



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS**

**INSPECTION REPORT ON  
ST GEORGE'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, LUXEMBOURG**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## St George's International School, Luxembourg

Full Name of School	<b>St George's International School, Luxembourg</b>		
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Telephone Number	<b>+352 423224</b>		
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Email Address	<b>principal@st-georges.lu</b>		
Principal	<b>Dr Christian Barkei</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Mark Turner</b>		
Age Range	<b>3 to 18</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>653</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (334 boys; 319 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	0-2:	<b>0</b>	5-11: <b>319</b>
	3-5:	<b>119</b>	11-18: <b>215</b>
Inspection dates	<b>10 Feb 2015 to 13 Feb 2015</b>		

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI Schedule* for the inspection of British schools overseas. The inspection consists of two parts: a preliminary two-day visit followed by a four-day (team) inspection. The previous ISI inspection was in October 2008.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools in England and overseas. As such, ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the relevant Standards for British Schools Overseas and the *ISI Framework* requirements. ISI is also the agency responsible for the inspection of schools in membership of the Associations of the Independent Schools Council (ISC). Accordingly, ISI inspections of British schools overseas are required to:

- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education and of the care for their welfare;
- provide objective and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and build on their strengths and to identify and remedy any weaknesses;
- inform parents and the wider public of the quality of British schools overseas by placing reports in the public domain;
- report to the DfE the extent to which schools comply with the published Standards for British Schools Overseas;
- where applicable, assure ISC Associations that their member schools maintain the quality of provision expected.

ISI inspection is for the benefit of the pupils in the schools and through public reporting makes the information available to parents, governments and the wider community.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. The major difference is that schools in England must comply with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, which do not apply with legal validity to schools outside the United Kingdom. However, the inspection of overseas schools takes account where possible of compliance with any local requirements and it judges the extent to which the schools comply with the British Government's Standards for British Schools Overseas. The range of these Standards is as follows.

1. The quality of education provided by the school (Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment).
2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils.
4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff.
5. The premises and accommodation.
6. The provision of information for parents, carers and others.
7. The school's procedures for handling complaints.
8. The quality of provision for boarding.
9. Leadership and management of the school.

**The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:**

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit**
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features**
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures**

**(iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law.**

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St George's International School, Luxembourg is a non-denominational day school for boys and girls between 3 and 18 years of age. It operates as a not-for-profit trust (Association Sans But Lucratif) and is located in the district of Hamm, about three kilometres from Luxembourg City. The school operates as a single entity, divided into primary and secondary schools, each with its own head responsible to the overall principal. The governing body has been substantially re-modelled since the previous inspection. It now comprises up to 15 appointed members, including parents, drawn from across the Luxembourg and international community.
- 1.2 The school aims to create an atmosphere in which pupils are challenged to realise their potential, thus fostering confidence in themselves and their abilities, and a sense of personal worth. It encourages pupils to be happy, skilful, creative, knowledgeable, conscientious, healthy and safe.
- 1.3 St George's opened in 1990 as a primary school with just 12 pupils. Since 2003, a secondary school has gradually developed and the first year groups completed the IGCSE in 2008 and A levels in 2011. The school outgrew its original site and moved to its current location in April 2008. Since then, there have been four further extensions to the site. The secondary school has expanded rapidly since the previous inspection. A head of secondary was appointed in September 2008. A whole-school principal took up post in September 2013.
- 1.4 Since the previous inspection, there has been a significant building programme on the existing site. The secondary school building, which was new in 2009, was further extended in 2011 to cater for the increasing numbers of pupils. A new administration building was completed in 2012. In addition, the school has built a primary gymnasium, specialist accommodation for art and for design and technology (DT), two suites for information and communication technology (ICT) laboratories, two libraries and adapted facilities for the youngest children, including more extensive outdoor provision.
- 1.5 There are over 50 nationalities represented in the school. The school serves families from the highly mobile international business sector, professions, financial, government and European Community staff. Native Luxembourgish pupils make up five per cent of the school population. The school has identified 91 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive varying levels of specialist support. A further 409 speak English as an additional language (EAL) and the school provides support for all of them.
- 1.6 English National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

### **Early Years**

School	NC name
Early Years	Nursery
Reception	Reception

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 Pupils throughout the school are extremely well educated in line with the school's aims to create an atmosphere in which pupils are challenged to realise their potential, thus fostering confidence in themselves and their abilities, and a sense of personal worth. The excellent progress made by pupils in English is particularly noteworthy given the context that the great majority speak English as a second or third language. In the Early Years and Reception, the children make an excellent start to their learning. Building on strong foundations, older pupils achieve highly in their IGCSE and A-level examinations. Pupils are successful beyond the classroom and their attitudes to learning are exemplary. Pupils' achievements are supported by a good curriculum that provides a sound foundation for learning at all levels as well as opportunities to develop individual interests. Currently, numbers in the sixth form constrain the choices pupils are able to make. Too many sixth formers are not yet able to study their first-choice option mix. The school offers a wide choice of extra-curricular activities in which there is a high level of participation by pupils. Teaching is excellent overall, although it is not entirely consistent in quality, particularly in the secondary school. In the vast majority of cases, teaching encourages independence, challenge and reflection, strongly promoting pupils' progress. A very small amount of teaching lacks challenge by comparison. Marking is constructive, fully involves the pupils and helps them understand how to improve their work.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development at all levels is exemplary. Pupils are reflective, emotionally mature and show high levels of courtesy and politeness. The cultural diversity of the school is highly valued by the pupils who spoke of this as one of the school's best features. Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves are excellent, fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect and support. The school has effective measures to deal with any bullying that may occur. Arrangements for safeguarding, health and safety, including staff training, are excellent.
- 2.3 Since the previous inspection, governance and leadership and management have undergone significant re-structuring and clarification and are now excellent. Strong and visionary leadership actively identifies the school's successes and priorities and provides the structures to ensure improvement. Middle management plays a significant role in the school's success. The school is a cohesive community and all staff, teaching and non-teaching, fully share in the school's vision. Relationships with parents are excellent and the school responds rapidly to their concerns.

**(i) Compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas**

(The range of the Standards for British Schools Overseas is given in the Preface)

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Standards for British Schools Overseas.

**(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Incorporate the vital spark of learning that marks out the best teaching to all lessons.
2. Ensure that the sixth-form curriculum more effectively meets the curricular needs of all pupils as the sixth form continues to grow.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills**

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills is excellent, in line with the school's aims.
- 3.2 Children in the Early Years and Reception are confident and show a good understanding of initial sounds, blending them to make simple words that they use in writing. They work competently with numbers up to ten and beyond. They use ICT with increasing confidence and show high levels of creativity. Responding to the high expectations of staff, most children reach or exceed the English Early Years Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception.
- 3.3 By the end of Year 2, most pupils are beginning to read well and write accurately, creatively and in a variety of genres. The many pupils with EAL readily acquire English language skills and use these with growing confidence across the curriculum. They have a secure grasp of mathematical concepts and work confidently with ICT. By the end of Year 6, pupils, especially the most able, are highly articulate and read with fluency, expression and enthusiasm. They write confidently, use punctuation accurately and are fluent in a variety of genres. They are skilled at handling mathematical skills in a range of subjects, show independence and logical thought and achieve high standards of creativity in art, music and drama.
- 3.4 Pupils of secondary age speak with increasing levels of confidence. They listen well to one another and to their teachers, building on each other's ideas and working comfortably together. Pupils reach good standards in modern foreign languages, such as French and German, and, where appropriate can sit IGCSE examinations in their own home languages. They demonstrate excellent numerical and ICT skills and use these to good effect in subjects across the curriculum. Older pupils show high levels of reasoning skills and can think independently. They show high standards in creative skills such as art, music and such activities as ballroom dancing. Displays of artwork around the school are of a very high standard.
- 3.5 In the primary school, pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against English national tests but, on the evidence available, including the school's own data, it is judged to be high. Excellent progress is made by pupils throughout the primary school, including the able, those with SEND or EAL, and those who are gifted and talented. This is because of the carefully targeted support they receive.
- 3.6 In the secondary school, the following analysis uses the English national data for the years 2011 to 2013, which are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Results in IGCSE have been mostly higher than worldwide averages, with the trend showing improvement year on year even though examination entries have substantially increased in recent years. The A-level results have been similar to the UK average for maintained schools, with 2012 results being similar to the UK average for maintained selective schools. In 2014, 60 per cent of the pupils achieved A\* or A grades and all achieved a pass grade. These examination results, and the inspection evidence, indicate that pupils make good progress in relation to their abilities and achieve well. Those with SEND progress well relative to their starting points, thanks to the carefully targeted support they receive. Although the great majority of the pupils are working in their second or third

language, they make equally good progress as their peers. On most occasions, pupils who are able make good progress although occasionally there is insufficient challenge in a very small proportion of their lessons.

- 3.7 Outside the classroom, pupils meet with high levels of success in a wide range of sporting and other activities, those who are identified as being gifted or talented being well-supported in their efforts. For example, a team of pupils represented Luxembourg at the Council of British International Schools (COBIS) debating competitions in Prague and Amsterdam. Two teams of pupils in Years 9 to 11 competed in a 'Top of the Bench' competition in Brussels organised by the Royal Society of Chemistry. A total of more than 60 pupils successfully completed Sports Leadership Awards and increasing numbers complete the Méri-te Jeunesse awards. Primary pupils have participated in the COBIS games for the last few years and the primary choir performs on a regular basis in local venues, including churches, retirement homes and city squares. The vast majority of sixth formers go on to study at universities worldwide with all obtaining places at their first choice last year.
- 3.8 The pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They are attentive, focused and show high levels of commitment and enthusiasm for their studies. They are curious about learning and determined to succeed. As they mature, they become increasingly more independent in their learning. Behaviour is excellent throughout the school; good manners and courtesy are the norm throughout the age range. Pupils take considerable pride in their work and persevere, even on the very few occasions when limited opportunities to practise their skills are offered in class.

### **3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)**

- 3.9 The quality of curricular and extra-curricular provision throughout the school is good overall. It contributes to making a positive impact on the pupils' achievements and learning, enabling the school to fulfil its stated aims.
- 3.10 The curriculum meets the Standards for British Schools Overseas at all stages. It covers the requisite areas of learning and is suitable for pupils of all ages, abilities and needs. Children in the Early Years and Reception benefit from excellent indoor facilities and are encouraged from a very young age to demonstrate creativity, independence and cooperation. Provision for outdoor learning has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The curriculum follows the English Early Years Foundation Stage framework and covers all seven areas of learning with the possible addition of French, depending on the child's command of English.
- 3.11 In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is both broad and balanced and is implemented through the International Primary Curriculum (IPC), enabling a cross-curricular and thematic approach. In Year 5, for example, a fairground topic, based on the book *Charlotte's Web*, had pupils creating foam printed letters in art, making motorised carousels in DT and writing newspaper reports in English. Provision in mathematics has been refined by offering a scheme originating in Singapore which enables pupils to learn and master fewer mathematical concepts in greater detail as well as having them learn these concepts using a three-step process. The school has placed more focus on the sciences in order to ease the transition to the secondary school. The provision for physical education (PE) has improved since the previous inspection.
- 3.12 The curriculum in Years 7 to 13 is broad and balanced with a good range of subjects on offer. Curricular planning has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Timetable allocations for the subject areas are appropriate with a good

focus on developing pupils' skills in English, mathematics and science. Classes are set on the basis of prior attainment where appropriate and, in interviews with pupils during the inspection, they were positive about the impact this had on their learning. In Years 10 and 11, pupils are entered for examinations appropriate to their needs, for example in mathematics they can study for GCSE or IGCSE. Older pupils benefit from a good deal of flexibility in terms of the courses offered to them. For example, BTEC qualifications and the ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness have been provided where appropriate. Since the previous inspection, several new subjects have been offered, including business studies, psychology, economics, media studies, PE and drama. Currently, there is no opportunity for pupils to study individual sciences at IGCSE.

- 3.13 In Years 12 and 13, A-level provision is adequate, although as the school has begun to grow there are some complications with ensuring that pupils are able to study their first-choice mixture of subjects. In some instances, resource and timetable limitations have led to large class sizes, especially in mathematics. The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) has been introduced to the sixth-form curriculum and has already demonstrated its value to the more able pupils.
- 3.14 The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, known as SMSC in the school, is well structured and has a generous timetable allocation. The programme extends into the sixth form, where pupils continue to develop their social and moral understanding. Careers education has been introduced since the previous inspection. The programme is effective and pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education, including university. During interviews, they spoke highly of the careers advice they had received and were appreciative of staff efforts to guide them towards their university destinations. The introduction of Luxembourgish to older primary pupils has enabled better understanding of local language, culture and traditions.
- 3.15 Provision for able pupils and those with SEND and EAL is effective. At all levels there is good communication between class teachers, specialist teachers and support staff, thus ensuring that pupils' individual needs are identified and well catered for through individual learning plans. Pupils at the early stages of learning English receive dedicated specialist teaching and, if necessary, benefit from additional support instead of a modern foreign language.
- 3.16 Provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent. Although a small minority of parents raised concerns about extra-curricular provision, the inspectors found no evidence to support their views. Throughout the school, pupils can choose from a wide range of clubs that benefit them physically, intellectually and socially, including for example, Mandarin, German, chess, athletics, and sports leadership. The choice in the secondary school is more limited but this is mainly due to a lack of demand and the fact that a large number of older pupils attend clubs outside the school's provision. During interviews with pupils across the age range, they expressed their satisfaction with what was offered to them. Clubs and activities are organised efficiently and arrangements are clearly communicated to parents. In addition to activities offered by the school, clubs are also provided by independent organisations. The primary school's after-school provision, the Fun Club, is well attended and provides wrap-around care for working parents. It also provides some sixth-form pupils with work experience by offering them the opportunity to help supervise the club.
- 3.17 The school recognises the importance of trips and visits as part of a well-rounded education and makes the most of its geographical position by providing an excellent

range of these. Primary pupils, for example, took part in a singing competition in Brussels. Pupils in Year 7 recently visited the European Space Centre in Belgium whilst those from Year 10 went to Vienna, a French theme park, Florence and Krakow. Sixth-form pupils have experienced a bonding trip and visits to a variety of European cities.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.18 The quality of teaching is excellent overall and fully supports the school's aims of creating an atmosphere where pupils are challenged to realise their potential. In discussions with pupils, they were extremely positive about the quality of the teaching they received and felt that, as a result, they were stretched and challenged to succeed.
- 3.19 Teaching in the Early Years and Reception is highly effective in promoting pupils' progress and achievement. Teachers have an excellent understanding of the children's needs and create a learning environment with high levels of enjoyment and independence. Children are keen to practise their readiness to learn through the '5 Goods' and persevere in their work. Planning pays close attention to their needs and teachers use skilful intervention to extend the children's learning. For example, the glass-windowed mini-compost bin provides an excellent opportunity for practical learning and understanding of the world. Partnerships with parents are strong so that they are fully involved with their child's work.
- 3.20 In the primary school, well-planned and challenging teaching enables the pupils to make excellent progress in their learning. Small class sizes enable high levels of individual attention. Lessons move at a brisk pace and sustain the pupils' interests. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and encourage opportunities for discussion and perseverance. Pupils in Year 6, for example, created an audio tour of Luxembourg for the inspectors. They were involved in rigorous peer and self-evaluation and made improvements to their scripts. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and high-quality relationships create a safe learning environment in which pupils can explore ideas and develop critical thinking skills. Pupils feel valued and are keen to take risks with their learning. They are encouraged to think for themselves and readily 'have a go' at answering questions even if they are not sure of the answer. Classroom behaviour is exemplary. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach and excellent use is made of subject specialists. In an art lesson, for example, pupils were given excellent feedback on their observational drawings.
- 3.21 In the secondary school, pupils are encouraged to discuss and share their ideas in a studious but friendly learning environment. Classroom relationships are excellent. Lesson planning is thorough and detailed. A wide range of effective strategies is used to engage and extend pupils' learning. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and skilfully respond to their pupils' needs. Resources are used well to motivate and extend pupils' learning. In drama, for example, pupils used masks to effectively explore emotions and body language. Pupils make good use of one another as resources for learning, as evident, for example, in a Year 6 ballroom dancing lesson taught by Year 11 pupils, or in Year 7 mathematics where specific support is provided by sixth-form pupils at lunchtime. In a very small minority of lessons, however, teaching was less interactive and dynamic. As a result, pupils made less progress than that of which they were capable.

- 3.22 Pupils throughout the school who have SEND or EAL receive excellent support from their teachers and support staff. Particularly able pupils are encouraged and supported, although provision for this is not consistent in all lessons.
- 3.23 Assessment is good and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Teachers make excellent use of data to set targets and monitor progress towards them. Interventions are, as a consequence, timely and effective. Work is regularly marked and is of high quality, helping the pupils to understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work. Self-reflection is encouraged from the earliest age and pupils are fully involved in the assessment process. In the Early Years, for example, children are asked to make comments about the work they have done and these are recorded in their assessment portfolios.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils**

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent throughout the school.
- 4.2 The pupils are self-aware, confident and reflective, regardless of their age. In interviews, they said that the displays of work and other materials in classrooms and corridors are thought-provoking and make them feel proud. They are particularly appreciative of the displaying of work in parts of the school other than their own. Excellent opportunities exist in lessons such as drama and PSHE for the pupils to explore their feelings and they do so willingly, showing high levels of emotional maturity. Their appreciation of the non-material aspects of life is evident in their rich creative work in, for example, art and music.
- 4.3 The pupils' excellent moral development is evident in all that they do throughout the school, including in the Early Years where the children show good sharing behaviour and readily help one another. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and show high levels of concern for their fellow pupils and staff. This extends to those less fortunate than themselves, with fundraising for charity being an important part of school life. Sixth-form pupils show high levels of maturity and moral awareness, evident for example in their debates on issues such as sex education and abortion.
- 4.4 Excellent social awareness begins in the Early Years where the children feel safe and well cared for. This gives them the confidence to interact with others and gradually take on responsibility. Across the school, pupils are courteous and polite and have excellent manners. Opportunities to exercise responsibility have improved since the previous inspection. In interviews, pupils felt that they could make their opinions known and that they were listened to. The sixth-form management team is democratically chosen. The council in the primary school and the parliament in the secondary school foster a sense of responsibility but are also successful in giving the pupils a sense of involvement in the school's decision-making and an insight into democratic processes and how different views can be heard and considered.
- 4.5 The large number of different nationalities and languages represented in the school is the foundation for the pupils' excellent cultural development. In interviews, pupils felt very strongly that the diversity in the school was one of its strongest features and enabled them to develop an appreciation and understanding of each other's cultures. Their understanding of British, Western and global cultures is excellent.

### **4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety**

- 4.6 Arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent. At every level, the school achieves its aim of achieving potential through challenge and care. Pupils from the youngest age feel safe, newcomers are welcome and the school caters exceptionally well for its diverse community. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and are always available to offer advice and support. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent and, without exception during interviews, pupils stated that teachers had a genuine interest in them and felt they cared for their well-being as well as for their academic successes. Pupils have excellent relationships with their classmates and with pupils of different ages, as seen during a PE lesson where Year 12 pupils taught Year 8 boys the intricacies of the tango and the cha-cha. Pupils are particularly kind to one another from the earliest age.

- 4.7 Transition arrangements between the primary school and the secondary school ensure that pupils move seamlessly between phases of education.
- 4.8 Behaviour throughout the school is excellent. From the youngest age, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and to co-operate. There are effective support mechanisms in place throughout the school, with tutors and class teachers central to the process. The very rare incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with swiftly and effectively. There is a strong emphasis throughout the school on promoting good behaviour with a host of tangible rewards available to strive for. Bullying is very rare and pupils are certain that, should it occur, it would be dealt with quickly. In their responses to the online pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils felt that teachers did not treat them equally, did not provide them with enough responsibility and were not sure if they could talk to an adult if they had a problem. Inspectors found no evidence to support these views and staff were observed to provide excellent levels of support and encouragement. Pupils have many opportunities to exercise responsibility. The significant number of pupils who completed the questionnaire in hard copy and those who were interviewed by inspectors held much more positive views about these aspects.
- 4.9 Safeguarding arrangements have a high priority and are underpinned by a detailed child protection policy. This policy is implemented effectively, conforms to Luxembourg requirements and is of an equivalent standard to that expected in England. Staff are appropriately trained to respond to any concerns. Several staff and two governors have undergone training at the higher level. The register of staff appointments is accurately maintained. All staff have undergone checks on their suitability to work with children.
- 4.10 The school takes all necessary measures to reduce risks from fire and other hazards. It satisfies local requirements for fire safety and for health and safety. Fire drills are held regularly and fire notices are clearly displayed. Potentially hazardous substances are safely stored. Risk assessments are carried out for school trips. There are excellent facilities for sick or injured pupils, including a well-equipped specialist medical room. Qualified nurses are available throughout the day, as well as weekly visits from a doctor. In conformity with local requirements, all pupils undergo a medical check every two years. First-aid boxes and lists of qualified first aiders are prominently displayed around the school. Medications are securely kept, administered when required and key staff are aware of those pupils with potentially hazardous medical conditions. Suitable access, including lifts and modified door openers, are provided for pupils with physical disabilities.
- 4.11 Pupils learn about the benefits of healthy eating and exercise. They are provided with a nutritious mid-day meal, including a popular salad and fruit bar. Admission and attendance registers are well maintained and correctly stored.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent and has improved significantly in recent years. Initially, the governing body consisted of a small number of trustees who lived outside the country, had limited contact with the school and were concerned primarily with finance and premises. When the school grew to include pupils of secondary school age, the trustees appointed a head of secondary but the relative powers between the two heads were unclear in some important respects. At the time of the previous inspection, steps had just been taken to improve the arrangements for governance.
- 5.2 The governing body, which now includes more locally-resident governors as well as a number of appointed parent governors, provides excellent oversight of the school so that it is successful in achieving its aims. Excellent communications with the school leadership team enables the board to achieve a clear grasp of the successes and priorities of the school. Governors are now much more involved in the daily life of the school, attending social events and acting as link governors.
- 5.3 Governors bring a wide range of skills to support the work of the school. The introduction of effective committees, which meet regularly, has enabled the governing body to play a much more active role in monitoring educational initiatives and standards. Governors act as genuine critical friends and have successfully provided both support and challenge over a period of significant growth in the school. Training and membership of a professional organisation mean that the governors are now much more aware of their responsibilities in respect of welfare, health and safety, the appointments procedure and the checking of staff suitability. They receive regular training in the safeguarding of pupils and regularly review relevant policies. Governing body minutes have recorded that the governing body is fully involved in the annual review of the child protection policy and its implementation.
- 5.4 In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed themselves as highly satisfied with the governance of the school.

### **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management**

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is excellent and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the running of the school.
- 5.6 Senior leadership has created a challenging and caring educational vision which is shared by all. The appointment of an overall principal, who works closely with the two head teachers, has provided clear leadership to all parts of the school. Consequently, a real sense of unity and purpose exists between members of staff at all levels.
- 5.7 The management structure at senior level has changed significantly since the previous inspection. Several new management posts have been created. This has enabled much more effective management of both academic performance and pastoral care and has strengthened lines of communication throughout the school. Senior leaders are effective in self-evaluation and the setting of priorities, and in

ensuring that they are achieved. Managers at all levels monitor the quality of the educational experience, both academically and pastorally, with considerable success. There is close collaboration between the primary and secondary sections of the school in order to secure a more coherent learning experience for the pupils. A cohesive middle management structure has been created to ensure effective implementation of initiatives. New appointments since the previous inspection include achievement and progress leaders in the primary school and heads of faculty in secondary.

- 5.8 Senior managers have been successful in securing the appointment of high-quality staff who have a clear understanding of their roles. Job descriptions are now in place and are regularly reviewed. An effective system of staff appraisal has been introduced and this meets local employment legal requirements. The programme for continuous professional development is well established and draws upon lesson observation. Induction and monitoring procedures for new staff are effective and include secure arrangements for child protection training. The school implements thorough procedures for checking and recording the suitability of staff to work with children. Staff at all levels receive regular training in the safeguarding of pupils.
- 5.9 Administrative, financial and support staff play a major role in ensuring the school's success. Strong financial management has enabled ongoing improvements in accommodation and resources.

### **5.(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians**

- 5.10 The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent. The school maintains highly constructive relationships in accordance with its aims of creating a caring and supportive community. The school has a welcoming approach.
- 5.11 Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were highly supportive of the school. Parents were particularly pleased with the school's promotion of worthwhile attitudes and values, the high standards of behaviour and the management of the school. They appreciate the ready availability of information about the school and its policies.
- 5.12 Inspectors found no evidence to support the small minority of parents who thought that the school does not provide sufficient information about their child's progress. Reports to parents are regular and effective. Parents have the opportunity to attend parent conference meetings twice a year to discuss their child's achievements and progress. The school is beginning to develop online reporting to parents which is designed to further enhance this communication.
- 5.13 All sections of the school provide useful information documents to the parents. New parents receive an informative handbook. Parents are kept well informed about the work of the school through contact books, weekly newsletters, an annual school report, termly curriculum letters and milepost calendars and an excellent website. Detailed secondary curriculum guides and 'good to know' guides provide helpful advice on how parents can support their child's learning and are available on the website. Parents have good opportunities to become involved in school life through charity events, international dinners and walking groups. The newly established Friends of St George's seeks to involve governors, parents and staff in school life.
- 5.14 The school's complaints policy meets all requirements and is implemented consistently. In responses to the questionnaires, a very small minority of parents expressed dissatisfaction with the way their concerns were handled. Inspectors

found that complaints are appropriately investigated in line with published procedures with care and sensitivity.

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and staff and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors and a selection of other governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Dr Lynn Powell	Reporting Inspector
Ms Dawn Akyurek	Junior Team Inspector (Head, COBIS school, Spain)
Mr Richard Morgan	Junior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS)
Mr Timothy Roberts	Senior Team Inspector (Head, HMC, COBIS school, Czech Republic)