



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

Sharjah English School

Sharjah
United Arab Emirates

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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, 70 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, a range of teachers, representatives of the governors and groups of students. Two and a half school days were monitored.

The lead inspector was John Cranfield. The team members were Kathryn Brand, Stuart Dobson and Nick Lee.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

Sharjah English School (SES) meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas accreditation.

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

SES is a good school with some outstanding features. It is highly effective in meeting its mission of 'providing quality British education to children aged 3 to 18 in an inclusive, caring environment, which also offers them stimulation and challenge'.

Teaching is of a good standard throughout the school and the dedication of teachers is reflected in the positive achievements of the students. A good proportion of students across the school attain higher grades than their peers in the United Kingdom. Students are happy, articulate and confident learners. Their attitudes, values, and behaviours are excellent. Responses received from a range of parent and student questionnaires indicate strong support for the school and recognition of the high quality of education it provides

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths:

- The pro-active involvement of the board of governors in the strategic direction of the school.
- Teaching standards across the school are high. Most lessons are good or better.
- The curriculum prepares students well for entry/re-entry into the UK education system.
- The school is highly effective in enabling all students to develop their personal skills and qualities. Students are thoughtful, well behaved, treat others with respect and have well developed social skills.
- Safeguarding of all students is a priority. It is under-pinned by excellent pastoral care and robust welfare, health and safety policy and procedures.
- The whole school community, teaching, non-teaching, administration and ancillary staff work to promote high quality learning and care for all students.
- The school is held in high regard by the wider community and parents. Students are proud to be members of the school and value the opportunities it provides.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

- 1) Monitor the impact of a whole school management information system on raising student attainment and demonstrating value added.
- 2) Maximise the potential of a single site to ensure a greater continuity in policy and practice across the whole school.
- 3) Support and monitor the use of the full range of assessment information in planning to maximise the learning of all students

4. The context of the school

Full name of school	Sharjah English School		
Address	P. O. Box 1600, Sharjah, UAE Maleha Road (Opposite University City), Sharjah, UAE		
Telephone Number/s	++9716 5589304		
Fax Number	++9716 5589305		
Website Address	www.sharjahenglishschool.org		
Key Email Addresses	Principal - jnolan@sharjahenglishschool.org Principal's PA – shennessy@sharjahenglishschool.org Bursar - bursar@sharjahenglishschool.org		
Headteacher/Principal	John Nolan		
Chair of Board of Governors/Proprietor	Khalid Al Amiri		
Age Range	3-18 years		
Number of Pupils	Total 782	Boys 394	Girls 388
Pupil Numbers by Age	0-2 Years 0	3-5 Years 188	6-11 Years 297
	12-16 Years 231	17-18 Years 60	18+ Years 6
Total Number of Part-Time Pupils	None		

Sharjah English School (SES) was established in 1974 as a primary school. The school operated with a Board of Governors under a constitution written initially in 1975, and updated in 1978. It was established as a non-profit organisation with a local sponsor, who does not participate in the running of the school. The secondary school opened in 2005, with 33 students, at which time SES relocated to its present site. The school's constitution was further updated in 2014, placing the oversight of the school in the Board's hands, and enshrining its not for profit status. The first GCSE exams were taken in 2008 with A Levels following in 2010. There are presently 785 students on role. Virtually all primary pupils transfer to the secondary school.

The school continues to expand, at an average rate of about 7% per year. Admissions for September 2016 are oversubscribed and waiting lists exist for every year group, except Year 12. Building plans for a new primary classroom have been delayed. The current Year 6 is taught in in the Arts Block, rather than with the other junior classes. Shared facilities such as the Sports Hall are fully booked during the week.

There is now a three form intake from Foundation 1 up to Year 3. The class sizes in Foundation Stage are a maximum of 22. In each of the other primary years and in secondary the maximum is 25.

The school hosts MEd students from higher technology institutions and teachers from other Sharjah schools. The school recently hosted a Pearson Internship and Mentoring Programme for leaders and managers from other schools.

The school has identified meeting ministry requirements and offering a complete UK educational experience in the time available as major challenges.

The school has been accredited by BSME and BSO.

4.1 British nature of the school

The appearance, nature and ethos of the school are recognisably British. The school was established as a British school, by British companies and parents working in Sharjah – its original founding imperative was to provide an education based on UK principles, procedures and a curriculum that would permit children to join or re-join the UK education system without disadvantage at any stage. UK passport holders comprise 32.2% of the student cohort. The majority of students continue their education in universities or colleges in the UK.

SES follows the Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework, the National Curriculum for England for Key Stages 1 to 3, leading to GCSE and A Levels. Assessments are based on national standards from the UK. Throughout the school, where practicable, subjects have a British focus in their content.

The school is organized according to the pastoral structures used in English schools. British practice is evident in approaches to performance management, staff target setting and annual review meetings. All communications from the school to families and students are provided in English only, as are all school publications, reports, letters and the website. Texts, materials, educational equipment and software are UK sourced. The Head Boy and Girl, prefects, class representatives and house captains all contribute to giving the school a British feel. The importance of extra-curricular provision including clubs and school trips, are in line with British best practice. The school celebrates special events in the UK, for example Remembrance Day.

There are strong UK links with the school's careers department and university applications programmes. The school is a member of ISCO (Independent Schools Careers Organisation) and registered with UCAS.

Parents are supportive of the British nature of the curriculum. Interviews with parents and feedback from parental questionnaires suggest they appreciate the high quality of education on offer at SES.

5. *Standard 1*

The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided by SES is good with outstanding features.

5.1 Curriculum

There is full-time supervised education for all students of compulsory school age. The National Curriculum of England provides the framework for teaching and learning and for the academic, moral, physical, creative and social development of students. The curriculum provides opportunities for all students to learn and make progress. The curriculum is broad and balanced offering a wide range of courses and subjects. It is enriched by extensive extra-curricular activities and takes into account national requirements. This enables pupils to enter, or re-enter the UK educational system at an appropriate level, if that is what they wish to do. In addition, it is enhanced by a variety of local and international educational visits, and special events.

The school has a written curriculum policy, supported by schemes of work and appropriate planning documentation. The principal language of instruction is English.

EYFS is delivered in full and the methods of delivery closely resemble those offered in a majority of British schools. Setting by ability is used in the lower school to match the literacy curriculum to individual requirements, including those with special educational needs. The primary curriculum meets the needs of all students and is enhanced by Arabic, PE and music, taught by specialist teachers. Setting is introduced in Year 6 for English and mathematics. Students have access to a computer suite once a week and staff are able to book mini iPads in order to support learning in class. The Key Stage 3 curriculum offers the full range of National Curriculum areas of study. At Key Stage 4, all students study English, mathematics and science in addition to choosing other subjects from the 10 option available. Students in Key Stage 4 normally sit 9 or 10 GCSEs in total. More able mathematicians sit their GCSE examination at the end of Year 10 and proceed to further mathematics. At Key Stage 5, students can choose from 13 subjects on offer, including art and design, design and technology, and PE. Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good across the school.

Arabic is taught from Foundation Stage 2 upwards and the school is working towards implementing the new requirements of the local Ministry Regulations. The curriculum promotes an interest and knowledge in the culture, traditions and history of the Emirates, and the world at large – it is international in perspective and scope. The curriculum is supported by effective identification and provision of learning support. Throughout the school, there is a well-coordinated programme of support and withdrawal. Individual education plans are written for all students on the register and effectively shared with all staff. In secondary, there are plans in place to extend the identification of needs for all students through the implementation of effective student profiling. Positive relationships with an educational psychologist and parents of students on the register enhance

provision and impact. As a consequence of changing demographics in the Early Years, the school has identified the need to improve provision for students who speak EAL.

The appointment of a new secondary Gifted and Talented coordinator has given fresh impetus to the identification and provision for the more gifted and talented students. Whilst only in post since January, the coordinator is focusing on spreading the concept of learning dispositions to all staff to support learning. Current practice includes the targeting of identified students for enrichment opportunities such as talks by external speakers.

Transition throughout the school is managed well. There are close links across the primary, both through proximity and liaison, ensuring a smooth transition. 'Taster days' for Year 6 have been implemented in order to further enhance the transition from Key Stage 2 into secondary. The options process in Year 9 enables students to make informed choices and prepare for the challenges of GCSE. Year 12 students have an induction programme at the start of the sixth form. Throughout the later years, secondary students receive careers guidance. 'Futurewise' in Year 10 provides systematic careers advice. Students are helped by tutors and head of sixth form to apply for university places, complete personal statements and UCAS forms. Work experience in Year 10 and the Life Management Skills programme in the sixth form, the PSHE programme and a range of leadership roles throughout the school provide students with the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

Overall the teaching and assessment are good with outstanding examples

Across the EYFS, the quality of teaching is outstanding, good and satisfactory in almost equal proportions; there is no unsatisfactory teaching. Across Key Stage 1, teaching is predominantly good. There is however, limited use of assessment to inform lesson planning and to set appropriate challenges for all students. Whilst there is some evidence of effective differentiation, higher ability students are insufficiently challenged.

In the outstanding lessons there is enthusiasm and energy in teaching and learning. Levels of engagement are high. Where teaching is only satisfactory, the main learning activity is listening to the teacher; lengthy descriptions that many of the EAL students fail to follow. Across Key Stage 2, the majority of lessons are good or better, the majority being good with outstanding features. Assessment for learning is evident both orally throughout lessons and in exercise books. Learning objectives and success criteria are made clear to students and referred to throughout lessons. The use of assessment information to help match work to students' needs is underdeveloped. In the majority of lessons students enjoy their learning underpinned by excellent behaviour. Students and their parents are aware of their targets; they understand what is required to improve. Although students with individual learning needs are identified in planning, provision is under developed. In the best lessons learning activities are effectively differentiated, clearly meeting the needs of individual students.

Across the secondary school, the quality of teaching is good or better. Teaching is stronger across Key Stages 4 and 5. Whilst nearly all teachers write lesson plans, the quality and efficacy of planning is inconsistent. Where teaching and learning is good or better, planning clearly highlights differentiated learning outcomes and activities, progression and assessment opportunities. In best practice, observed in English lessons, oral and written feedback clearly identified student's strengths and areas to develop. Clear targets for improvement are often accompanied by challenging and expansive questions. Written feedback in many other areas was erratic or centred on a 'tick and flick' approach with brief praise comments. Clear learning objectives are identified in the majority of lessons and in the best lessons these are discussed and explored by students to ensure clarity of understanding. They are however rarely referred to during the plenary to assess student mastery. In the best lessons, inspirational teachers apply a range of modelling and scaffolding techniques to ensure that new knowledge is clearly understood and applied. In a particularly effective Year 11 PE theory lesson, the teacher encouraged students to reflect on their understanding of a topic on a continuum, before and after a learning activity; student progress was clearly identified. In an Arabic lesson, the variety of learning experiences effectively motivated and engaged all students in their learning. Students work highly effectively both independently and collaboratively, maximising learning time. The level of challenge for all students is not consistent across all subjects. In some lessons there is little or no planning for challenge.

Across the school classroom resources are good in quality, quantity and range. They are nearly always used effectively. The majority of teachers demonstrate a sound understanding of the aptitudes, cultural background, learning needs and prior attainments of the students, although this is less so for EAL students. The use of new technologies to enhance learning across the school is underdeveloped. In one design and technology (DT) lesson, students were encouraged to use their devices to assess their models and the effective use of Google classroom was seen in another DT lesson.

The school has a clear framework for assessment. In early years, students are assessed against the Early Learning Goals. At the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, assessment is based on levels, comparable to age related UK expectations. Key Stage 3 assessments are linked to National Curriculum levels. There are regular checkpoints on student progress and these are reported clearly to parents. Foundation Stage students receive 3 written reports a year, primary and secondary students 5 monitoring reports and sixth form monthly monitoring reports accompanied by a full written report at the end of term 2.

5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

Students attain high standards and / or make good progress across all key stages

The youngest students are assessed in relation to the revised EYFS profile. At the end of the Foundation Stage, standards are broadly in line with UK national averages. Overall, 52% of students, 60% girls and 44% boys, achieve a good level of development compared to 60% in the UK. The average points score at the end of Foundation Stage is 32.8 compared to the UK figure of 33.8. Progress over time is good or better.

Attainment in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 compare favourably to UK national expectations. Girls substantially outperform boys in both reading and mathematics. Key Stage 2 assessments are internally marked and moderated. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are high. Over 70% of students exceed UK national average expectation in reading. The figures for SPaG and mathematics are 74% and 66% respectively.

Students continue to make good or better progress across the secondary years. Standards at the end of Key Stage 4 are high. 46% of students achieve A*-A grades compared to 21% in the UK. 85% of students attain 5 A*-C grades including mathematics and English compared to 69% in the UK.

Following a review of the 2014 results, the school has identified a noticeable difference in the performance of boys and girls. Targeted intervention programmes are planned.

At A level over the past 3 years, 27%, 49% and 35% of secondary school students obtained A or A* grades compared to the UK national average of 27%. In the most recent examinations 62% of students obtained A*/B grades compare to 52% in the UK.

The secondary school uses a range of data, including CAT4 scores, to set progress targets. The great majority of students meet or exceed their targets. Learning support students typically exceed their CAT prediction by a grade at GCSE.

Students are gaining new knowledge, understanding and skills at a good rate across all key stages.

Although many high achieving students are provided with an appropriate level of challenge, this is inconsistent across the school. Although the school is becoming data rich it is yet to become data powerful. Whilst data analysis occurs at departmental, key stage and management level, the outcomes are not yet used strategically to improve student attainment and raise the quality of teaching and learning.

There is a clear focus on continuous improvement in terms of student attendance and punctuality. 'Engage' software is used to monitor attendance and punctuality. There is

regular and effective communication to parents. The attendance rate for last term, 93.05% is a reflection of the combined efforts of staff, students and parents.

The school is highly successful in helping students to develop their personal skills and qualities: students are thoughtful and well behaved. Students are highly 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 lives.

6. *Standard 2*

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Overall, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is outstanding.

Students develop their awareness and understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects through a combination of themed assemblies, planned PSHE lessons, tutor time, extra-curricular activities, the formal and informal curriculum, as they progress through the school.

Students show a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible. Spiritual development is good overall though variable, because some teachers give more attention to this aspect than others. In some classes, students use reflection and meditation very well to clarify their thinking and to develop empathy and sensitivity, for example in a very short session on 'peace'. As students move through the school, they develop a set of values, principles and beliefs which inform their perspective on life and their patterns of behaviour.

The pastoral curriculum reinforces students' understanding of right and wrong and respect for the law, through for example 'Golden Rules' and shared behavioural expectations. Minor misdemeanours are dealt with effectively and appropriately. This results in a positive learning atmosphere. For Muslim students, the principles of right and wrong are supported through Islamic studies and the Quran. Behaviour is outstanding in classrooms and around the school. Students co-operate well with each other, their teachers and other adults in the school.

Students start school with varied prior social experience but make very good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. There is a high level of success in meeting the Early Learning Goals for social learning. Social awareness is enhanced through subjects such as geography, history and English, in addition to the planned PSHE programme.

Students are respectful of others' views and cultures, and are strongly committed to promote good relationships between people regardless of age, cultural background, social class, race or gender. Tolerance, democracy, respect for freedom of expression and other human rights are developed throughout the school. Care and concern for others extends beyond the school: last year students raised a substantial amount of money for the Red Crescent. Rich curriculum experiences ensure that students develop a very good knowledge and understanding of citizenship in the UAE and UK and more generally about the need to be a good citizen. The school is highly effective in promoting knowledge and understanding of modern British life.

The school provides many opportunities for students to develop their self-awareness, promote their self-esteem and increase their self-confidence. Nearly all students take an active interest in school life through participation in choirs, concerts, Model United Nations, sporting activities and assemblies. The school encourages responsibility and provides opportunities for students to show initiative and demonstrate responsibility, for example school council representatives and voting for house captains and supporting them in their

role. A high number of students participate in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme; 19 students have already achieved gold award and a further 20 are currently undertaking it.

7. Standard 3

The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of students throughout the school is excellent.

The school prioritises students' wellbeing. Careful and regular checks are made to ensure that the premises are safe and in good order. The school site is kept very clean throughout the day. The outdoor areas are safe and very well cared for.

The school has robust health and safety policies that are followed rigorously. Written policies are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of students in school, and on trips within the country and abroad. There is an anti-bullying policy document which highlights preventative procedures in the first instance, moving to more punitive depending on circumstance.

Relationships between staff and students are excellent. Students feel safe and valued as individuals.

Parents identify the safe and caring environment as a significant strength of the school. Fire drills are conducted three times a year. Evacuations are timed and monitored. Transport safety, internet safety and well-being procedures are given high priority.

Admission and attendance registers are accurately maintained, exceeding local regulatory requirements. Daily attendance is recorded and tracking of absence is rigorous.

Students' medical records are stored confidentially. The school nurse and doctor provide on-site care, support and liaise closely with parents on any medical issues. Students are encouraged to lead healthy life styles, with a wide range of opportunities for active play and sports.

Teaching assistants and administrative staff contribute to the safety of students by ensuring security procedures are followed, for example access to the swimming pool and start and end of the day arrangements. The premises are safe and secure. The dedicated special needs team effectively support students cognitive and physical needs.

8. *Standard 4*

The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The suitability of the governing body and staff is of a high order. The governing body provides strategic direction and ensures all local requirements are met. They do not interfere with the management of the school; there are clear lines of demarcation.

The board ensures the school meets the safety, care and guidance requirements for all students. In addition, they take responsibility for the recruitment and checking of staff credentials.

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 UAE and previous employment activity. The Ministry of Education must approve the qualifications and status of teachers employed by the school before issuing work visas. This process requires the checking of original certification including the attestation of degree certificates and teaching qualifications held by teachers.

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.

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

The accommodation and resources at Sharjah English School are good with many outstanding features.

The campus has a number of buildings situated within very attractive and well-maintained grounds. Extensive use is made of the school's pool, gymnasium and recreational areas to provide a wide range of sporting and play activities. The school is developing new primary school accommodation and is planning to provide much needed additional shade for the swimming pool.

The teaching areas are well resourced with interactive whiteboards in all classrooms. The furniture and fittings are appropriate for the age and needs of all students including those with special needs. The specialist teaching areas for science, library, drama, ICT and PE are well equipped. There are sufficient areas for shade during non-contact time and sufficient bathrooms. There is a common room for Year 12 and 13 students.

The facilities manager and her team ensure that health and safety checks are carried out regularly. Any identified health and safety concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively. The school meets or exceeds all national requirements regarding the safety and maintenance of the facilities. There are security stations at the access points and the school is surrounded by a secure boundary walls. The security staff monitor the main entrance.

The leadership team and staff are present to greet the students and parents at the start of the day and to supervise them before they go into the buildings. Similarly, at the end of the day, students are escorted to the pick-up points. School buses fully comply with local safety regulations.

There are no known problems with the water supply or drainage. There are excellent facilities for students who are, or become, ill. No food is cooked on site. Hot food is provided by an external contractor. There are good facilities for hygienic serving and consumption. Sound insulation, air conditioning units, lighting and acoustics allow for effective teaching and communication. The flooring is in good condition.

10. *Standard 6*

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The quality of information provided by the school to parents, prospective parents and its wider community is excellent.

Interviewed parents were highly complementary about the school's web based Communicator in keeping them fully informed alongside the school's newsletter, issued twice a term. Annual parental surveys confirm a high level of parental satisfaction with the school. Formal reports and regular consultation meetings keep parents well informed about their children's progress, levels of attainment and attitudes to learning. In the primary school, parents can meet teachers at any time informally before or after school. Teachers email addresses are published on line and parents are encouraged to contact them with any concerns. Daily reading records and a homework diary help keep parents informed about their children's progress. Parents in the secondary school are encouraged to attend transition meetings and option evenings. In addition, parents have a voice on the governing body. Prospective parents are well-supported and kept informed at every stage of the admission process. Face to face meetings are given a high priority. Parents are invited to attend music concerts, school productions and sports days.

The schools aims and ethos feature prominently on the web site. Key policies, including admissions, discipline and exclusion, and particulars of educational and welfare provision for students with learning difficulties and / or disabilities, and for students for whom English is and additional language are available on request. Details of the curriculum and a copy of the complaints procedure are posted on the web site. The school publishes academic performance data during the previous school year and includes the results of public examinations.

Contact details of the school and the board are readily available. A comprehensive log is kept on all staff employed together with their qualifications and service records.

Following any formal inspections or accreditations, the school publishes the full report on the web-site.

11. *Standard 7*

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school has a formal complaints procedure that is transparent, open and effective. It takes into account local laws and regulations.

The policy is available as a hard copy in addition to the web site. The complaints procedures are rigorously adhered to and highly effective in ensuring that a complaint is dealt with at the appropriate level.

Clear time scales are set out for the management of a complaint. The school aims to respond to a complaint within 24 hours. Most concerns are resolved through direct contact between a parent and class teacher or tutor; parents are able to contact teachers via email. If the issue is not resolved, the school's open door policy ensures parents have easy access to section heads and the principal.

There is an expectation that more serious complaints are made in writing. If a complaint remains unresolved, parents are encouraged to address their concerns to the parent governor either by letter or email. The parent governor acts as an independent intermediary.

Should the issue remain unresolved the parent may address the Chairman of the Board, accompanied if requested. Any complaint beyond the most routine is recorded in emails / correspondence. More serious complaints are addressed in the principal's monthly report to the Board of Governors and recorded in the minutes, as are subsequent decisions or ruling by the Board.

Ultimately parents have recourse to the Ministry of Education. Confidentiality is assured throughout the whole process.

Parental feedback indicates a high degree of satisfaction with both the speed of response and the outcome of any complaint.

12. *Standard 8*

The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable.

13. *Standard 9*

Leadership and management of the school

Overall the quality of leadership and management is good. The governance role fulfilled by the board is of a high order. There is clear educational direction as reflected in the quality of education, care of the students and the fulfilment of the school's aims and ethos. There are highly positive relationships between the principal and the board.

After a period of rapid growth, including the appointment of some new senior leaders, the school is now entering a period of stability. Consequently, structures and many policies and procedures are being updated to reflect the new situation. Senior leaders and the board of governors consistently communicate high expectations and ambition. Whilst school development planning identifies clear targets with timeframes, the success criteria do not always focus sufficiently on improving the quality of teaching and learning, or on raising student attainment. The 'Ten Year Business Plan instigated in 2014, provides an effective future focus on enrolment, key building dates and fee structure. The Board of Governors systematically challenge senior leaders.

The school has recognised that middle leaders (in many instances) are growing into their roles. Consequently, there is a need to ensure that all middle and senior leaders are equipped with the knowledge and skills to effectively discharge their responsibilities and possess the confidence to be held and hold others to account.

The need for a more strategic approach to performance management, whole school priorities and a planned continuous professional development programme has been identified by the whole school co-ordinator of professional development. Within secondary some innovative training provision is apparent with 'pop-up' departmental sharing, 'bright spots', 'bright spaces' and the recent introduction of 'golden tickets' to enable greater sharing of best practice.

Although teaching is generally good and frequently better, monitoring is not always effective in further raising the quality and provide a greater focus for raising student attainment across the whole school.

Effective policies ensure that students make at least good progress in literacy. The school's curriculum provides well organised and effective opportunities for all groups of students to learn well and make good progress. The school is in the process of planning to meet the needs of the increasing number of students for whom English is an additional language more effectively.

The absence of an effective whole school tracking system is a missed opportunity to provide evidence for individual and departmental value added, and increase the level of accountability across the school.

The school ethos promotes positive behaviour and good personal development for students, including all aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school runs well on a day-to-day basis. Operational procedures are well established and understood. The Board is highly successful in securing, supporting and developing sufficient high quality staff and ensuring their suitability to work with children. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and exceed statutory requirements.