



British School Overseas

Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

The English Primary Group (Salwa School)

مدرسة المجموعة الانجليزية للتعليم المبكر الخاصة

Kuwait

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1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

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

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

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

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

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

During the inspection visit, 32 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, members of the board and a range of teachers, parents and groups of students.

The lead inspector was Colin Dyson, team member was Katy Brand.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

Salwa School meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas accreditation.

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

Salwa School is an improving school.

Children are well supported through effective pastoral care and the implementation of sound welfare, health and safety policies and procedures.

Overall, teaching meets the standards and assessment is good.

The senior leadership team has an understanding of the strengths of the school and areas requiring improvement.

Parents and staff value the British nature of the curriculum and are highly committed to the school. Nearly all children make progress at least in line with their ability, some better. The national curriculum provides the framework for teaching and learning supplemented with host country requirements. The curriculum is enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths, which include:

- The highly positive impact the principal has had on developing the school in a short space of time.
- Both teaching and non-teaching staff contribute to a school that is well managed.
- Children are happy, well behaved and feel very well supported.
- The excellent relationships between children, and between children and staff.
- The parents hold the school in high regard.
- The strong mission statement that is reflected across the school; 'Be the best you can be.'
- The strong desire by the whole school team to improve further.
- The high quality of the children's personal development.
- The atmosphere of calm throughout the school that enhances the value placed on learning.
- The care and concern of the teachers extends beyond the classroom in ensuring each child is truly valued.
- Teachers feel well supported by the school management.
- Clear and consistent behavioural expectations have been implemented and behaviour across the school is good.
- The teaching of English is becoming a strength and effective teaching of phonics skills enable children to become skilled readers and writers.
- The school is rapidly improving and has a strong capacity for further improvement.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

1. Provide all school leaders with further high quality professional development opportunities.
2. The board should ensure (through accurate school evaluation) that resourcing is provided to meet the educational needs of all the children, in line with a broad curriculum that engages learners.
3. Develop further the impact of teaching in all lessons to inspire and support all children to make rapid and sustained progress through rich and memorable learning experiences.

4. The context of the school

Full name of school/college	Salwa School, The English Playgroup Education Co WLL				
Address	Salwa, Block 7, Street 2, Building 292/282, Kuwait				
Telephone number	+965 2561 1864 / +965 2565 2457				
Fax number	+965 2563 9531				
Website	ww.epg.edu.kw				
Email address	primarysalwa@epg.edu.kw (School) admin@epg.edu.kw (Company Head Office)				
Head	Mrs Judith Pollock				
Chairman of Board of Governors	Mr. Sulayman Al Bassam				
Age range	4 years, 6 months to 8 years, 5 months				
Total number of pupils	697	Boys	430	Girls	267
Numbers by age	0-2 years	0	11-16 years	0	
	3-5 years	21	16-18 years	0	
	5-11 years	676	18+ years	0	
Total number of part-time children	None				

Salwa School is part of a well- established international co-ed school with a sole proprietor, English Playgroup Educational Co W. L. L. (EPG) in Kuwait. EPG was launched in 1975 and consists of 17 Early Years branches and 2 primary schools catering for around 6,000 children. The aim of the EPG group is to provide affordable bilingual education to young learners in Kuwait.

Salwa School is on a single site and caters to the needs of a diverse pupil population of approximately 700 from Foundation Stage 2 to Year 3. The school generally follows the National

Curriculum for England, with accommodation for subjects required by the Ministry of Education; Arabic Studies, Islamic Studies and Kuwaiti Social Studies.

All children are English as second language learners. The majority of students are Kuwaitis with the remainder expats from neighbouring Arab countries. English is the language of communication throughout the school, and in lessons. The school makes it clear to parents that it does not admit pupils with special educational needs (SEN) unless the school has the capacity to support them.

Challenges identified include the language barrier, restricted space, cultural attitude of parents towards schooling including the impact of nannies and over-protective care, as well as meeting all the requirements of the Ministry of Education of Kuwait.

4.1 British nature of the school

The British nature of Salwa School is evident.

The language of instruction in the school is English with the exception of Arabic Studies, Islamic Studies, and Kuwaiti Social Studies. The curriculum is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum for England 2014. Extra-curricular provisions are being developed to enhance the breadth of the curriculum.

The school is organised according to structures used in independent schools in the UK. The house system, school uniform, school council all contribute towards the 'Britishness'. Classroom management, displays of work, three term year and age-related year groups contribute further to a British feel to the school.

All communications from the school to families are provided in English, translated into Arabic for non-English speakers.

Children are encouraged to develop effective social skills and a willingness to be part of a caring community. They display a good understanding for rules and responsibilities appropriate to their age. The school is a harmonious community that displays positive levels of empathy and tolerance.

Parents are highly supportive of the British nature of the curriculum. Interviews with parents clearly highlighted that they appreciate and value the British style of education and its focus on high expectations.

5. Standard 1

The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided by Salwa School meets the standard for accreditation.

5.1 Curriculum

The school's curriculum meets the standard for accreditation.

The National Curriculum of England provides the framework for teaching and learning. In addition the children follow an Arabic and Islamic Studies programme, which meets the requirements of the local Ministry. Assemblies and a programme of after school activities for Year 3 enhance the curriculum. The school organises a range of events, such as Healthy Eating Week, and educational visits to places in Kuwait in order to enrich the children's learning experience. Proposals for events and visits are completed and submitted for Ministry approval. The school strives to offer a broad and balanced curriculum, however due to physical constraints they are restricted in implementing innovative practices.

The school has written curriculum policies in place for FS2 and Key Stages 1 and 2, supported by schemes of work and appropriate planning documentation. Teachers plan together on a weekly basis by subject and by unit to ensure parity and provision for the children. The subject matter taught, is age and ability appropriate. Opportunities for spoken English and language development are enhanced in many lessons by practical activities in science and topic, for example growing plants.

The principal language of instruction is English throughout the school.

The primary curriculum meets the needs of all pupils. In Year 1 and Year 2, the school has been proactive in the deployment of specialist teachers, to enhance the quality of learning particularly in English. Setting is being trialled in Year 3 for mathematics once a week in order to further differentiated provision. In Year 3, the curriculum is enhanced by Arabic, Islamic Studies, PE, music and art. The curriculum needs to be advanced with the further development and use of learning technologies. Currently a bank of 26 tablets is available, using a booking system. The use of IT to enhance learning was not commonly seen during the inspection. The provision of PSHE is currently covered by assemblies and form times, but has been identified as an area of development.

Although EPG state they do not provide for children with SEN, for children where needs are after admission, action plans have been created in liaison with the social worker: staff provide extra support for these children. Intervention groups are run during assembly time for those who require extra English or Arabic and support is targeted within lessons. Good relationships with the social worker and parents of students with SEN, support the provision.

Implementation of tracking and monitoring procedures are enabling teachers to review and adapt the curriculum to more effectively meet the specific needs of the children.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment meets the standard.

Teaching across the school is satisfactory and a significant number of lessons were judged good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The assessment of learning has developed significantly over the past year and meets the standard with some innovative practices being embedded.

In the Early Years, teachers plan to ensure children experience a happy and secure learning environment. Early Learning Goals are used to encourage them to engage in a range of learning activities. Due to a lack of space resources are not always available to inspire their curiosity, excitement and interest in learning. The children are beginning to be able to recognize initial sounds, know how books work and enjoy a good range of speaking and listening activities. Children spoke with confidence about a number of people in the community who help us.

Good guidance by the teachers and support staff establishes personal confidence in the children and helps to create a firm foundation for future learning. Classrooms are bright and colourful environments where children's work is displayed and valued.

Under the strong leadership of the principal there has been a focus on developing the quality of teaching. As a result, most children are making progress over time. The vast majority of children have English as a second language and teachers plan and teach lessons that have an appropriate strong focus on developing reading, writing and communication skills. Planning is of a good quality and consistent across the school. Middle leaders monitor planning to ensure all teachers follow school policy and procedure. Clear identification is made on how tasks will be matched to meet the wide range of children's abilities, however the range of tasks do not always provide activities that fully challenge or create memorable learning experiences.

The development of greater clarity of expected teaching and learning has resulted in raising expectations and teaching over time is improving to ensure children are engaged and motivated.

The information for teachers in the Staff Handbook provides clear guidance and procedures. Clear behaviour expectations are now more consistently applied across the school and behaviour is well managed. Any incidents of low level disruption were as a result of teaching that did not fully engage the children's interests. In the vast majority of lessons children were keen to learn and applied themselves well.

The school has recently audited the implementation of assessment strategies and a new strategic plan has been implemented. Using 'Class Monitor', teachers now assess children's learning and progress regularly and with growing accuracy. The school has

secured clear data to highlight good levels of progress over the past year however historic tracking data is not yet available. Teachers are becoming more confident in using tracking and monitoring and some teachers are innovative in its use. This best practice is now being shared to ensure practices become consistent across the school.

The teaching of English is a strength across the school. Children in the Foundation Stage were encouraged to become confident speakers as they role played 'people who help us in the community'. Older children read with fluency and demonstrate a love for books that extends beyond the classroom. The teaching of phonics is a strength and children use decoding strategies effectively when challenged by new words.

In the most successful lessons, opportunities for children to develop as independent learners were recognised. In some lessons, teachers and classroom assistants over direct children, so that they do not always take enough responsibility for their own learning. In FS2, the activities are enjoyed by the children, but they sometimes lacked challenge through both the choice of activity and the level of questioning. In the classroom there is a 'language rich' environment created with opportunities for the children to engage in dialogue with the teacher, assistant and each other. In a writing activity, the teacher ensured she spent individual time with each child in her group.

Teachers have a developing awareness of the aptitudes, cultural backgrounds and needs of individual children. This insight has led to a high level of support for EAL learners that enable many of them to make rapid and sustained progress. Monitoring of progress by EAL students is undertaken by the Vice Principal and clearly identifies that children make good progress.

Teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 use a range of teaching strategies to support learning. In the most successful lessons, they were well paced, with practical, hands on activities capturing pupil's interests as children planted and monitored seed development. Most teachers review pupils' previous attainment and then move quickly on to new learning, maintaining pace and child involvement.

Children enjoy their lessons and are keen to take an active role and make progress in their learning. Expectations for behaviour and learning were clearly explained and reinforced in a calm, positive and consistent manner. This was evident in lessons across the school where regular praise was given to those following instructions, thus providing positive feedback and at the same time, reinforcing required expectations.

In the small number of less effective lessons, there was little evidence of differentiation and although adding value during group and individual activities, teaching assistants provided a lesser level of support during whole class teaching.

The school recognises that parent expectations and understanding can be a barrier to learning. A clear focus has been the strengthening of the home school links and this is having a positive impact in areas such as improving attendance through avoiding unnecessary absences.

5.3 Standards achieved by students

Standards achieved across the school meet expectations.

Across all year groups, current children make consistently good progress from levels significantly below UK expectations. Standards in mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with UK expectations. In mathematics 83% achieved a level 2B or better and 90% achieved a 2B in Science by the end of Year 2. Children make good progress developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills, considering their different starting points. School data highlights that from their low entry level, good progress is made in English: 70% achieve more than expected progress in writing and 88% in reading.

From levels below expectations on entry to the school, by the end of Key Stage 1 increasing numbers of children are meeting UK expectations.

Recent data demonstrates that in mathematics and science children are achieving levels broadly comparable to UK national averages. In English the school has been proactive in supporting rapid progress towards achieving UK expectations. Progress across all year groups is becoming consistently strong in English. Evidence from classroom observations and children's work indicates that achievement levels are rapidly improving.

Teachers are now effectively using 'Classroom Monitor' to enable them to identify progress levels and to provide effective support for those children failing to make sustained progress. Interventions have included: involving parents, providing small specific group support or using additional teacher support within class. Where attainment or progress has been identified as below expectations a range of strategies have been implemented that aim to sustain increased improvement. Effective action planning has enabled the school to identify those children requiring specific action plans and these are developed and monitored by the social worker in partnership with Year Leaders. The impact of these strategies is enabling both more accurate identification of needs and the monitoring of effectiveness of classroom strategies.

The use of Classroom Monitor is seen as an effective strategy to ensure more consistent and accurate levelling of children's outcomes. At this stage, it is too early for the school to identify reliable trends and patterns over time. Children enjoy their lessons, though opportunities to support them in becoming more independent learners are not consistent.

Attendance figures are below expected levels. The school has implemented a range of procedures to encourage parents to recognise the importance of good attendance. The school is proactive in following up non-attendance and levels are improving. During the inspection, attendance levels were 90% - 92%.

6. *Standard 2*

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children at Salwa School is good.

The school enables children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence: spiritual development is sound. The school's positive behaviour policy and rewards system contribute to their social, moral and personal development. It has had a positive impact on behaviour and children's ability to make 'good choices'. Although the children's ability to make behaviour choices is good, the school needs to provide opportunities for the children to develop as independent learners appropriate to their age.

The School Council makes a positive contribution to the life of the school and provides opportunities for members to demonstrate their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. The new recycling initiative, fundraising and work with charities contribute to students' understanding of being a 'good citizen'. Children are encouraged to develop important qualities, such as tolerance and understanding, which will enable them to make a positive contribution to society.

Parents and children feel that transition into the school is good and that the children make friends easily. Behaviour is very good in classrooms and around the school; children are polite and courteous. In lessons children co-operate well with each other and their teachers. Any negative behaviour is dealt with quickly, effectively and appropriately. This results in a positive learning atmosphere in most lessons.

Children show respect and awareness for their own and other cultures. The school holds an annual International Day and incorporates opportunities to investigate other countries and cultures within the curriculum. The children's spiritual awareness is developed through Islamic Studies lessons and themed assemblies. There is limited provision for the small minority of children who are non-Muslim.

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

The welfare, health and safety of children throughout the school are good.

The school is an orderly learning environment, and children respond well to instructions allowing learning to take place effectively.

The quality of pastoral care and support is good and is given a high priority. The health and safety of the children is a paramount. Children are well supervised by staff at all times. The school nurse treats any incidents requiring first aid, keeps good records and informs parents of any incidents. Teachers of the younger children carefully supervise and make certain children are not lonely. Extra care is in place to ensure children are dismissed safely at the end of the school day when road traffic could be an issue.

Safe guarding arrangements are in place and are underpinned by appropriate policies. These are implemented effectively and exceed local requirements. The Social worker is highly effective and supports the school community in dealing with any sensitive issues.

Arrangements to protect the health and safety of staff and children and to minimise the risk of fire and other hazards are well documented to meet all local requirements. The parent company also provides a range of valuable support and guidance on safety and human resource issues and procedures.

Children are safe and feel safe. They enjoy learning about how to stay healthy.

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

The suitability of the proprietor and staff is of a high order.

The English Playgroup Educational Company is held in high regard by the local community. The HR department oversee school policies, ensuring all local requirements are met, including the right to work in the host country; suitability to work with children and appropriate certificates of approval.

The proprietor, board and senior staff have effective working practices and self-evaluation is enabling an agreed awareness of the schools strengths and areas for further development in implementing a high standard of safety. An appropriate range of meetings, detailed reports and presentations raise awareness of school life and ensure levels of accountability are appropriate.

There is a list of all staff who currently work in the school. This is regularly updated and shows when they started and stopped working in the school. Staffing levels are appropriate to support the learning of young children and ensure satisfactory delivery of the curriculum.

The proprietor and board are beginning to monitor progress for the school against specific educational short and medium term targets and embedding quality assurance procedures. The level and capabilities of staffing need are not yet evaluated against the educational needs of all the children to enhance learning outcomes further.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation meet the standards for accreditation.

The school is making the best use of the limited space available to provide a safe learning environment.

The school buildings are fit for purpose and well maintained. The age of the building and limited space impacts on implementing a fully broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriate for young children. The senior leaders have ensured space is well utilised.

Washroom facilities are hygienic and accessible due to the on-going diligence of non-teaching staff. Classrooms, furniture and fittings are mostly appropriate for the needs of the children. The impact of increased resourcing such as in the library has had a highly positive impact on developing a stimulating learning environment. Outdoor areas are well used but only provide very limited opportunities to extend the curriculum. Recent improvements to ensure soft play areas are safe have enhanced the opportunities for children to play in a safe environment. The size of classrooms varies and in some space is restricted. As well as indoor and outdoor PE areas the school has an assembly hall and dedicated music and art rooms. Food preparation areas are designated areas and children eat in classrooms.

Security at the school is good. There is a security door at the main entrance which requires a code to enter the building and a button to exit. The school receptionist is located at the front exit and monitors all visitors to the school and provides visitor badges if entry to the teaching areas is required.

The proprietor and board recognise the need to further enhance the facilities however this is a serious challenge on such a restricted site.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents, carers and others is good.

The school mission and aims are clearly stated and displayed around the school. This provides clear guidance for all students and staff. The partnership between the school and the parents is a strength and helps to support the children's learning. Parents are very satisfied with the standard of education at the school and believe the pastoral support and care is especially good. They feel that staff strive to give individual attention to the children.

Parents stated that they were well informed about their child's progress on a regular basis. A wealth of information is available and parents stated that the website is an effective tool. There is a clear structure in place for parents' meetings and written reports. Although parents are encouraged to support the school through attendance at the wide range of workshops offered and at sports day, involvement is limited due to the physical constraints of the premises. Parents felt that the development of a PTA would further enhance their opportunities to be in partnership with the school.

Contact details are readily available to parents. Parents stated that staff and management are approachable and they are able to meet with them with ease due to the effective open door policy. Issues and concerns are dealt with quickly and appropriately. Parents are asked for feedback after parent meetings through a range of questions.

Regular newsletters celebrate progress and achievement and provide information for parents. School diaries are used as a form of contact between parents and staff and for informing parents of any homework. However, parents appeared to be unaware that homework is posted on the parent portal. Parents are generally satisfied with the level of communication between school and home.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

There is a formal complaints procedure that is transparent, open and effective.

Procedures take into account both local regulatory requirements and elements of best UK practices. The policies are available both as hard copies and can be viewed on the school website.

The complaints procedures are rigorously adhered to and are highly effective in ensuring that any complaint is dealt with at an appropriate level. Clear time scales are set out and parents are updated on any long running issues.

The handling of complaints mirrors the management structure of the school. The class or subject teacher is consulted first, but if an issue is not resolved, it can be raised with senior leaders. If a complaint remains unresolved parents are encouraged to address their concerns to the group's student liaison officer, who acts as an independent intermediary. Serious issues can also be dealt with through the managing director/deputy managing director. Parents maybe accompanied if requested at formal meetings. The school is also supported by the Chief HR officer who provides support and guidance.

In discussion with inspectors, parents stated that they felt confident about raising concerns, should they have any. Ultimately parents have recourse to the Ministry of Education. Confidentiality is assured throughout the whole process.

12. Standard 8

The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable.

13. Standard 9 Leadership and management of the school

Leadership and management meet the standard for accreditation.

The governance role is fulfilled by the company's Central Office. This office in partnership with the school's senior leaders has implemented a three-year strategic plan for the future direction of the school. The board needs to ensure that systems on evaluating the success of the school are well monitored and focused on further raising children's achievements.

The principal has, in a short space of time, set a culture of high expectations for children and staff. The senior leadership team have effectively used self-evaluation to develop a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. The principal has led by example and has created a culture of respect and tolerance.

Regular monitoring of teaching and learning by the senior leaders is enabling a rigorous system of quality assurance to be implemented that uses a number of effective strategies. Monitoring regularly includes the scrutiny of children's completed work and structured lesson observations. This approach has encouraged staff to feel they can contribute to the clear priority of the development of the whole child. Effective whole school involvement has been further encouraged by the implementation of effective performance management that is leading to improving teaching standards.

Delegated leadership is beginning to have a positive impact on securing the schools capacity for continued development, through the focus on teaching and learning to raise attainment.

The school has identified the need for a more rigorous approach to monitoring, tracking and assessment. Teachers have implemented a more consistent approach to planning and are developing a greater awareness of the potential of tools such as 'Classroom Monitor' to increase their effectiveness.

The school leadership team is central in ensuring that the school ethos is shared across the school community and that everyone is valued. The clear shared vision as well as the successful monitoring of systems that are being embedded is bringing a good level of consistency across the school in teaching, planning, assessment and high expectations.

The quality of relationships between the senior leaders and board is a strength. Senior leaders in both primary schools are developing effective links and sharing best practice to enhance learning outcomes.