude to their work is excellent. Whilst the level of students' English is high, the use of technical language is underdeveloped. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong and most share their enthusiasm for their subject with the students.

Throughout the school, the students consistently display good attitudes towards their learning. Although there is evidence of target setting in primary this is not evident in secondary. EYFS staff continue to develop their process of self-assessment with their children.

### 5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

The behaviour and attitude of the pupils is outstanding and is a genuine strength of the school which enables learning to take place in a very positive environment. In lessons, pupils are mostly engaged in their learning and keen to achieve. This attitude is reflected around the school, where there is very little evidence of behaviour issues. The students are articulate and their spoken English is of a very high standard, this was clearly illustrated by the head girl and deputy head boy.

Attendance, quoted at 92%, remains a target and is lower at certain identified times of the year. This issue is well recognised by the school. Efforts have been made to improve these figures and this remains an ongoing target. Punctuality remains at a good level at 98%.

Assessment using GL, CAT4 and internal assessments in both primary and secondary is now starting to provide reliable data to measure the attainment and progress of pupils. Checkpoints are still used in Year 6 and year 9 and provide useful data for comparison over time as other assessment methods evolve and data is gathered. Moderation of internal assessment is evident, for example English writing assessments in primary with a skills ladder feedback sheet in books is present and standard practice, this level of moderation is yet to be established in secondary.

Students in Year 4 and above take the CAT4 tests on entry and the GL assessments are taken in May. In primary, a 'dip' in attainment is noted after the long holiday but this is a common feature of schools with EAL learners. Internal assessment data in primary shows clear overall progress over the year from this Mid Term 1 assessment point.

Marking of books in primary has been a target and signs of improved consistency are evident with feedback and next steps in place. There are clear examples of pupils responding to comments made by the teacher. Secondary practice is developing but is not so consistent, with less evidence of quality feedback and target setting. Attention has been given in secondary to completing the marking cycle by encouraging the children to respond to comments.

Checkpoints are used to assess at Year 6 and 9 and are although these results showed a decline from 2017 to 2018 in both Year 6 and 9, when CAT4 and data is analysed this demonstrates the majority of students are working at or above expected levels in the core subject areas. In both Year 6 and 9 fewer students achieve the highest grades compared to mathematics and science.

28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

IGCSE results show year on year progress with 75% achieving A\* to C in 2018 (5 iGCSE including English and Maths). These results are above the UK averages. Predictions suggest that the iGCSE results will improve again in 2019.

Currently there is a small number of children in the older age groups at the school with 12 A Levels taken by 4 Year 13 students in 2018. Results at this level show promise with 100% of these at grades A to C. Year 12 results were 78% at A to E.

The school has used internal progress data to identify areas to target. These include KS3 English, which is currently showing no significant difference when compared to UK norms. The mean standardised age score in mathematics, science and KS2 English are all either above or significantly above UK norms, with little difference seen in performance between boys and girls. When comparing CAT4 data with progress test results, Year 10 boys are showing a significantly lower level of value added than the girls and all A Level girls are achieving above expectations with only boys falling below.



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

The quality of the students SMSC development is very good and is a key strength of the school.

The students all show respect for the school and their host country and take part in a whole school flag ceremony daily which is led by the head girl or boy. The school follows a comprehensive programme of moral education which is enhanced by the inclusion of global perspectives. This enables students to develop their self-esteem and confidence. Students are encouraged to reflect on their learning using a growth mindset approach. There are developing opportunities for students throughout the school to exercise leadership skills. The house system is effective in ensuring student involvement in organising projects and events such as assemblies, house competitions and opportunities to support charities. Students readily accept responsibility and leadership roles, and the Head and deputy head boys and girls are excellent ambassadors for the school.

The school understands that attendance is low and try to discourage parents from removing their child from school for extended periods of time. The school have tried to address this by holding memorable events at the end of the academic year such as FS2 graduation to encourage parents to stay.

The school effectively enables and encourages students to distinguish right from wrong, and to show respect for themselves and others. During the visit behaviour was very good throughout the school and students interacted positively with each other, their teachers and other adults. Students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them in terms of behaviour. In assemblies and moral lessons, topics such as tolerance delivered by the Year 7 students' in an assembly encourage the school community to reflect on their behaviour and how it can impact on others. Students know who they can talk with if they need support. The Welfare Officer is proactive and is implementing a comprehensive programme to reduce the stigma of mental health throughout the school.

In primary, the very positive relationships between students and teachers enhance the learning environment. The students show respect for one another and, whatever their cultural or religious background they feel an integral part of the community.

School charity fundraising initiatives take part throughout the year and the house events raise significant amounts of money to donate to local charities and underprivileged children both within Sharjah and internationally.

Students learn about their own, and other cultures, through the curriculum provision and the school's diversity. This is celebrated through events which reflect the international dimension of the school.

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

The provision for welfare, health and safety is good.

There is a high level of commitment to the welfare health and safety of the students within the school.

The school has embedded secure fire safety routines. Ministry visits to the school take place and fire extinguishers are regularly checked. The children have planned fire evacuation practises termly. The health and safety committee meet weekly and full site inspection takes place fortnightly.

During the school day, gates are locked and security staff document every visitor as they enter and exit the school. The security team have signing in procedures and issue lanyards to visitors. The cleanliness of the site is exemplary with maintenance staff visible throughout the day. The toilets for children are clean and children are encouraged to wash their hands before they eat. Students interviewed agreed that they felt valued and safe at school. Students also felt that their teachers cared well for them although some KS3 students were less positive about their school experience. The parents interviewed confirmed that they felt their children were happy and safe in the school environment.

Two full time nurses and one full time doctor remain onsite throughout the day to ensure that the medical welfare of the students is met. The school clinic holds records for all major and minor incidents, including those that need to be reported to external agencies. The clinic facilities meet the needs of the school well. A number of staff are trained in first aid. Additionally, some students who have also received First Aid training, are on duty during break times.

A large amount of the outdoor space is shaded and the playground area is well equipped for the students to use during breaks. During these times, the number of adults supporting play time is well matched to the number of children in the playground. The staff supervising play time wear luminous bands so that they are easily recognised by students.

The pastoral care for the children is an asset to the school. A dedicated welfare officer is based in school who works with children regularly. The pastoral support for students in KS5 is exemplary with children being equipped for life beyond their school years. The Welfare Officer provides new staff with Child Protection and Safeguarding training at the start of every academic year, including informing the staff on reporting procedures. The staff also have access to online Educare CPD, which they are expected to complete. The school's management information system, Engage, is well used to record and log concerns about a student. The access to this information is kept confidential and access is only granted to

28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

designated members of staff. The welfare officer (who is deputy designated safeguarding lead) has also made links with a psychologist who regularly attends parent workshops to speak to parents about mental health issues. However attendance at these sessions is low.

The school promote growth mindset as a key priority for the school. The school recognised the lack of student independence across the school. The teachers have worked hard to change the way students think about problems and to develop resilience in their learning, moving away from a culture of blame.

The school holds a file with all risk assessments. Those that are long standing are reviewed annually. All teachers complete these when they take the children out of school. In the secondary science labs all chemicals are stored safely away from the children. The school holds after-school activities twice a week. Children can register on to these. Attendance registers are created using Engage. Engage also holds all information about students, including emergency contact details. These can be accessed by all members of staff.

During teacher absences the school is able to provide cover internally. Planning is shared.

A directive from the Education Ministry of Sharjah ensures that swimming now only takes place for students in Year 4 and above. When swimming lessons are taking place, the ratio of adults to children is met and a nominated member of staff acts as a lifeguard.

The school displays awareness of cyber safety. That this was evident was seen in some lessons across the school. The school also runs anti-bullying campaigns throughout the school. In Primary, the children felt that cases of bullying were dealt with quickly. However, in Secondary the perceptions of the students differ.

Clear procedures and expectations are evident for the transportation of students to and from school. Logbooks for bus drivers and bus supervisors to sign in and out are present. The school provides the parents with a mobile app that they can use to track the whereabouts of their child, logging when they boarded the school bus and when they were handed to an assigned adult. If there is a change to the usual adult then the bus supervisor is informed of the change and they carry a waiver form. The buses are all fitted with CCTV to ensure child safety. However, systems for children being collected by parents or drivers are not as well established.

The school promotes healthy eating, in foundation stage children were made aware of healthy and unhealthy food. For older children a canteen is available on site for students to purchase light snacks. After listening to student feedback concerning the canteen, the contract is now being changed. A number of water coolers are available throughout the school allowing children access to fresh, cooled water throughout the day.

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

The suitability of the proprietor, board members and staff meets the standard.

There are positive relationships with the principal and the board. This ensures a smooth day-to-day operation of the school.

The board is committed to supporting the development of the schools in the group and has appointed a team of advisors to sit on the board. The board has recognised the need to increase professional development opportunities to further enhance the impact of teaching and assessment and this will be led by one of these advisors.

Staffing levels are sufficient for the successful delivery of the curriculum. However, posts of responsibility are not evenly distributed across the school.

The owner and governing board are knowledgeable and experienced. they receive regular progress reports on the school's performance from the Principal but do not hold the school fully to account or challenge decisions made with sufficient rigour.

All staff from overseas must satisfy the local requirements of the MoE before a residence visa is issued. These include all the appropriate checks. The school ensures that all staff employed within the school and who have access to children, (including those staff who are employed by an agency) have full police checks. All teachers employed by the school have 2 references, but this does not extend to teaching assistants. The school keeps records of staff that currently work in the school and those that have worked in the school since the last inspection.

No member of staff has undertaken safer recruitment training. The Designated Safeguarding Officer does not hold suitable training to fulfil this role effectively.

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

The premises and accommodation are fit for purpose and provide a suitable learning environment for the students.

Security at the site is good with visitors registered on arrival and guided through the welcoming reception area. The security guards are supported by colleagues from the maintenance department at busy times. The site is secure with CCTV cameras in place.

Regular health and safety checks are made and logged. Fire drills are regular, logged and meet local standards. Evacuation routes and assembly points are clearly signed. The clinic, run full time by a doctor and two nurses, is well resourced. Development of the clinic will be needed as the school grows further. No issues with general maintenance around the school were noted.

There are a number of outdoor play areas, including a playground, football, basketball and netball facilities. The central outdoor area is covered and used for break times and the flag ceremony each morning. Breaks are adequately supervised, including older students used in a monitoring role with the younger children. Recent developments have been made to the outdoor facilities, with further plans in place for cricket nets to further enhance the facilities.

There are adequate toilets around the site, with adult and student toilets clearly labelled. The support staff keep the site clean with great efficiency. Drinking water is available and clean.

Classrooms are light and kept at a suitable temperature. Displays in primary are often interactive 'working walls' which are up to date and further support learning. In some corridors the displays need updating, although this appearance is not helped by the climate. Painting of the school is done on rotation during the holidays, with the aim being to paint all classes once a year. Secondary art students are spending time painting characters on the walls in Foundation, adding to the general appearance.

There are good quality facilities already in place for swimming, secondary ICT, PE, drama and performing arts and science. Plans to further develop the site, including a new Foundation building as well as canteen, library and staff areas will only have a positive impact.

## 10 *Standard 6*

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

The provision of information to parents is at a good general standard, with parents reporting they are happy with the communication they receive. Whilst the structure for complaints was not clear the parents were happy that communications and issues were dealt with quickly by staff at school.

The school uses *Engage* and *Class Dojo* to inform, with a home/school diary used in the younger year groups to communicate information. Internal assessment data is shared through *Engage* with the Secondary pupils and parents to assist with target setting and progress. This transparency is positive and will have an increasing impact as data on progress and attainment develops. Parents are also informed about progress, attainment and the next steps in their child's learning in written reports twice a year and at individual Parent Teacher Conferences. The website contains some important information, including the education philosophy, vision and mission statements and a secondary newsletter. The inclusion of a greater range of information for both current and prospective parents would be beneficial and potentially have great impact on the school.

Coffee mornings, looking at issues such as student stress and mental health are operated by the school for parents. Increasing attendance at these is an ongoing target for the school, the effort made so far by the school to improve attendance has been recognised.

General feedback from the parents is very positive about their children's education at the school and they appreciate the often very personal element of communication offered. Parents commented that they felt teachers were approachable and available and that events such as concerts add a great deal to the school. The parents of the younger children are more likely to attend events at school than those of the older students. There is a PTA in place which is recognised by the other parents for the work that they do.

## 11 Standard 7

### The school's procedure for handling complaints

A grievance policy is in place.

Parents were not very clear about the process of making a formal complaint. They reported that the process varied greatly and was dependent upon who or what the complaint is about.

The policy lacks clarity of procedures. The various stages and timescales for responses are not given. The policy is not readily available to parents on the website. However parents stated that they were happy with the speed of response when issues were raised.

The policy does contain more detail for dealing with student complaints.

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

The leadership and management of the school meet BSO standards.

Leadership and management meet the standard required for BSO with aspects that are good or better. The proprietors ensure 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 are positive relationships between the principle and the board. Recently a team of advisors has been appointed to serve on the board for the Scholars International Group. They have responsibility for directing the administration, the operations, the auditing, the ERP and the communication across the group. However they have yet to hold senior leaders to account.

There are school policies in place, though it is unclear when and how they are reviewed by the board.

The recent school self-evaluation prepared for the inspection indicates that the rigour of analysis and observation is variable: some data was incorrect.

Overall, the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and, in many cases, better. However, the school's performance and line management processes would benefit from greater rigour.

Recent external monitoring reports (by the Ministry of Education evaluation) identified that the principal should ensure that processes for school self-evaluation are suitably rigorous and truly reflect the school's performance. It suggested that the school should develop a rigorous process of appraisal for teachers and support staff: the governing board should ensure that the school is fully held to account for students' outcomes. Observations and interviews undertaken this week confirm that this is still the case.

There is an example of good leadership in the primary section where the head of primary has empowered the literacy co-ordinator to develop a literacy programme across the section. Currently there are no co-ordinators for mathematics or science in this section.

The school development plan provides a roadmap for the future but there are no success criteria: it lacks a cohesion and clarity that would make it a more powerful document. Many of the items had completion dates in 2018 and term 1 and 2 of 2019 but observations did not indicate that they had been achieved. It appears that heads of sections are sometimes able to function with too little attention paid to whole school direction. Whilst there is a



28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

shared school vision, not all staff are as aware of it as they should be: progress made on the targets set in the last inspection has been slow.

The school runs well on a day to day basis. Operational procedures are established and understood. Senior staff have established a calm and caring community.

The school offers a satisfactory curriculum in key stages 4 and 5 and English national curriculum in KS1-3, and has sufficient resources to support the provision.