



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS

**INSPECTION REPORT ON
THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF BUCHAREST**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

The British School of Bucharest

Full Name of School	The British School of Bucharest
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Principal	Mrs Joanne Puddy-Wells
Proprietor	Ms Corina Adriana
Age Range	1 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	430
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (223 boys; 207 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2: 27 5-11: 241 3-5: 50 11-18: 112
Inspection dates	26 April 2012 to 27 April 2012 14 May 2012 to 17 May 2012

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 May 2009.

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 The school seeks to offer a comprehensive international education, based on the English National Curriculum (NC). It is committed to developing confident, motivated, self-disciplined learners, who develop their potential and learn to make a responsible contribution to the world. Within a secure and caring environment, the school aims to provide a strong, intellectual foundation and to encourage pupils in open enquiry, creativity, decision making and independent thought. The school is a non-profit making foundation, Crawford House, which operates under Romanian law. The proprietor is president of the board of the foundation and has oversight of the management of the school, working closely with the school principal to develop the educational provision.
- 1.2 Opened in 2000 with fewer than 10 infant children, and after several moves to meet the school's developing needs, the school now operates on one site to the north of the city of Bucharest and provides education in separate sections for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), primary and senior pupils. Year on year, the school has grown from the bottom upwards, so that numbers in the senior section of the school are fewer than those in the lower part of the school. The school moved to its present site in December 2008 and made significant adaptation of the premises. Since the previous inspection, the school has opened a unit for children aged 12 months and now accommodates 27 children under 3 years of age, 50 children aged 3 to 5, 241 pupils aged 5 to 11 in the primary section of the school and 112 pupils aged 11 to 18 in the senior section.
- 1.3 Pupils enter the school at all ages and at all points during the year. From Year 3 they are assessed before entry in English and mathematics. Many children arrive with little or no English language. Thus pupil abilities are variable throughout the school. The ability profile of the primary section is above the UK average overall. In Year 6 around one-quarter of pupils are of well above average ability. The ability profile of the senior section is above the UK average overall, although different cohorts display some variation. Pupils entering the sixth form sit an entrance examination and are also assessed based on previous results from other school systems and results in public examinations.
- 1.4 Of the 359 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), children in the EYFS pick up their English through immersion in the language. From Year 1 onwards, 28 pupils receive specific support, through an EAL programme that involves intensive work with specialist teachers. The school identifies ten pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive specialist learning support.
- 1.5 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 for the Nursery groups of the EYFS and its NC equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Crib	Nursery
Crèche	Nursery

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills are good at all stages and all levels of ability, including the EYFS where children achieve highly across the English national areas of learning. This is supported by good teaching and an appropriate curriculum, although that in Years 10 to 12 presents certain constraints that the school acknowledges. Pupils of all abilities, and those with SEND or EAL, make good progress and are enthusiastic about their learning, eager to explore new concepts and ideas. They succeed particularly well in developing speaking and listening skills. Creativity is achieved in all parts of the school and the 'university' courses in the primary section allow this and freedom of expression to develop particularly well. Pupils apply their numeracy skills in a variety of subjects and are independent and capable users of a range of information and communication technology (ICT) software. In extra-curricular activities, some pupils achieve at a high level in sport, although opportunities for competition against other schools is limited and the small numbers of senior pupils preclude certain team activities. Overall, results in UK national tests at the ages of 7 and 11 have been above the UK average for maintained primary schools, and GCSE results have been similar to the UK average for maintained schools. Results in the International GCSE (IGCSE) have varied between subjects and from year to year, although in many cases they have been similar to, or above, the worldwide average.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils show high levels of self-esteem and self-awareness that lead to trusting, open relationships, which are a defining feature of the school. They demonstrate a strong sense of self-worth and develop into confident, independent young people. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and translate this into action in their respect and concern for others. A well-organised school council allows pupils a voice and gives them a strong sense of involvement in school life. Social confidence, teamwork and self-reliance are built up effectively through residential trips. Pupils' cultural development is excellent and stems from the experience afforded by their wide variety of cultural backgrounds, and their harmonious relationships with each other. The quality of the school's arrangements for pastoral care and for welfare, health and safety are excellent, and there are secure arrangements in place to carry out recruitment checks on those working at the school.
- 2.3 The quality of the governance of the school is excellent. The proprietor is committed to providing the support that is essential for the school's future development and ensures that the school meets the needs of its pupils. The proprietor discharges her responsibilities well in relation to all statutory requirements. Good, often excellent, leadership and management by the senior management team provide clear educational direction that leads to the good standards achieved and the excellent quality of pastoral care. They have enabled the developing school to flourish. The leadership of the EYFS is highly effective and based on experience and knowledge of the age range. Some confident subject leadership enables consistently effective teaching and learning, and a thorough approach to the tracking of pupils' progress has been carefully and successfully implemented. Nevertheless, an informal approach to the monitoring of some aspects of provision, such as marking of pupils' work, is insufficient to ensure their quality. The school is committed to recruiting staff with expertise and empathy with its ethos and does so successfully.

2.(b) Action points

(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. Routinely scrutinise and monitor the quality of pupils' written work to ensure closer adherence to the marking policy.
2. Ensure best practice is shared across the school to establish a consistently high quality of teaching.
3. Strengthen the range, quality and coherence of the senior school curriculum.

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 pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills is good. Pupils are well educated at all stages and for all levels of ability, in line with the school's aim to develop confident, self-disciplined learners who can realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to the world. In the EYFS, children achieve highly across the English national areas of learning and demonstrate excellent language development. The environment provided in the EYFS is a particular strength and children frequently initiate activities and develop their independence.
- 3.2 The pupils' all-round achievement is based on suitable levels of knowledge, understanding and skill in curricular and extra-curricular activities. Pupils succeed particularly well in developing speaking and listening skills, a strong achievement as a significant number have EAL, and there are numerous notable examples where they have achieved excellent results. They are articulate, not afraid to express their opinions, and yet always listen with consideration for others. Pupils show reasonable understanding of previously learned material and their subject-specific vocabulary is well developed. For example, in a Year 9 science lesson, pupils showed good levels of oral ability and were able to present cogent arguments as they discussed the solar system. Displays of artwork around the school show considerable creative achievement. In particular, a pupil-led mural project is enhancing the environment of the school. The 'university' courses integral to the curriculum are highly valued by pupils in the primary section and allow freedom of expression and creativity to develop particularly well. Throughout the school, the effective development of mathematical skills enables pupils to apply them in a variety of subjects. Information and communication technology skills are well developed and pupils are independent and capable users of a range of software. Year 2 pupils, for example, were able to transfer data between applications with ease.
- 3.3 In extra-curricular activities, some pupils achieve at a high level in sport, although opportunities for competition against other schools is limited. Additionally, in the senior section, small pupil numbers preclude certain team activities. There are opportunities for pupils to develop their musical talents and the talent competition encourages pupils to demonstrate their musical prowess. There is a growing tradition of public speaking and debating in the school. An enthusiastic, highly capable group of pupils debates competitively on the world stage and has just returned from participating in the World Scholar's Cup, winning a good number of trophies.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the English national data for the years 2009 to 2011. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Overall, results in UK national tests at the age of 7 have been above the UK average for maintained primary schools. Pupils demonstrate stronger performance in mathematics than in reading and writing, where results are generally similar to the UK average. Results in UK national tests at the age of 11 have been above the UK average for maintained primary schools. Performance in mathematics has exceeded English and science and is far above the UK average for maintained primary schools.

- 3.5 The school's GCSE grades have been similar to the UK average for maintained schools. In general, girls have performed better than boys, particularly in 2010 and 2011. Results in the IGCSE have varied between subjects and from year to year, although in many cases they have been similar to, or above, the worldwide average. These results and observation of pupils' performance throughout the school indicate that pupils at all levels make good progress relative to pupils of similar ability.
- 3.6 Pupils' attitudes to their learning are highly positive at all levels. They are enthusiastic about their work, eager to explore new concepts and ideas, and frequently attend additional tutorial sessions on a voluntary basis to develop their abilities. Pupils work well within groups and on individual tasks. They appreciate the range of extra-curricular activities and join in whole-heartedly.

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

- 3.7 The quality of curricular provision, including that in the EYFS, is good overall. The curriculum is effective in its coverage of the English NC and is generally suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. In the EYFS and Years 1 to 6, provision is consistently good, whereas from Year 7, some is good, but much is satisfactory. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils' learning, and the curriculum framework mostly supports the school's aims to provide a comprehensive international education that enables pupils to continue their education anywhere in the world, despite certain curricular and physical resource shortcomings. The curriculum is extremely well supported by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. There is ample support from outside organisations, providing additional activities for pupils which capture their interest.
- 3.8 The provision for pupils with SEND or EAL is good. Pupils are supported through individual education plans (IEPs), specialised support in class, extra one-to-one classes and withdrawal for individual sessions. The monitoring of IEPs is at an early stage and has yet to establish the effect on pupils' performance.
- 3.9 The EYFS enjoys excellent resource provision and a safe, secure environment that enables children to develop all areas of learning, both inside and outside the school. Throughout the EYFS and primary section, music and physical education benefit from the support of specialist teachers. The primary curriculum is well planned overall. In Years 1 to 6, there is a strong emphasis on numeracy and literacy, and support continues for those with EAL. The 'university' courses provide a wide range of activities that reflect the interest and expertise of the teachers, and stimulate pupils' interest and intellectual development beyond the boundaries of the prescribed curriculum. Days devoted to a particular subject, such as science across the year groups, enable pupils to focus on a variety of activities that bring the subject to life. The recent introduction of laptops for use in the classroom has allowed ICT to be integrated into the curriculum.
- 3.10 In Years 7 to 9, the curriculum is broad and balanced, and includes all subjects usually offered within the English NC. All pupils, with the exception of EAL learners, study at least one modern foreign language (MFL). In Years 10 to 13, small numbers have led to limited subject choice and difficulty with timetabling. The range of subjects is growing, for example with the introduction of art, and design and technology, but whilst the school has tried to accommodate the option choices made by pupils, this has not always been possible. Co-ordinated sciences is not available at IGCSE, and instead biology is compulsory for all IGCSE pupils. Additional

optional support after school and on Saturday mornings enables fast tracked Year 10 pupils to take physics GCSE and Year 11 to have greater revision time.

- 3.11 Pupils with little or no English language upon entry to the school receive good support in place of MFL lessons, and from classroom teachers within regular lessons. They also attend additional lessons after school although, as a consequence, this precludes their participation and integration with other pupils in certain extra-curricular activities. However, as EAL support is effective, they very quickly join the mainstream curriculum. Able, gifted and talented (AGT) pupils are identified and their progress monitored closely. Opportunities are planned for them to be challenged intellectually and creatively, for example through their preparation for the World Scholar's Cup.
- 3.12 Use of the libraries is tightly integrated into the curricular and extra-curricular provision. They are central to the atmosphere of the school and purposefully utilised. For example, immediately after school, senior pupils were observed studying or reading quietly in one section, while a debate club discussed the subject of fast food in another.
- 3.13 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is a continuous feature of the school's provision and reflects its aims. Good use is made of the diverse backgrounds of pupils, and different belief and value systems are cross referenced against those present in the United Kingdom. The curriculum mostly supports re-entry into schools in the United Kingdom.
- 3.14 A plethora of extra-curricular activities is on offer. All staff are involved in the programme, the pupils' attendance is monitored and the good quality of the provision enables a lively, purposeful feel to the school subsequent to the conclusion of the formal curriculum. Teachers make good use of the extensive school grounds and resource provision is evident, for example with the addition of a climbing wall, staffed by external personnel. Pupils can take part in competitive debating, and some limited opportunities are available to compete against other schools in a range of sporting endeavours.
- 3.15 Trips add to the pupils' enjoyment of their learning, although the programme does not make extensive use of the local environment. The opportunity for pupils to participate in the International Award, which is well attended, is an example of the school's efforts to improve its extra-curricular provision still further.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The quality of teaching is good overall. Throughout the school, the teaching, some of which is excellent, is effective in contributing to pupils' achievements, enables successful learning and promotes pupils' progress. It enables the school to meet its aim to provide a comprehensive, international education based on the English NC. In a majority of lessons, teaching motivates and interests pupils.
- 3.17 Teachers' subject knowledge is secure, and the use of specialist staff for music and physical education enriches the experience of children in the EYFS and primary pupils. The staff know their pupils well, have outstandingly good relationships with them and adapt the teaching to their learning needs. An easy informality between teachers and pupils promotes good learning and makes for success in tests and English public examinations. The EAL teaching is a strength of the school. Teachers and classroom assistants are well aware of pupils with SEND or EAL and help in lessons is effective. As a consequence, pupils respond positively and their learning is good. The AGT pupils are offered a wide range of challenging

opportunities to enhance their skills further. Lessons are suitably planned and usually based on effective schemes of work.

- 3.18 In the EYFS, there is an excellent combination of adult-led activities and opportunities for child-initiated learning. Some excellent provision is made for structured play, indoors and outdoors, that engages children and ensures progress.
- 3.19 At its best, teaching has high expectations of what pupils can achieve and the pupils are challenged to think for themselves, for example in creative subjects such as drama, art, design and technology, and in the 'university' courses. Well-considered learning objectives are shared with the pupils and build on their prior knowledge. The lessons have positive and challenging content, where well-chosen resources are effectively used. Independent learning is strongly encouraged, for example in the setting of project work both in school and for homework. In design and technology, senior pupils were set the task of making individual designs for a perfume bottle. There is a balance of teacher and pupil involvement which enables all pupils to be actively engaged in learning. In a Year 9 art lesson, the teaching ensured that pupils were focused and all achieved work of a high quality, and in English in Year 7, pupils responded enthusiastically to a series of tasks that required an active response, where they voluntarily sought information from a dictionary for the meaning and use of words.
- 3.20 Where teaching is less effective, it lacks sufficient challenge and encouragement for pupils to think and act for themselves. Lessons lack pace and opportunities for learning are limited, as pupils' ambition and curiosity are not promoted.
- 3.21 Teachers make good use of a suitable range and quality of resources, such as interactive whiteboards, to reinforce learning and encourage pupils' interest.
- 3.22 Across the school, assessment, based on careful analysis of performance data, is used effectively to track pupils' progress and inform future planning. Teachers share supportive assessment information with pupils orally, but in most cases the marking of pupils' work offers limited, perfunctory comments that do not advise as to how work might be improved, in order to enable future progress.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The school clearly fulfils its aim to provide pupils with a secure and caring environment that encourages the fulfilment of individual potential and the growth of self-esteem and for them to become responsible citizens of the world community.
- 4.2 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Their high levels of self-esteem and self-awareness lead to trusting, open relationships, which is a defining feature of the school. Pupils demonstrate a strong sense of self-worth and develop into confident, independent young people. They feel safe and secure in a supportive learning community where they celebrate each other's successes. They feel valued and take pride in the rewards and accolades they receive. The vibrant and fruitful environment, excellent art displays and musical performances are testimony to their awareness of beauty and an immaterial side of life.
- 4.3 The moral development of pupils is excellent. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and translate this into action in their respect and concern for others. Developed strongly through the primary section's 'golden rules' of behaviour, the pupils' moral awareness is reinforced by their exposure to a wide variety of issues and moral dilemmas debated in the PSHE programme and explored in assemblies. Strong moral awareness underpins the pupils' spontaneous care and support for their fellow pupils and their empathy for those less fortunate than themselves, as seen in the generous support for chosen charities.
- 4.4 Pupils demonstrate excellent social development. They feel secure and well cared for and this allows them to reach out to others and accept responsibility with relish. The well-organised school council allows pupils a voice and gives them a strong sense of involvement in school life. They participate enthusiastically in activities and involve themselves in community projects, such as Habitat for Humanity. Social confidence, teamwork and self-reliance are developed through residential trips, such as when pupils in Years 4 and 5 visit a safari village. They develop an increasing knowledge of current issues facing the world through such experiences as a human rights awareness week and the Year 13 visit to the United Nations base in Geneva.
- 4.5 Pupils' cultural development is excellent, stemming from the experience afforded by their wide variety of cultural backgrounds and their harmonious interaction. Cultural diversity is celebrated in features in *Newsblast*, as well as on a daily basis. Differences are explored and increasingly understood. Opportunities are given to study local and international social and political structures, ensuring that pupils develop international awareness.

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

- 4.6 The quality of pastoral care and the arrangements for the pupils' welfare, health and safety is excellent. All staff care effectively for the well-being and development of all pupils, from the youngest year groups onwards. In line with its aims, the school maintains a thoroughly supportive and secure atmosphere where care is a priority. The school has comprehensive measures in place for guarding against bullying and dealing with unacceptable behaviour, and pupils feel that they are effective.
- 4.7 Relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst pupils themselves, are outstanding. This creates a true family atmosphere and there are many examples of

interaction based upon mutual respect. Older and younger pupils benefit from being together, with 'twinning' being just one example of this. The culture of excellent behaviour is prompted by the clear rules displayed around the school. Rewards and sanctions are well understood at all levels. Everyday misdemeanours are dealt with in a positive and constructive way.

- 4.8 Arrangements for pupils' health and safety are rigorous. They have due regard for pupils' welfare and take into account the requirements of the Romanian authorities. The school has rigorous structures and procedures in place for child protection and safe recruitment. The relevant training for child protection is undertaken by all staff.
- 4.9 The school takes all necessary measures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Secure risk assessments are in place and are reviewed regularly. Consultants are regularly used to advise on the best health and safety practices, including emergency drills.
- 4.10 The arrangements for the care of pupils who are taken ill whilst at school are well known to pupils, and include a well-equipped medical centre and staff suitably trained in first aid. Pupils with SEND are well catered for.
- 4.11 Pupils of all ages, including those in the EYFS, are aware of the significance of healthy living. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and the school's new catering service provides very nutritious meals that they appreciate. Regular exercise is encouraged and many opportunities for this are available throughout the school.
- 4.12 The admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of the governance of the school is excellent. The proprietor has a clear vision for the future of the school and works closely with the principal to ensure that this is met and is in line with the school's aims. She makes a clear distinction regarding her responsibility for the financial and business side of the school, while delegating the principal's role and responsibility for all educational aspects. The proprietor is committed to providing the support that is essential for the school's future development and fulfils her responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning, and investment in staff, accommodation and resources. She ensures that the school meets the needs of its pupils, while retaining its declared ethos. The proprietor has overseen the adaptation of existing buildings, providing viable and much needed accommodation.
- 5.2 The proprietor's clear insight into the working of the school is enabled through good relations and regular communication between herself and the principal. They enjoy an open and constructive exchange of ideas, and the experience and expertise of the proprietor ensure that the school benefits from oversight providing perceptive advice and challenge to the leadership.
- 5.3 The proprietor discharges her responsibilities well in relation to statutory requirements. School policies, including those for safeguarding, and health and safety, are reviewed annually. The proprietor meets with the child protection officer to ensure the effectiveness of procedures to safeguard pupils. Scrutiny of the selection and appointment procedures for all staff and volunteers is comprehensive and the proprietor is kept informed.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 Leadership and management are good overall. They provide clear educational direction in accordance with the aims of the school. Delegated responsibilities are effectively discharged, and particularly those for the safeguarding of pupils.
- 5.5 At senior level, good, and often excellent, leadership and management lead to the good standards achieved and the excellent quality of pastoral care. They have enabled the developing school to flourish, and have set and achieved clear priorities. At other levels of the management hierarchy, management is more variable in quality, although that for the EYFS is highly effective and based on experience and knowledge of the age range. Some middle management enables consistently effective teaching and learning, but in other areas an informal approach to monitoring does not ensure a sufficiently good quality of provision.
- 5.6 Since the previous inspection, the school has undergone considerable changes that ultimately have seen the reorganisation of the senior management team, the effective restructuring of the faculty system and the establishment of clear responsibilities for academic and pastoral oversight. The school represents considerable work in progress at present, and senior management is starting to look at the challenging timetabling and curriculum issues associated with extending the senior section. The intention of the senior management is to keep all staff involved and informed. This is currently in evidence as the school development plan for the year is being reviewed by all staff, so that they have an understanding of what is proposed and share in its construction. Other staff have been encouraged to take

forward various initiatives that reflect their personal strengths and interests. This all represents considerable activity and responsibility, and while some initiatives, such as a thorough approach to the tracking of pupils' progress, have been carefully implemented and monitored, some more informal initiatives have not. A range of appropriate policies is in place and these are systematically reviewed, but weaknesses in approach to the implementation of some, such as the marking policy, demonstrate that attention to the detail of the policies and oversight of provision are not yet well embedded.

- 5.7 The school has taken careful account of the recommendations of the previous report and has made good progress in developing stronger ties between its three sections. Regular meetings across the three sections have moved this forward, particularly in the EYFS, the primary section and the early years of the senior section. The performance data has been audited and has enabled the tracking of pupils' progress, as well as facilitating staff's planning of future work. Monitoring of systems of organisation and management continues, the support for new staff is improved and arrangements for the induction of new pupils are sound.
- 5.8 The school is committed to recruiting staff with expertise and empathy with its ethos, and does so successfully. It ensures that they are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all pupils, safeguarding, and welfare, health and safety. New members of staff are carefully inducted, and a system of appraisal of all staff aims to support individual professional development and performance.

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

- 5.9 Links with parents, carers and guardians are good. They reflect the school aims to provide a positive, stimulating and caring environment. Parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire particularly value the readily available information about school policy and feel that the school responds promptly to questions and concerns. They also responded positively regarding the range of subjects offered and feel that their children are progressing well. Some parents expressed concern about the cost of extra-curricular activities. The inspection found that while a few specialist activities, provided by external organisations, do attract an additional cost, many more are provided by school staff and are free.
- 5.10 Parents feel that the staff are approachable and accessible. Informal communication with parents occurs at the beginning of each school day when parents are greeted and welcomed by senior staff, and they feel that they have every opportunity to meet with teachers when questions or concerns arise.
- 5.11 Social media and other electronic systems provide parents across the school with up-to-date and accurate information about the school's life and work. These are supplemented by some well-produced magazines, such as *Newsblast*, that provide a wider view of the school's activity and philosophy.
- 5.12 The active Parents' Association provides an excellent range of events throughout the academic year, both to support the school and to raise money for the wider community. Parents have considerable opportunities to play an active part in the school, attending quiz nights, coffee mornings, cookery demonstrations, the artisan fair, school performances and the summer fair. They are welcomed into various curricular activities, such as the science day, when several joined their children's lessons.
- 5.13 Parents have regular opportunities to discuss their children's progress. They receive twice-yearly written reports on the progress and attainment of their children in all

subjects. These are complemented by parent evenings. Informative handbooks are designed to support new pupils on joining the school and their families, and as pupils enter each new phase of the school.

- 5.14 The school handles parental concerns with care and in a timely fashion. Pupil planners are available for the recording of homework and for communication with parents, and have the potential for extended use.

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 proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended 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

Mrs Beryl Fawcett	Reporting Inspector
Miss Patricia Griffin	Deputy Head, IAPS school, UK
Ms Barbara Lubaczewska	Head, COBIS school, Czech Republic
Mr Timothy Roberts	Head, COBIS school, Czech Republic