



**British School  
Overseas**  
Inspected by Penta International

# **Inspection report**

## **St Christopher's Primary School**

### **Bahrain**

**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, 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 accreditation visit, over 60 part- lessons were observed, school documentation and policies were analysed, students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions, both formal and informal, were held with board members, the principal, headteachers, senior managers, middle leaders and a range of teachers and groups across all phases. A focus group of parents and a focus group of pupils were consulted about their views of the school. The accreditation team were in school for three days.

The Lead Inspector was Gerry Cranfield. The team members were Rosie Clark, Colin Dyson, Simon Higham and Nan McKeown.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

St Christopher's Primary School meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

### 3. Overall effectiveness of the school

St Christopher's Primary School is an outstanding school. It provides a high quality of education underpinned by exemplary pupil care. Overall the quality of learning, teaching and leadership are excellent. The pupils, parents and staff are highly committed to the school and feel valued and appreciated.

Nearly all pupils make good or better progress. Standards at the end of all key stages are high.

Pupils are well supported through high quality pastoral care throughout the school and the effective implementation of robust welfare, health and safety policies and procedures.

The curriculum is broad and balanced; enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

The board is highly effective in providing strategic direction and support for the school. They hold the senior leadership to account.

St Christopher's Primary School sets high expectations of all its pupils and they respond by making good or better progress in their lessons. Levels of attainment are high in both academic and wider creative capacities that enable pupils to be highly effective learners.

The leadership of the headteachers have a highly positive impact on all areas of the school ensuring that staff have a clear understanding of its present and future priorities, and ensure these are monitored and developed. The headteachers are passionate in their desire to continually improve all aspects of the school. The clearly stated vision is shared and understood by all stakeholders and drives the development of the school.

Teaching is of a high standard throughout the school and the dedication of teachers is reflected in the academic and personal achievements of pupils. Teams of specialist teachers have a positive impact on the quality and range of learning opportunities. Classroom assistants are used effectively to maximise their impact on pupils' learning and progress.

### 3.1 What the school does well

St Christopher's School has many strengths which include:

- The proactive involvement of the board of governors in the strategic development of the school
- The Principal is visionary in ensuring that the school remains at the forefront of educational development.
- The determined, hard-working approach of the Principal and the senior leaders in ensuring that all staff are kept up to date with educational research and the latest initiatives
- The collaborative teamwork that underpins the work of all staff in the school
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is outstanding. It is supported by excellent pastoral care and robust welfare, health and safety policies and procedures.
- The school is highly successful in enabling all pupils to develop their personal skills and qualities: pupils are thoughtful, well behaved, treat others with respect and have well-developed social skills.
- The school's commitment to the further development and implementation of tracking data and target setting
- The wide range of extra-curricular activities and out of lessons learning which enhance the learning of all pupils.
- The whole school community - teaching, non-teaching and support staff - work as a team to promote high quality learning and care for all pupils.
- The quality of the curriculum planning and implementation enables all pupils to achieve well; a high percentage achieve outstanding results compared to English national standards.
- The school is held in high regard by the wider community and parents. Pupils 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:

- Ensure planning enables pupils to develop higher order thinking skills so that all learners at all levels are challenged in all lessons
- Ensure that the school's process for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating operational policies and procedures is sustainable
- Ensure that pace, creativity and planning for the development of the autonomous learner and competent individual are consistent across all lessons.

## 4. The context of the school

St Christopher's School is a co-educational international school, providing a British-style of education for pupils aged 3 to 18. The school is licensed under Bahraini law as a private and non-profit making school. It registered with the Ministry of Education as a 'Foreign Educational Institution'. The school is also registered with the Department for Education (DfES) in the UK.

There are presently 2,255 pupils on role representing 75 nationalities. The gender split is almost 50%. The major nationalities represented are: British 37%, Arab nationals (including 19% Bahraini) Indian 7% and American 7%. The majority of pupils come from professional families, from which a number have at least one parent travelling extensively overseas on business. The majority rely on domestic help to support their household, which affects the levels of independence exhibited by many pupils.

All students have to satisfy admission criteria. From Year 1 onwards, prospective students sit an entrance test to ensure they can access the curriculum on offer, with support if necessary.

The school follows the National Curriculum for England from EYFS to iGCSE, in addition to meeting local requirements for the teaching of Arabic Language for pupils in Year 1 to 11 and Islam for Muslim students in the senior school. The history and geography of Bahrain is in the process of being fully implemented into the humanities curriculum. Post 16 pupils have the choice of following either GCE Advanced Level (International A-level in some subjects) or the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme.

The school has identified the following as potential barriers to learning:

- Government directives on the curriculum and wider school regulations
- Ongoing civil unrest and a general climate of uncertainty
- Turnover of locally employed staff, including teaching assistants, compounded by the limited availability of short term supply cover
- Limited availability of local resources – sourcing from overseas takes time and attracts high shipping costs
- Limited opportunities for learning through local educational visits.

## 4.1 British nature of the school

The British nature of the school is well above the standard required. It is a strength.

The ethos, nature and appearance of the school are recognisably British and mirror what would be found in the independent sector in the UK. The school is a member of British Schools in the Middle East (BSME), Association of British Schools Overseas (AoBSO), The Headmasters' and Headmistresses Conference (HMC) and the Independent Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS).

There are strong links between St Christopher's and the UK. 37% of the pupils are British nationals. Many pupils who enter the school have had experience of UK state schools, UK Independent Sector or other British International schools. Pupils sitting entrance examinations for independent schools perform well and usually secure their first choice of schooling.

86% of staff (excluding teachers of Arabic) are British nationals with British qualifications who have taught in the UK. 11 of the 12 senior managers hold the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and the school Principal was awarded the OBE for services to British education in Bahrain and the Middle East.

The school is organized according to the structures used in English schools. Classroom management, displays of work, three term year, age-related year groups and the importance given to pastoral care contribute to a British feel of the school. St Christopher's follows the National Curriculum for England with the addition of IGCSE in certain subjects, International A level and the IB Diploma Programme. UK practice is evident in approaches to performance management, staff target setting and annual review meetings. St Christopher's uses a range of UK assessments in addition to CEM data to track the progress of its pupils against those in the UK.

All communications from the school to families and pupils are provided in English, as are all school publications, reports, letters and the website. The importance of extra-curricular provision including clubs and school trips is in line with British best practice.

The school celebrates UK traditions and events, for example Remembrance Sunday, Queen's Jubilee, 'Great British Week' and Christmas and Easter in a culturally sensitive manner. Year 6 were involved in a 'History Day' during the accreditation visit. The pupils and the teachers attended in outfits and took part in a range of activities which recognised and celebrated key British events and personalities throughout the decades.

St Christopher's has hosted a number of eminent British visitors including members of the Royal Family. Prince Andrew officially opened the Saar site. Chelsea Pensioners have visited the school and talked to pupils in assemblies and class. The school has links with the Anglican cathedral in Bahrain; the Dean is a member of the Board of Governors.

Texts, materials, educational equipment and software are UK sourced. Interviews with parents, suggested they very much appreciated the British style of education on offer. They identified the fact that the British nature of St Christopher's School provides the opportunity for their children to access top British universities as a key factor in their choice of school.

## 5. Standard 1

### The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided by St Christopher's Primary School is outstanding.

#### 5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum provided by St Christopher's School is well above the standard required.

The school provides a well differentiated, broad and balanced curriculum, supported by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The Early Years Foundation (EYFS) department is underpinned by the Foundation Stage Profile (England.) In Years 1 to 6 the curriculum is based on the English National Curriculum, adapted to the local context and needs of pupils. Specialist teachers deliver music, art, DT, physical education and swimming. At Key Stage 2 pupils have the opportunity to study French.

The school follows Ministry requirements for the teaching of Arabic language. The school has worked hard to ensure that Arabic pedagogy is in line with practice outlined in the Framework for Learning.

The planning in all year groups is collaborative. The delivery of the curriculum focuses on meeting the needs of the individual learner and developing the 'tripartite St Christopher's pupil'. Foundation Stage curriculum plans are coherent, systematic and detailed. Regular monitoring by senior and middle leaders ensures that the school's first Priority Strategic Element of developing 'Autonomous Learners', 'Competent Individuals' and 'Global Citizens', is evident in all curriculum planning. Curriculum documentation is well planned, clear and concise. It includes long- and medium-term planning. Documentation is consistent in style and presentation. In particular, there is clear evidence of detailed weekly planning being used effectively to deliver the curriculum. The school uses assessment outcomes to inform appropriate changes to the curriculum. For example, there has been a focus on developing pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling.

An extensive Learning Support Department works closely with class teachers to enable students with learning needs to successfully access the curriculum. Pupils with EAL needs up to Year 1 are also supported in their learning. The needs of the high ability learner are met through lesson planning and delivery, including a 'super challenge' activity. Academic enrichment sessions for high ability learners are delivered by the leadership team in addition to art exhibitions, drama productions and sporting events. The school offers in excess of 50 extra-curricular clubs for all pupils.

In Year 6, cross phase units of study are implemented to ensure that all pupils are 'secondary ready'. Recently, the use of Google documents was used to collaboratively

write poetry using both Year 6 and Year 7 students. In addition, the English transition unit of study, 'Kensuke's Kingdom' is also taught.

St Christopher's takes into account the types of curriculum and external examinations commonly used in schools in the UK. This enables pupils to enter, or re-enter the UK educational system without disadvantage.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

Teaching and assessment at St Christopher's Primary School are outstanding.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. The quality of discussion in lessons from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to Year 6, clearly indicates that pupils are enthusiastic learners. In addition, there is evidence that pupils frequently bring items and ideas from home into the classroom, thereby extending their learning environment. Pupils are motivated, active learners and take pride in the fact that they are part of the learning community. Teachers' subject knowledge is current and strong.

In EYFS, teachers' detailed planning supports the delivery of a high quality continuous provision that motivates and engages the Nursery and Reception pupils. The teachers ensure that the delivery is structured around the developmental needs of individual children and aims to reflect their interests whenever possible. The wide variety of activities in EYFS contributes to the rich educational experience of the youngest children. EYFS teachers ensure the pupils have an extensive range of practical experiences to bring their learning alive and ensure that learning does not only take place in the classroom. Parents are actively encouraged to support the learning process. In EYFS, some parents were working with pupils to build rockets, which were then launched across the playground. Pupils were challenged to identify factors that impacted on the distances travelled. Other parents set up cooking areas to investigate cake making and smoothie creation.

Classroom assistants in EYFS lessons are utilised effectively to support learning and encourage a high level of speaking and listening skills that enhance the fluency and confidence of the pupils. For example, pupils made models of polar bears discussing key features and could recall a range of interesting facts on how polar bears were well adapted to their environment. In another lesson, pupils were encouraged to discuss what it means to "stand up for yourself" and how this could be a positive personal attribute.

Pupils work cooperatively, share resources and equipment well. They enjoy group and paired activities. In one Key Stage 1 lesson, "pupil experts" used their knowledge to help their peers complete the task on model cars.

Extensive use of digital technology is effective in motivating and enhancing pupils' learning. There is considerable evidence to suggest that the pilot scheme 'Bring Your Own Device' (BYOD) with selected Year 5 and 6 pupils is having a positive impact on their learning. Pupils in a Year 6 science lesson used their own devices to record the results of their experiment on a template which the teacher had 'google' mailed to them the night before. In a Year 5 class, QR codes were used to create an interactive display and access multimedia to reinforce learning and understanding. In a Year 1 science lesson, small groups were asked to predict the qualities of a material and then work together to make a Pic Collage using a mobile tablet to record evidence.

Display work is a considerable strength of the school, celebrating both academic success and promoting opportunities for higher level thinking. In EYFS, specific learning areas were clearly aligned to specific Early Learning Goals.

Teachers' collaborative planning in all years, is highly effective in ensuring a good balance between directed, independent and child initiated activities. Learning objectives are consistently shared ensuring pupils have a clear understanding of what they will be learning. In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils were guided to set appropriate learning objectives for the lesson. Whilst there is clear reference on lesson planning sheets to address the development of 'Autonomous Learners' and 'Competent Individuals' this has yet to be embedded.

The best lessons across all phases were characterised by high expectations, pace and energy. In these lessons, pupils are engaged in their learning, challenged by quality questioning and willing to articulate their thoughts, ideas and responses to the teacher and their peers. Although effective and challenging questioning techniques were observed particularly in EYFS and year 6, the use of probing questioning to develop pupils' higher order thinking skills across the curriculum is inconsistently applied.

Evidence of pupils effectively applying intellectual, physical or creative strategies both verbally and in written responses was observed in the better lessons and in the high standard of displays in classrooms and around the school. Pupils' contributions are valued and praised. Pupils are engaged in problem solving and have the opportunity to work independently and collaboratively. They are encouraged to think and learn for themselves and work and play co-operatively.

Effective use of Assessment For Learning techniques to enhance learning - effective questioning and starter activities, including a review of prior learning, are evident in nearly all lessons. The use of the plenary to assess learning was seen in some lessons across the key stages. In a year 6 DT lesson the teacher used a plenary mid-way through the lesson to check pupils' understanding before moving to the next phase of their learning.

Monitoring and tracking is implemented consistently across the infant and primary school. This has a highly positive impact on learning outcomes and pupils' progress. There is evidence of verbal and written guidance to support pupils 'progress to the next level. Most pupils knew their current level and what they needed to do to improve. Parents and pupils are given summative information about progress and levels through established reporting procedures. Marking informs students of their next steps to learning and follows the clear guidelines from the marking policy. Particularly good practice was evident in Reception books where pictures and comments documented the learning that takes place across both Literacy and mathematics lessons.

Opportunities for self and peer assessment were evident in nearly all lessons, including specialist lessons. Pupils are asked to give a thumbs up or thumbs down to indicate their understanding of the learning objective. The traffic light system is used consistently and effectively in exercise books. In the most successful lessons, pupils are asked to reflect and

critically evaluate their own work. An excellent example of this was seen during a swimming lesson where the teacher used instant video feedback to allow pupils to critically assess their butterfly leg kick. Learning continues at break times underpinned by extensive playground provision.

## 5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

Overall the standards achieved by pupils are outstanding

Assessment data shows that some pupils in reception classes are currently exceeding expectations in literacy and numeracy. By the end of the EYFS most pupils are able to write simple sentences, word lists, labels and use phonetic knowledge to correctly spell simple words. The skills learned in the EYFS prepare the pupils well for the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum.

Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, standards remain high as a result of the good progress made by nearly all pupils. This is supported by the effective use of data both internal and standardised, to monitor progress, set and review targets on a regular basis and provide individualised support in order to develop strong basic skills and a good knowledge base.

By the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014, 68% of pupils reached a level 3 in reading and 63% reached a level 3 in mathematics. These results are significantly better than UK figures. 54.8% of pupils achieved level 2A or higher in their writing, 25.3% attained level 3. Gender differences are negligible.

At the end of Key Stage 2, Year 6 pupils outperform UK national averages. At St Christopher's 79.3 % of pupils achieved level 5 or above in reading, with 64.3% achieving level 5 in mathematics. 97.9 % of pupils were on or above target in reading and 99.3% were on or above target in mathematics. Only 2.1 % were below target in reading and 0.7 % below target in maths. Although figures for level 5 in writing are significantly lower at 24.6%, 94.2% achieve the expected UK level 4 or above. Evidence in 'Big Writing' books demonstrates that nearly all pupils make significant progress in their writing from EYFS to the end of Key Stage 2.

Senior leaders have identified that the level 5 ceiling for PIPs disadvantages the more able pupils in that it is difficult to demonstrate value added. The school introduced its own level 6 test to address this. In 2014, 25 pupils were chosen for the level 6 challenge. 19 (14% of the year group) passed the test and achieved level 6. In June 2014, the junior school undertook 'World Class Tests' for gifted and talented children. 12 Year 5 pupils took part, with 7 achieving Distinction in mathematics and 4 receiving distinction in problem solving. Senior leaders and pupils reported a significant improvement in the teaching of Arabic. This is supported by interview, book scrutiny and the outstanding results achieved by some Year 6 pupils who passed the GCSE examination in 2014.

The school is 'data rich' with a broad range of assessments used across all phases in the primary school. The school constantly reviews the data it uses in order to track progress effectively. Senior leaders ensure that the range of data is fit for purpose and uses a triangulation approach when scrutinising results. Any anomalies are explored in full with year leaders, subject leaders and class teachers in order to ensure that all pupils progress. Monitoring of standards is embedded in practice. Pupils' progress is rigorously tracked

throughout the primary school to ensure that pupils build on prior achievements and make good progress in relation to their starting points. The school has established consistent procedures for tracking progress and strategies for analysing data in order to accurately evidence individual student value added. Data is analysed and outcomes are used to set targets for pupils. This data analysis is used to set year group and department targets. It also informs individual teacher targets as part of the appraisal process. Data indicates that pupils at St Christopher's are consistently achieving significantly higher standards compared to UK national averages.

## 6. *Standard 2*

### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The quality of the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is excellent. The school successfully encourages high moral standards, self-discipline and mutual respect for the cultures, opinions and values of all others.

St Christopher's places a high priority on ensuring that the education and well-being of all pupils in the school are at the heart of any school policies, strategies and initiatives which are developed. It prides itself on being an international community school. The positive impact of this on pupils' attitudes and personal qualities is seen in lessons and around the school.

Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and positive. Pupils and teachers share a mutual respect for each other – this is a major strength of the school. They conduct themselves around the school in a calm and orderly fashion, demonstrating politeness and respect to their peers and adults. The pupils are happy and express great pride in their school. A recent pupil survey revealed that the vast majority of children enjoy their learning. Pupils who receive learning support described their teachers as "helpful", "fun" and "kind". Pupils show compassion for others. A World Kindness Day was celebrated when they highlighted acts of kindness demonstrated throughout the school.

Throughout the school, pupils are well motivated and keen to learn. Nearly all pupils are well behaved in lessons, as they move around the school and during break times. A fire evacuation drill took place during the accreditation and all pupils moved quietly and in an orderly fashion to the assembly area. Classroom 'Golden Rules' are evident in classes. Moral Dilemmas have been introduced in assemblies and provide a platform for moral and social development. The qualities of the 'Autonomous Learner' are clearly visible throughout the school. A focus group of students were confident, self-assured, courteous and polite. St Christopher's pupils clearly take pride in belonging to the school.

Pupils are proud of their own achievements but more importantly, they are proud to share in the achievements of their peers. During many lessons pupils were given opportunities to reflect on their own beliefs and those of others. As they move through the school, pupils deepen their understanding and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values.

Pupils clearly display a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them. This was evident in lessons and a range of high quality displays throughout the school. Pupils work co-operatively and collaboratively with one another. They are attentive to their peers and openly praised success. Pupils take account of each other's views and contribute effectively to class discussions. In an assembly, certificates were awarded by teachers for progress, achievement and assisting other students. Pupils clearly demonstrated the ability to recognise the

difference between right and wrong, readily apply this understanding in their own actions and in establishing clear expectations of the 'right thing to do'.

Pupils are enthusiastic about school clubs, school trips and drama productions as can be seen in the school's yearbooks and the numerous photographs and display work around the school. The Student Council clearly has a 'voice' and their opinions are valued.

## 7. Standard 3

### The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision the school makes for the welfare, health and safety for pupils is outstanding.

New pupils are allocated buddies to help them settle in and older pupils work alongside younger ones through the class buddy system during special events such as “World Book Day” or “Maths Day”.

Pupils thrive at the school. They are nurtured and encouraged to be articulate, confident and caring individuals, enthusiastic about their learning and experiences at the school. Pupils are encouraged to co-operate, collaborate and support each other.

Pupils in need of extra support are identified early, either upon entry to the school or through the systematic analysis of the school's data. Any pupil who is not making expected progress is quickly identified and supported appropriately. A comprehensive referral process is also in place for class teachers. Currently 155 children are supported by the Learning Support department. Amongst these are a small number of pupils identified as ‘high’ need. These pupils are entered onto the school's SEND register and receive specific, targeted interventions over a longer period of time. The majority require only short term interventions such as ‘Comprehension Club’ or ‘Writing Club’. These take place in withdrawal sessions in the Learning Support department. The Learning Support department also provides additional support for EAL pupils joining the school in Early Years and Year 1.

An educational psychologist and the Bahrain Children's Academy regularly work with the school to provide additional assessment and support for children. The school identified the need for closer communication between class teachers and the Learning Support department and has worked hard to address this. Across the school, provision for pupils with particular talents is met through a wide range of events or clubs in sport, the arts, community and service. Able pupils sit Arabic IGCSE in Year 6.

Pupils enjoy their playground and play safely following the Golden Rules which are clearly displayed along with the school's expectations for use of designated spaces. A variety of attractive play areas and activities are provided, including large amounts of shading. Timetables for the climbing equipment regulate numbers of children to ensure safe play. The level of supervision during playtimes is good. In addition to providing high quality care for all pupils, the nurse contributes to health education units, providing talks about puberty for older pupils in Year 6, and even playing the role of Florence Nightingale during Year 1 Victorian Day!

The safeguarding and well-being of pupils is a high priority and effectively implemented by all staff. Pupils are well supervised during the school day, as well as before and after school. Administrative and security guards ensure the school's procedures are followed. Currently the school does not have a Health and Safety Committee. There is no external Health and Safety audit to check the quality of procedures, although regular Ministry of Education

inspections ensure that all local regulations are met. Evacuation and lockdown practices take place on a termly basis, both planned and unannounced. The unscheduled evacuation due to a fire alarm during the inspection was carried out calmly and smoothly, with areas for improvement passed to the HR and Facilities Manager for action.

Health and safety topics such as road safety in the Nursery are included in the curriculum. There is a digital citizenship programme in place. E-safety is reinforced through PSHE lessons and posters displayed in ICT teaching rooms. The school encourages healthy eating, and advises parents to prepare healthy snacks and packed lunches. The content of lunchboxes is monitored by Teaching Assistants. The nurse provides guidance to parents about healthy eating.

A written first aid policy is in place and effectively implemented. First aid training is provided on an annual basis with additional CPR and defibrillator training for PE staff. All swimming staff are qualified in life-saving techniques and the necessary equipment is in place and up to date.

## 8. *Standard 4*

### The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The suitability of the proprietor and staff is of a high order. St Christopher's Primary School is held in high regard by the local community. The board oversee school policies and the strategic direction of the school, ensuring 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 pupils. 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 Bahrain and their 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.

Staffing levels are excellent 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. The school takes great pride in recruiting and retaining high quality, committed and hardworking staff. A substantial percentage of the teachers are UK trained and have recent English National Curriculum experience. All expatriate and local teachers, including those working in SPARTA (Sport and Arts Academy of St Christopher's) are required to produce either UK or local police checks in line with best safeguarding practice.

Teachers tend to want to stay at Christopher's and the average length of employment is 6 years. Teaching assistants are timetabled and shared across classes to further support the learning of the individual student. An extensive programme of CPD for teachers and middle leaders has been implemented. The impact of CPD on learning features strongly in the school's monitoring and reviewing cycles.

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

The premises and accommodation are outstanding.

The modern buildings are well maintained, ensuring an environment that is conducive to learning. All classrooms and activity areas offer a lively and stimulating learning environment. They are spacious, light and equipped with age appropriate furniture, appropriately arranged to make resources accessible to all pupils and facilitate independent learning. Specialist teaching areas include two purpose built science laboratories which can also be used to deliver food technology lessons. The facilities are used well and timetabled each term to allow access to different year groups. Teaching rooms for music, art and design technology, together with extensive sporting facilities, further enhance the educational experiences of all pupils.

The school has recently enhanced provision. The construction of a building over the swimming pool has provided a large, purpose-built dance studio and additional activity rooms. A large shaded and floodlit sports area has been built to further improve the already excellent sporting facilities. The addition of a Macintosh suite has enhanced the provision of information technology. Extensive improvements to the IT infrastructure support the school's long term strategy for digital technology. A variety of outdoor play facilities support pupils' development of physical, academic, social and emotional skills. These include a quiet area, large play equipment and science discovery area.

The school provides a large, well equipped health room and employs one full time, qualified nurse plus a supply nurse who carries out eye tests for every child from Reception upwards. The learning support department is generously staffed with a team of teachers and learning support assistants, led by the subject leader who liaises with the senior management team.

## 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.

The school prospectus clearly communicates the school's vision, the structure of the school and points of contact. This is supplemented by the web-site and regular information updates released at key times throughout the year. In addition parents can access criteria for admission, discipline and exclusion procedures, behaviour and child protection policies as well as the complaints procedure. 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. The school's vision and mission statement are prominently featured in relevant documents and publications and referenced as a key driver of school improvement. Whole school policies, including those not related to curriculum are available to parents and regularly reviewed and updated. The school clearly outlines its provision of support for pupils.

Communication between home and school is highly effective, including newsletters accessed via 'Parent Portal', information evenings, parent consultations and written reports. A focus group of parents stated that the quality of communication was exemplary. Formal reports and consultation meetings twice a year with teachers, keep parents well informed about their children's progress, levels of attainment and attitudes to learning.

Prospective parents are well-supported and kept informed at every stage of the admission process. Interviewed parents were complementary about the school's induction process. They also stated that the school is always ready and willing to meet in order to discuss concerns and/or receive feedback on the school and its policies. The Principal has recently initiated meetings with small groups of parents to receive feedback and explain/clarify any areas of misconception.

The school's highly effective marketing department ensures that the profile of St Christopher's remains high in the media. Regular press releases of sporting events, visits, pupil's achievements and community service are reported in Bahrain's main English language newspaper and other media.

The school is proactive in its pursuit of community and service opportunities for pupils, to develop themselves outside of the classroom. A focus group of pupils were proud and passionate about their involvement in projects including 'Kindness Day', Year 5 backpack donations to the school's team of cleaners, supporting Syrian refugees in Jordan and 'Go Global Cambodia' appeal. One Year 6 pupil has written a book to support the Cambodia project.

Parent involvement in the school is welcomed and encouraged by St Christopher's. Parents are able to apply to the school to become a 'Parent Volunteer', working alongside the pupils in the year group 'Activity Streets'. Training is provided for new volunteers. The 'Friends of St Chris' (FOSC) is active in its fund raising and social support for the school's community. Every class throughout the school has a designated 'class parent'. Volunteer parents are given opportunities to train as teaching assistants.

The school is constantly exploring ideas and opportunities to develop its position as a community leader. The school celebrates Bahrain National Day giving pupils opportunities to learn about and celebrate local customs. The school organizes 'The St Christopher's Model United Nations Conference', an established event attracting delegates from 8 schools. The school also shares its facilities and staff with other members of the community through SPARTA – the Sports and Arts Academy.

Through its membership of bodies such as BSME (British Schools in the Middle East), pupils participate in a range of competitions, sporting and arts events. The school regularly takes the lead in creating new opportunities for community involvement, for example the 'St Christopher's Music Festival'.

## 11. Standard 7

### The school's procedure for handling complaints

There is a formal complaints procedure that is transparent, open and effective and takes into account local laws and regulations.

The complaints procedures are rigorously adhered to and highly effective in ensuring that a complaint is dealt with at the appropriate level. Written records clearly detail the process regarding individual complaints and a high level of confidentiality is observed. 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

Leadership and management of the school are outstanding.

The relationship between the board of governors and the Principal is highly positive. There are clear lines of demarcation. Whilst the governing body is clearly responsible for strategic direction, the day-to-day operation of the school effectively discharged by the Principal and his senior leadership team. The leadership team, led by the Principal are highly effective in promoting the development and implementation of a shared vision that places the development of the whole child at its centre. Collectively the Principal, the Head of School and senior leaders are highly effective in ensuring that St Christopher's primary school is held in high regard by parents, pupils and the local community. Resources are used effectively and efficiently to support the academic and pastoral priorities of the school and implement the school's 'Framework for Learning'.

The leadership team are committed to ensuring that all pupils benefit from high calibre teachers. A planned professional development programme has the raising of pupil attainment as a priority. Rigorous procedures ensure the school's aims and objectives are effectively monitored, reviewed and evaluated. The Principal and senior leadership team recognise the importance of ensuring that the process is sustainable. The senior leadership team has ensured that statutory requirements for the delivery of the Arabic and Islamic curriculum are met. They have gone beyond this however, by providing resources and training to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning in Arabic is of the same high standard as the National Curriculum subjects.

Senior leaders are effective in managing change and implementing recommendations from the previous report. They seek and value the contributions made by the Principal and middle leaders. New initiatives and procedures are introduced gradually and monitored closely to assess their impact on pupil achievement. Detailed documentation of the evaluation of the 'BOYD' pilot was given to the accreditation team.

Leadership teams at all levels constantly monitor, reflect and review strategies, policies and initiatives in order to ensure that St Christopher's School meets the needs of its pupils. Year leaders see themselves as the conduit between senior leadership team and teachers. The positive impact of the school on pupils' behaviour and achievement is clearly evident throughout the school. Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is of a high order.

The school has developed highly successful strategies for engaging with parents and carers. The school leadership team recognises the contribution made by all staff in ensuring each and every child succeeds. Both teaching and non-teaching staff are valued as members of the school team. This has created a strong community of professionals who support, encourage and work effectively to ensure that pupils attain high levels of achievement in the classroom enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities.