



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		
Address	42 Erou Iancu Nicolae 077190 Voluntari Ilfov County Bucharest Romania		
Telephone Number	0040 21267 8919		
Fax Number	0040 21267 8969		
Email Address	office@britishschool.ro		
Principal	Mrs Joanne Puddy-Wells		
Proprietor	Ms Corina Adriana		
Age Range	1 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	500		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (239 boys; 261 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2:	20	5-11: 256
	3-5:	57	11-18: 167
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	500	
Inspection dates	25 to 28 May 2015		

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 2012.

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.

CONTENTS

	Page
1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	3
(a) Main findings	3
(b) Action points	4
(i) Compliance with Standards requirements	4
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	4
3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	5
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills	5
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	6
(c) The contribution of teaching	8
4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	10
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	10
(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	11
5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	13
(a) The quality of governance	13
(b) The quality of leadership and management	13
(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians	15
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The British School at Bucharest aims to provide an international education for a comprehensive intake of boys and girls, based on the English National Curriculum (NC). Its mission is to develop confident, motivated, and self-disciplined learners, who can realise their potential and 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 The school is a day school which opened in 2000 and is now located in the north of Bucharest. An Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) section within the school campus provides education from the age of one. There are primary and secondary sections, the latter including a sixth form. The sections occupy two adapted three-floor buildings. Some secondary teachers visit the primary school to teach specialist subjects. The school has undergone a steady expansion since it began. There are now 77 children in the EYFS, 256 pupils in the primary section and 167 in the secondary section, including 29 in the sixth form. Since the previous inspection in 2012 the school has enlarged the breadth of the secondary curriculum, increased club offerings, capitalised on additional space and increased personalisation of the curriculum in Years 10 to 13. The school plans to admit boarders in the next academic year.
- 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. The ability profile of the primary section is above the UK average, although with a wide spread of abilities represented, and some variance in the ability of different year groups. The ability profile of the senior school is slightly above the UK average, with most pupils having ability that is similar to or above the UK average. The ability profile of the sixth form is similar to the UK average, with pupils demonstrating a wide spread of abilities. About one quarter of the pupils are Romanian, one fifth are British, and over 50 other nationalities are represented in the school body. Parents are predominantly engaged in professional, commercial, or diplomatic occupations.
- 1.4 There are 384 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL). Children in the EYFS acquire English through immersion in the language. From Year 1 onwards, 31 pupils receive specific support, through an EAL programme that involves intensive work with specialist teachers. The school identifies 13 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and five of these receive specialist learning support, either for cognition and learning difficulties or for social and emotional difficulties.

- 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 their NC equivalences are shown in the following table.

Early Years

School	NC name
Crib	Nursery
Crèche	Nursery

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 From the EYFS onward, pupils, including those with SEND, make at least good progress as they go through the school. More able pupils and those receiving EAL support progress faster. Children in the EYFS do well and have an excellent development of language. When playing they make independent choices and communicate these very well. In the primary section pupils have good literacy and numeracy skills and display secure knowledge, skills and understanding in other subjects. These strengths develop further in the secondary and sixth-form sections, where pupils communicate articulately and, given the opportunity, show a willingness to work creatively and independently. In all the sciences pupils apply mathematics easily, have a reasonable understanding of previously learned material, and their subject specific vocabulary is well developed. Tablet computers and laptops are widely utilised and as a result the pupils' relevant skills are well developed.
- 2.2 The curriculum is excellent. It has been improved following a previous recommendation and supports pupils' achievement. It meets the school's aim of providing a British curriculum, and affords excellent support for those with SEND or in need of specific help in English. It has particular strengths in its breadth of modern foreign languages, its separate sciences and the range and freedom of options for older pupils. The resources supporting the curriculum are excellent, including wall areas for display, the library, and the grounds. The extra-curricular provision is very extensive, as is the range of visits and the school's use of its wide-ranging links with local and international communities. Teaching is good and some is excellent notably when there is overt attention to the whole ability range. The school has responded to the recommendation to share its best practice but more still needs to be done, particularly in meeting the needs of the whole ability range in the secondary section. The tracking of pupils in all years is assisting the attention given to each pupil's progress. In spite of the school's response to the recommendation to improve marking, not all teachers are yet fully implementing the guidance of the whole-school marking policy. In the EYFS, assessments are only moderated within the school and there is no system to ensure the validity of these judgements in relation to a wider comparison.
- 2.3 Pupils' personal development is excellent and a strength of the school. Pupils are self-confident, highly personable and emotionally mature. They show respect for the cultures and belief systems of others and live in harmony in the school's international milieu. Personal service opportunities not only support others in need but also develop the empathy of those pupils taking part. In all sections of the school pupils benefit from excellent systems of pastoral support and from secure procedures for welfare, health and safety, and for safeguarding. Staff-pupil relationships are excellent. Of those responding to the pupils' questionnaire a small minority expressed the view that teachers treated pupils unequally or were unfair in their punishments. Inspectors were unable to find evidence to support these views.
- 2.4 Governance is excellent: the proprietor has very good knowledge and awareness of the school and its needs. Pupils benefit strongly from the attention of the proprietor to the resources and the built environment of the school. Arrangements for checking the suitability of staff are secure and recorded in accordance with regulatory requirements. The leadership and management of the school are good with some excellent features. The monitoring of staff is good but not fully effective in improving the quality of teaching and assessment and thus academic achievement. Staff

recruitment and retention has improved. The opportunities provided for staff development show commitment to staff support. Links with parents are good. The parental questionnaire indicated that parents are very supportive of the school. Small minorities indicated concerns over special help, information about progress and the model of governance. Inspectors' evidence supported only the need for better additional in-class support for the most able.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Increase the consistency of marking across the school in order to strengthen the way it is used to improve pupils' work.
2. Spread the school's best practice in teaching and learning, especially in meeting the needs of the whole ability range.
3. In the EYFS develop some form of external moderation of pupils' achievements and progress.

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 good.
- 3.2 The achievement indicates that pupils are working well towards meeting the school's aim of enabling them to continue their education anywhere in the world. The overwhelming majority of parents are pleased with their child's progress.
- 3.3 The progress achieved by children in the EYFS is excellent. Children do very well in the seven areas of learning and development and have an excellent development of language. In the Crèche most arrive with little or no English. Nevertheless as a result of the language-rich environment provided by the staff, the children make sustained progress in the development of English language and of communication. When playing they make and communicate independent choices. They respond confidently to all the educational experiences provided. By the time they arrive in Reception children are able to recognise some phonic sounds and join in counting songs, and in Reception the older children can use their phonic skills to write simple sentences and count to 20 and beyond. In a topic which involved making models of dinosaur bones, children were very keen to use comparative language and non-standard measures.
- 3.4 In the primary section, pupils display secure knowledge, skills and understanding of the material covered in lessons and the overall standard of literacy and numeracy is good. They are able to apply the knowledge they have learned. By Year 6 pupils can use a wide range of computational methods to solve complex problems. Skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are good and appropriate progression is made. Pupils are articulate: they can describe the process and outcomes of their work. Their extended written work is of a high standard and they are able to edit their work to make improvements. Their standards of presentation are good: older pupils become proficient in a clear cursive style of writing and take great care in the neatness of their exercise books. They show a good level of all-round success in the variety of enrichment activities that are on offer, ranging from Spanish to computer coding.
- 3.5 In the secondary section, pupils show a good level of knowledge, understanding and skills across most subject areas. They too can apply their knowledge. They communicate articulately and, given the opportunity, show a willingness to work creatively and independently. In all the sciences pupils apply mathematics easily, have a reasonable understanding of previously learned material, use subject-specific vocabulary well, and are able to carry out systematic investigative practical work. Tablet computers, laptops and other technologies are widely utilised, and as a result the pupils' ICT skills are well developed.
- 3.6 Although the numbers are small, university applicants gain entry to their first-choice universities. A large proportion go to UK universities with others going to other countries, notably the USA and the Netherlands.
- 3.7 Outside the classroom, pupils achieve well either individually or in teams across a breadth of sporting and extra-curricular activities, such as in football tournaments, public speaking, dance and drama. Secondary pupils taking part in the International Duke of Edinburgh's Award have achieved success at bronze and silver levels. The

secondary section production of *Grease* involved all pupils who wished to take part and pupils greatly enjoyed it.

- 3.8 The following analysis uses English national data for the years 2012 to 2014, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in NC tests at ages seven and eleven have been above the English average for maintained primary schools. Secondary pupils take a mixture of GCSE and IGCSE examinations. In 2014 there were 19 entries for GCSE and 140 for IGCSE. Results in GCSE have been similar to the national average for maintained schools. IGCSE results in 2014 were overall higher than worldwide norms, and the same is true in many subjects in 2013. The school has now had a relatively small number of A-level candidates. Their results overall have been above the national average for maintained schools, and similar to the English average for maintained selective schools.
- 3.9 The level of attainment in NC tests at age 11 indicates that pupils make progress in the primary section that is good in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. The level of attainment at GCSE and IGCSE indicates that pupils in the secondary section also make good progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. The level of attainment at A Level indicates that pupils in the sixth form make progress that is good in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. This is corroborated by inspectors' classroom observations and work scrutiny. School tracking data shows that more able pupils make greater progress than their peers. On average pupils with SEND make academic progress at the same rate as their peers. They also make good progress with their specific difficulties with the support of the school meeting their needs. Pupils with EAL support make greater progress than their peers.
- 3.10 In the EYFS the pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent and they are enthusiastic participators both in adult-led and in child-initiated activities. Elsewhere in the school attitudes to learning are good: particularly strong features are the co-operation and enjoyment that pupils show and their good management of their work. Pupils also apply themselves and persevere.

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

- 3.11 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.12 The curriculum provides an excellent coverage of the requisite areas of learning and is suitable for all ages and abilities. It meets the school's aim of providing a comprehensive international education based on the English NC. It includes a wide-ranging and relevant programme in personal, social and health education (PSHE), and, for secondary pupils, subject and careers advice. For example, all Year 12 pupils have an individual interview with their visiting careers and higher education counsellor.
- 3.13 In the EYFS the educational programmes for the prime and specific areas of learning help most children to reach the level of development typical for their age. The weekly timetable provides an excellent coverage of the requisite areas of learning with a balance of adult led and child initiated learning.
- 3.14 In the primary section, pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum that is stimulating and of high quality. It is particularly strong in its provision for modern foreign languages (Spanish, French, German, and Mandarin). The school is making

good progress towards aligning its curriculum with the recent changes made by the English Department for Education. PSHE continues to develop with economic awareness to be added next term.

- 3.15 The primary curriculum has a strong emphasis on numeracy and literacy, as well as support for those with EAL. As at the previous inspection the 'university' courses provide a wide range of activities which reflect the interest and expertise of the teaching staff and which are intended to provide stimulation outside the confines of the prescribed curriculum. Notable examples seen were pupils learning sign language and others learning how to create a newspaper.
- 3.16 The secondary curriculum has been strengthened since the previous inspection and in this respect the school has responded very positively to the third recommendation of that inspection. The inspectors acknowledge in particular: the Year 10 and 11 options built around pupils' choices as part of a successful move towards the personalisation of the curriculum; the new subjects of Mandarin and 'world religions' as well as a second modern foreign language in Years 8 and 9; the adoption of the separate sciences in Years 10 and 11 and the start of design and technology (DT) from 2015. Given the size of the sixth form the wide offering of subjects at post-16 is a strength.
- 3.17 Since the previous inspection, improvements have been made in the transition between Year 6 and Year 7, with some specialist lessons in Year 5 and 6 science and mathematics.
- 3.18 The special provision for pupils with SEND and EAL is excellent. This includes awards and qualifications in personal and social education. The gifted and talented programme for pupils so identified monitors the extent to which such pupils' work is enhanced. Pupils are offered some extension work as part of their ordinary subject tuition as well as being provided with cross-group enhancement events. However, in the lessons seen the number of lessons with overt special provision for the more able was small and some more able pupils said that class work lacked challenge.
- 3.19 The resources supporting the curriculum are excellent. Pupils benefit from the ICT resources as well as from the well-stocked libraries, science laboratories, games facilities and outdoor swimming pool.
- 3.20 The extra-curricular provision of the school is large and the number of after-school clubs is extensive. On top of these there is a great variety of sporting and other activities including, as the school expands, increased opportunities for team activities.
- 3.21 The academic curriculum is further enriched by an unusually extensive range of well-organised educational trips and opportunities to use and extend pupils' subject knowledge. In line with its ethos, the school has extensive links with the local and international communities. Inspectors noted particularly the activities fostering pupils' development as committed citizens such as the weekly personal service activities (Fundatia Innocenti and Don Orione).
- 3.22 Parents and pupils registered strong support for what is offered. A small minority of parents completing the questionnaire had concerns about the quality of special help received. Inspectors agreed that more challenge could be offered to the most able but that the support of those with EAL and SEND was excellent.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.23 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.24 Teaching meets the aim of the school to encourage individual potential and is well on the way to the successful fostering of open enquiry, creativity and independence of thought.
- 3.25 In the EYFS teaching enthuses pupils by ensuring challenging, playful child-initiated and adult-led activities across all the EYFS areas of development. Planning and the use of resources are good. In many sessions excellent use is made of the outside learning environment.
- 3.26 In the main school most teachers display good subject knowledge. This is most evident when teachers teach their specialisms. In the primary section pupils benefit from specialist teaching of music, physical education (PE) and drama, with the addition of mathematics for the most able in Year 6 and some specialist science teaching in Years 5 and 6.
- 3.27 Teachers also have a good knowledge of methodologies to employ and resources to use to keep pupils interested and engaged, and this was a strong feature of many lessons seen. For instance, in a Year 10 physics revision lesson there was detailed planning, with laboratory equipment available to exemplify and assist tutorial discussions, and a Year 6 PE lesson had a circus of activities. Open-ended questioning is used widely to draw out pupils' ideas and their thinking beyond the obvious. There is, in the best lessons, a brisk pace, which gives urgency to the teaching and leads to good levels of achievement. Teachers frequently provide opportunities for the pupils to work successfully in pairs and small groups. Lessons usually foster pupils' application and enable at least good progress to be made. In a small minority of lessons an over-directed approach is employed which does not engage pupils. In these lessons pupils' achievement is restricted, especially that of the most able.
- 3.28 The inspection included the opportunity to see cross-subject planning and teaching across subjects on a DT enrichment day for Year 7. Here dynamic team teaching successfully facilitated pupils' use of art, ICT and design to create a collaborative construction.
- 3.29 In the primary section, the better teaching meets a range of personal needs, provides social interaction and fosters academic maturity. In the secondary section, whilst lesson plans contain notes indicating how the range of needs can be met in observed lessons, overt provision was not clearly demonstrated. A notable exception was a modern foreign language lesson where there was sensitive accommodation both of first language speakers and of novices in the same group.
- 3.30 Across the primary section ICT is widely utilised to impart knowledge, to model the learning tasks and to reinforce concepts, such as a game of phonic bingo and research to write information text. Teachers use tablet computers adroitly to encourage exploration of a topic through child-created video and sound files, as seen in a class studying small creatures. The functional uses of ICT across the curriculum are well planned. In the secondary section, the use of ICT is integral to the teaching, and this enhances the educational experience and learning of all pupils.
- 3.31 In the EYFS and primary section, teachers organise the classrooms well to encourage a sense of ownership in the pupils and to encourage independence in

choosing and using appropriate resources for each task. They use colourful and attractive displays to celebrate social, creative and academic success. Most staff use interactive whiteboards regularly as an effective teaching aid. In the secondary section, classes are well organised and appropriately arranged for specialist teaching.

- 3.32 Throughout the primary section, good use is made of teaching assistants, many of whom are well qualified for their role. Teaching assistants are particularly effective in assisting EAL pupils.
- 3.33 The homework set in the primary section reinforces the importance of English and mathematics within the curriculum. Homework set in the secondary section is appropriate for purpose, often extends and challenges and reinforces independent learning. Inspectors do not agree with the small minority of parents who were critical of homework.
- 3.34 In the EYFS, feedback to the pupils is oral and immediate. Primary marking is regular with a majority of teachers adhering closely to the defined and supportive marking policy. This provides clear indications to pupils of ways in which they might improve their work. In the secondary section, marking is also regular but sometimes infrequent, and whilst there are good examples of 'next step' marking, targets, self-assessment and feedback, these features are not universally established. Overall across the school there is still inconsistency in marking both within and across year groups and in spite of the school's response to the recommendation about marking from the previous inspection.
- 3.35 Throughout the school the small class sizes result in teachers knowing their pupils well. This knowledge and its use in planning are strengthened by the improved system, EYFS, primary and secondary, of recording and analysing on-going performance. However, in the EYFS, assessments are only moderated within the school and there is no system to ensure the validity of these judgements in relation to a wider comparison.

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 spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 This success fulfils the school's mission and aims to develop self-esteem in all areas, respect for different cultures and beliefs, and responsible citizens of the world community. By the time they leave the school the sixth formers are well-adjusted, hard working adults who are well equipped to demonstrate the school's values.
- 4.3 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Pupils are self-confident, articulate, highly personable and emotionally mature. They are courteous and helpful and feel safe and happy in school. They respect and enjoy their beautifully maintained school buildings, facilities and grounds. Their achievements are celebrated in assemblies and in vibrant displays around the school. They develop a sense of wonder about the world in which they live. This was clearly demonstrated during the 'enrichment day' focused on DT when pupils' awareness of the impact of architecture on the global community was stimulated and they showed amazement and delight in the possibilities of computer-aided design.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is excellent. Pupils demonstrate a keen sense of right and wrong. They know the school rules and show high standards of conduct. They reflect upon the rights of individuals and readily engage in discussion, as demonstrated by upper juniors, as they reflected upon the legacy of motivational speakers like Martin Luther King, with the subsequent impact upon human rights; and Malala, in her fight for the right to gender equality and education for girls, showing respect for freedom of expression. The eco-committee works to heighten awareness of care for the planet and to draw attention to the day-to-day measures that the school community can undertake to protect it.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is excellent. Highly positive and constructive relationships exist between adults and pupils and among pupils themselves. Older pupils provide excellent role models for the younger ones. They are highly co-operative in paired work and group learning. Their social bonds are further strengthened during residential visits and field trips. The many clubs and activities on offer enable pupils to interact socially with older and younger members of the school community.
- 4.6 Pupils readily accept positions of responsibility within the school, which they discharge conscientiously. A wide range of posts are held, including head boy and girl, prefects, house captains, sports captains, members of the school councils and student voice, and eco-committee. School councillors represent their peers in a range of issues and are confident that all reasonable concerns and requests will be considered and implemented where appropriate. Potential candidates prepare speeches and are democratically elected by secret ballot.
- 4.7 Pupils show considerable compassion and concern for those less fortunate than themselves and raise money to support a number of charities, locally, nationally and internationally; for example, in the collection of harvest gifts and the preparation of charity shoe boxes. The student-led 'Planet BSB Eco Committee' has organised fund-raising events for a well-building project in Ethiopia. Older pupils make weekly visits to help care for orphaned babies and toddlers in hospital and disabled children

in a local centre. These service opportunities have a profound impact upon the spiritual and social development of all the volunteers.

- 4.8 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. They show respect for the cultures and belief systems of others and live in harmony with their peers, who represent many cultures and religions. Their understanding is enhanced during the annual 'language café', run by parents, with stalls displaying food and traditions from their home countries, where pupils order using the language of that stall. Different festivals are presented and celebrated by pupils in assemblies, such as Romanian National Day, which includes folk dancing, and those from other religions. Links have been made with local churches, a synagogue and a mosque, whilst the annual carol service takes place in an Anglican church. These festivals and links enable pupils to understand a great variety of religious practice and cultural differences and the importance they have for the different adherents. The diversity of world literature is celebrated during 'book week' and teatime concerts performed by the pupils include music from different cultures and traditions. They participate creatively in music, drama, dance, art and crafts within and beyond the curriculum.

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

- 4.9 The quality of the pastoral care and the arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.10 The school meets its aim to provide a secure environment.
- 4.11 All staff have been trained in pastoral matters by the designated child protection lead (DCPL). The lines of communication between staff are clear. This, together with the alertness of staff to potential problems requiring intervention, provides an effective system of excellent support. The proprietor ensures that all staff, including non-teaching staff, are alert to the signs of pupils in need of support.
- 4.12 A very large majority of pupils are aware of staff they can turn to if in need. They are informed of outside support agencies too. The school has appointed an education psychologist to strengthen its support. Some pupils were uncertain about the degree of confidentiality if seeking an interview, a matter the school agreed to clarify.
- 4.13 Rewards and sanctions work effectively to motivate and encourage pupils' personal development. Relationships are extremely positive between staff and pupils and among pupils themselves. This is a consequence of the high professional standards of the teachers and the work that they continuously do to promote good behaviour among those they teach. The arrangements for guarding against harassment and bullying are effective. The anti-bullying policy is in line with British guidance for overseas schools. Most pupils consider that the school deals effectively with any incident of bullying. Where problems have occurred records show that they have been resolved quickly. The two school headteachers monitor incidents. In their questionnaire responses a small number of pupils said teachers were unfair in their treatment of pupils but this view was not sustained in the many interviews with pupils. The school's record of sanctions imposed for serious misbehaviour confirms this judgement.
- 4.14 Appropriate arrangements secure the health and safety of pupils and thorough attention is paid to child protection in all parts of the school including the EYFS. The advanced training of the principal and the DCPL is up to date and all other staff have recently had training at the standard level. The school uses links with external agencies for advice and guidance and to ensure transparency in its child protection operations. The proprietor and the principal have child protection matters as a

weekly standing item for discussion in which the working of the policy is considered and reviewed.

- 4.15 For the built environment the school has an effective health and safety policy and this is overseen by the school's business manager and the head of maintenance. The policy is extensive in the range of hazards it covers. Food and medical aspects are monitored by the Romanian civil authorities. Checks are made regularly of the safety of electrical equipment including portable appliances and earth continuity. Fire and earthquake drills are periodically carried out. An external contractor maintains the fire alarms and fire prevention equipment. The school has acted as best it can to ensure that pupils are safe when entering and leaving the site where the road is busy and, at the time of the visit, in need of repair. Security staff wear high visibility vests and supervise the pedestrian crossing. The school has made several representations for road safety improvements to the local authority. In the EYFS the outside area is checked for cleanliness and the safety of equipment on a daily basis. This thorough approach to site safety provides assurance that all necessary aspects of welfare, health and safety, are in good order.
- 4.16 The school operates safe recruitment procedures. In the course of the inspection it updated the ways it maintains the central register of staff appointments in order to be in line with British home practice. There is a coherent policy for the use of volunteers and parent helpers in the school.
- 4.17 Healthy eating is promoted in science and assemblies and by the school's provision of meals. Inspectors found the school meals are nutritious. PE satisfactorily promotes the importance of physical exercise in its developing programme.
- 4.18 Health and safety training for staff takes place every autumn covering both new and existing staff.
- 4.19 Admission and attendance records are maintained and stored appropriately.
- 4.20 The school has a well-appointed medical room for pupils who are sick or injured. Systematic records are kept. The first-aid policy is comprehensive and follows British guidance. The school has an appropriate number of staff with first-aid qualifications, a highly trained nurse and members of staff whose training includes paediatric nursing.

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.
- 5.2 The arrangements for governance are the same as they were at the previous inspection with no change in the personnel concerned nor, at the time of the inspection, any material change in the school. A small minority of parents registered their wish for a governing body. Inspectors are clear that the proprietorial arrangements are in line with the practice of many British schools.
- 5.3 The proprietor continues to have a clear vision for the future of the school and to work closely with the principal to ensure that this is met and is in line with the school's aims. A clear distinction continues of proprietorial responsibility for the financial and business side of the school, with delegation to the principal of all educational aspects. The proprietor is committed to providing the support that is essential for the school's future development and clearly fulfils her responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning, and investment in staff, accommodation and resources. Since the previous inspection the proprietor has continued to oversee the adaptation of existing buildings, providing viable and extensive accommodation. A recent example is the establishment of a large room and equipment for DT teaching appropriate to the school's aim of promoting creativity.
- 5.4 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. The two are guided by the work of an independent consultant, a former inspector, who visits from the UK a number of times a year and reports either to the principal or to the proprietor or both.
- 5.5 The gubernatorial responsibilities in relation to statutory requirements are discharged appropriately. School policies are reviewed annually by the principal and the proprietor. The child protection policy is reviewed at least once a year, again by the principal and the proprietor. It is updated as necessary at other times, when changes are required. The DCPL updates the principal on child protection matters periodically. The follow-up process is highly effective. The updates are considered by the proprietor and the principal, and where necessary action is taken to ensure the continued effectiveness of procedures to safeguard pupils. The school was able to cite examples of successful interventions it had made where there had been instances of pupil neglect.
- 5.6 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

- 5.7 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.8 The principal provides strong leadership and steers the school resolutely. Her 'open-door' policy to staff and her caring and collaborative approach are the key to the success of the school. Strong, collaborative and distributed leadership is a salient feature of the school. The senior leadership team work closely together and

have a shared commitment both to maintaining the ethos of the school and to the continuous improvement of the quality of education and care it provides. The school's important third aim to be a stimulating learning, teaching and caring environment is projected by the leadership to all staff, resulting in the excellent personal development of the pupils.

- 5.9 Changes made since the previous inspection have established a new framework of management which provides clear leadership in many areas of the school. Senior leaders have a system of regular meetings which provide good opportunities to raise issues or ideas. This is appreciated by staff since it keeps them informed and enables them to play a part in further development. All staff in the school, teaching and non-teaching, place the highest priority on pupils' personal development and welfare, thereby giving significant support to the example set in this and other respects by senior leaders.
- 5.10 At all levels, the school's leadership and management ensure that teachers discharge their responsibilities well. In all sections of the schools, including in the EYFS and for pupils with SEND and EAL, teachers are guided by clear, effective policies and procedures which enable them to support pupils extremely well. The school is rigorous in carrying out the necessary checks for the suitability of all staff and the central staff register is accurately maintained. The school uses the Council of British International Schools (COBIS) to access the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). All staff have been trained in their roles of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety.
- 5.11 Progress has been made in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection: on sharing best practice to establish a consistently high quality of teaching and on the routine scrutiny and monitoring of the quality of pupils' work to ensure closer adherence to the marking policy. Formal systems and procedures, including peer observation, work audits and book scrutinies, have been introduced but, to date, these are not sufficiently robust to eliminate the variability of the quality of marking. Equally there are variations in the quality of the teaching, and especially in the in-class provision for the different needs of pupils.
- 5.12 The school knows itself well: from this knowledge the school development plan (SDP) clearly identifies and prioritises areas for improvement across the whole school. An effective system of review for professional development has recently been introduced; staff are appraised with reference to their job descriptions and two formal observations take place each year. Subsequent targets are then agreed. Staff reported that the feedback they receive makes them feel valued. There is excellent provision for continuous professional development for staff. New staff, including newly qualified teachers, have an effective induction programme. Contributions by individual staff to the development of new initiatives are encouraged. The principal is suitably appraised by the proprietor through an annual discussion focusing upon the targets set in the SDP and key performance indicators in her job description.
- 5.13 Management at all levels successfully recruits high quality staff. Staff retention has been improved since 2012. The school is well supported by a team of local administrative staff who bring valuable local knowledge to their role. Ancillary staff make a significant contribution to the school's caring ethos.

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

- 5.14 The quality of the links with parents, carers and guardians is good.
- 5.15 The school maintains a highly constructive relationship with most parents and pupils' families in full accordance with its aims.
- 5.16 Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they need information and this 'open-door' policy supports the school's aim to foster constructive and supportive partnerships between home and school in the learning process. The pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that parents are extremely positive about the progress children make, especially the range of subjects studied, the breadth of the educational experience provided, the pastoral help and guidance given, the high standards of behaviour and attitudes which are displayed and their opportunities to be involved with the school's life and work. The pre-inspection questionnaire also indicated that a minority of parents are unhappy with the information provided about their child's progress. Inspection evidence found that reports and informal feedback to parents are effective, regular and provide a clear picture of pupils' progress and achievement.
- 5.17 Parents have many and varied opportunities for involvement in the life of the school. Those with a particular expertise or area of interest are invited to share this with the pupils. Talks for parents on topics of interest such as e-safety, first-aid training, phonics, outdoor learning and parenting are organised and regular invitations are given to events which showcase pupils' talents such as in the annual production and regular concerts.
- 5.18 Many parents contribute to the active parents' association especially in charitable fund-raising; local and international charities are recent beneficiaries. Parents have extensive opportunities to play an active part in the school, supporting the artisan and summer fairs, the teddy bears' picnic, school discos, sports days and bake sales.
- 5.19 Parents of pupils and prospective pupils are provided with clear, appropriate information about the school. Such documents are available electronically or in hard copy. The weekly bulletin, newsletter and termly edition of *News Blast* provide much valuable information and are welcomed by parents.
- 5.20 Parents are particularly well informed about their child's progress through regular reports. In EYFS parents receive an annual report and those in the main school receive a formal written report twice a year. In addition, in EYFS at the end of each year parents are provided with a DVD containing photographs, videos and sound files of all the achievements of their child. In the secondary section, parents receive grade cards five times a year. Parents' evenings are held twice a year for the primary and termly for the secondary section. In addition, the school is pro-active in arranging to meet parents if they are concerned about progress, and parents are also able to request a meeting.
- 5.21 The complaints policy complies with requirements and encourages parents to provide feedback to the school. The pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that a small minority of parents are unhappy with the way the school has handled their concerns. Inspection evidence did not support their views and found that leadership and management make considerable effort to resolve any concerns in a timely and responsive manner.

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, parents, and the proprietor, 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.

During the week of the team visit Years 11 to 13 were on study leave and were not, therefore, observed in lessons except in a single revision tutorial.

Inspectors

Dr Stephen Grounds	Reporting Inspector
Ms Nicola Fortune	Junior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS School, Switzerland)
Mrs Kathleen Silvester	Junior Team Inspector (Former Head of Prep, ISA Grammar School)
Mr Michael Clack	Senior Team Inspector (Head, BSME and CIS School, Dubai)