



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS

INSPECTION REPORT ON THE BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, CAIRO

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

The British International School, Cairo

| | | | |
|------------------------|--|------------|-------------------|
| Full Name of School | The British International School, Cairo | | |
| Address | PO Box 137 Gezira Cairo 11211 EGYPT | | |
| Telephone Number | 00 202 3859 2000 | | |
| Fax Number | 00 202 3857 1720 | | |
| Email Address | info@bisc.edu.eg | | |
| Head | Mr Simon O'Grady | | |
| Chair of Governors | Mr Yasser Hashem | | |
| Age Range | 3 to 18 | | |
| Total Number of Pupils | 932 | | |
| Gender of Pupils | Mixed (499 boys; 433 girls) | | |
| Numbers by Age | 0-2: | 0 | 5-11: 454 |
| | 3-5: | 136 | 11-18: 342 |
| Number of Day Pupils | Total: | 932 | |
| Inspection dates | 23 to 26 February 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 November 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.

CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|-----------|
| 1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL | 1 |
| 2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL | 2 |
| (a) Main findings | 3 |
| (b) Action points | 3 |
| (i) Compliance with regulatory requirements | 3 |
| (ii) Recommendations for further improvement | 3 |
| 3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS | 4 |
| (a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning | 4 |
| (b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils) | 5 |
| (c) The contribution of teaching | 6 |
| 4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT | 8 |
| (a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils | 8 |
| (b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety | 9 |
| 5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | 11 |
| (a) The quality of governance | 11 |
| (b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians | 11 |
| (c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians | 12 |

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The British International School, Cairo is an independent day school for boys and girls from the age of three to eighteen years. It was established in 1976 to serve the interests of a small number of expatriate children. Over the years, it has grown in size and changed in nature, becoming more of an international school. Three-quarters of the intake is now Egyptian, with pupils from the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Saudi Arabia as the next largest cohorts. In total, 41 nationalities are represented. In 2008, the school moved out of central Cairo to a new, extensive, purpose-built campus in 6th October City, 30 kilometres west of Cairo. The school operates on a not-for-profit basis. It is registered as a not-for-profit society composed of parents and is governed by an elected board of nine directors, who constitute the governing body. All are current parents. The school is regulated by the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity.
- 1.2 The number of pupils on roll totals 932 (499 boys and 433 girls). Of these, 590 are in the junior school, including 136 in the Foundation Stage, for children between the ages of 3 and 5; 342 are in the senior school, of whom 82 are in the sixth form. The great majority of pupils have English as an additional language (EAL). Their needs are generally catered for by the teaching and specific support provided in lessons. However, four pupils in the junior school need and receive specific extra support for their English. Fifty-five pupils have been assessed as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Of these, 21 are withdrawn for specialist learning support and 34 receive specific in-class support.
- 1.3 The ability profile of the pupils in the junior school is in line with the UK average overall, with a significant proportion being below the average in verbal reasoning, particularly in the Foundation Stage, as was confirmed by inspection evidence. The ability profile of the senior school is above the UK average, with most pupils having ability in line with or above the average. The ability profile of the sixth form is slightly above the UK average for all pupils in maintained school sixth form education.
- 1.4 English National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The British International School, Cairo fulfils its challenging aims in exemplary fashion. The caring, supportive ethos creates an outstanding learning environment. Throughout the school, and particularly in the Foundation Stage, the pupils, most of whom have EAL, make rapid progress in their mastery of English, enabling them to strive for and achieve excellent standards across the curriculum and do well in external examinations. They benefit, in the main, from excellent, often inspiring teaching. Challenging support also enables the most able pupils and those with SEND to achieve to their potential. An excellent curriculum and an extensive range of stimulating activities, trips and clubs underpin pupils' achievements, which include an excellent record of entry to highly selective universities worldwide. The sharing of effective methods in teaching and learning, coupled with the increasing use of peer observation and challenging monitoring, are successfully raising standards, although the best practice in this is not yet consistently disseminated. Information and communication technology (ICT) resources and usage are excellent. Standards are high in art and drama. Following the recommendations of the previous report, regular assessment for learning is now in place throughout the school.
- 2.2 The pupils achieve exceptional levels of self-awareness and self-confidence and a strong moral conscience, feeling secure and valued in the friendly, trusting ethos which prevails throughout the school. This is built on the all-pervasive excellence of relationships. The pupils support each other readily, seniors delight in helping juniors and a real sense of community is built up, in which everybody plays their part. This highly inclusive ethos promotes extremely harmonious relationships across a wide range of nationalities and cultures. Excellence is celebrated. The pupil questionnaires indicated almost universal satisfaction with the way the school is run, with the progress they are making, especially for pupils with EAL improving their command of English, and with the help given them to learn by their teachers. A small minority felt the teachers were not always fair in their use of rewards and sanctions and did not treat them equally. The inspectors are satisfied that the school is dealing with this matter. A very small proportion felt that their views were not listened to by the school. Inspectors judge that the school uses appropriate methods to seek and act upon the pupils' views.
- 2.3 The excellent vision, supportive oversight and financial acumen of the school's governors have been major factors in its success. The excellent accommodation, facilities and resources provided help create an exceptional learning environment. The governors' vision is shared by the strong senior leadership, which analyses accurately the school's needs and sets priorities to achieve them, commanding the respect and loyalty of their colleagues, including excellent middle managers, in doing so. Collegiality and clear direction are the key. The parent questionnaires revealed high levels of parental satisfaction with their child's progress, especially in English, with the curriculum and educational experience offered and with the values the school promotes. A very small minority of parents were unhappy with the provision for pupils with different educational needs, with the homework given and with the information they received concerning their child's progress. Inspection found that provision and progress are excellent across the range of educational needs, that homework set is generally appropriate, and that reports on pupils' progress are highly informative and are well supplemented by regular parents' meetings.

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. Embed the sharing of excellent teaching strategies across the curriculum to ensure that pupils' educational experience is excellent in all subjects.
 2. Ensure greater consistency in the use of rewards and sanctions throughout the school.

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 of their learning, attitudes and basic skills is excellent.

Junior School

- 3.2 The high quality of the pupils' achievements and learning testifies to the school's fulfilment of its challenging aims. In the Foundation Stage, all pupils, including the great majority who have EAL and those with SEND, are actively engaged in activities. They exhibit high levels of numeracy and creativity. By the end of the Foundation Stage, their mastery of English has improved considerably, enabling most to communicate in English, including when playing with their friends.
- 3.3 In Years 1 to 6, the pupils' literacy, numeracy and proficiency in ICT develop to a particularly high level and they display secure knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum. Vibrant displays of artwork and excellent dramatic and musical productions testify to strong creative skills. Year 1 pupils use small tablet computers and video to design and program their own characters in a short film. The pupils become extremely articulate, they reason well and draw confidently on their excellent basic skills, including mathematical ones. Their standards of physical fitness are generally high, as shown by team successes in tournaments and by individuals competing at national level. Pupils with EAL make exceptional progress in relation to their starting points, whilst those with SEND and the more able also do well, responding readily to challenging provision.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the English national data for the years 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. The pupils' performance in UK national tests at age 11 has been above the English average for maintained primary schools. This level of attainment, allied to inspection evidence of excellent achievement and progress in lessons, within a context where the great majority of pupils have EAL, indicates that pupils make excellent progress relative to the average for pupils of similar ability.
- 3.5 Pupils demonstrate enthusiasm and a genuine desire to do well. They develop good collaborative learning and teamwork skills. They show initiative and take responsibility for improving their learning.

Senior School

- 3.6 The pupils are extremely well educated in accordance with the school's ambitious aims. They are remarkably articulate, and eager to contribute to class discussions. They are avid readers and develop sophisticated writing skills. They display exceptionally well-developed powers of logical and independent thought. For example, Year 13 pupils showed exceptional critical analysis of the factors affecting recidivism in their research on the role of prisons. Outstanding displays of artwork and high quality dramatic and musical productions showcase strong creative skills. Mathematical skills are fluently applied in lessons. ICT is embedded into the pupils' learning. All pupils engage in physical activity, some to a very high degree. Almost all pupils go on to study in world-class institutions across the globe.
- 3.7 Pupils achieve medal-winning performances, many at gold, distinction or national levels, in activities ranging from mathematics, science and music to sports and the

International Award, the equivalent of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in the UK. They demonstrate outstanding leadership skills and strong social and cultural awareness in three highly successful pupil-led activities, achieving ten 'best delegate' awards at Model United Nations (MUN) conferences, and 'best company' or 'most socially responsible company' in INJAZ young entrepreneurs' competitions, the Arabic equivalent of Young Enterprise in the UK, as well as raising large funds, through their *Hopeful Youth* initiative, to support the needs of the local community.

- 3.8 The following analysis uses English national data for GCSE and worldwide data for the International Baccalaureate (IB) for the years 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available.
- 3.9 The pupils' performance in GCSE has been above the English average for maintained schools and in line with the English average for maintained selective schools. Over half the subject entries were awarded A* or A grades. In 2014, twelve pupils gained high achiever awards for their performance in GCSE subjects. Results in International GCSE examinations were above the international and UK averages. In the IB, the pupils' performance has also been good, above the worldwide average and in line with the higher UK average of those pupils in the UK taking the IB. Two pupils gained the maximum 45 points and two 44. Taking into account the extreme turbulence nationally, the very high percentage of pupils with EAL and the inspection evidence of excellent achievement and progress in lessons, this level of attainment indicates that pupils make excellent progress in Years 7 to 13 in relation to pupils of similar ability.
- 3.10 Pupils' attitudes to learning are decidedly positive and they are highly productive in individual work and in collaboration with others.

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 (including community links of benefit to pupils) is excellent.

Junior School

- 3.12 The Foundation Stage follows the English Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and provides excellent coverage in all the areas of learning, with the addition of Arabic. Particular attention is paid to communication and literacy, enabling pupils to make rapid progress in their ability to speak and understand English.
- 3.13 The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is very effective in its promotion of human, social, physical, aesthetic and creative development. The revised English National Curriculum is followed, with the exception of religious studies, which is not on the curriculum. Acquisition of speaking and listening skills is a key area of the curriculum. Arabic is taught in all year groups and French is started in Year 3. Provision for drama is excellent. All pupils in each year group are involved in an annual production. Physical education is extremely well catered for, including participation in events abroad. The curriculum is enriched by an effective programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) and by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, ranging from sports, such as football and touch rugby, to gardening, from Bollywood Dance and yoga to chess club and coding, from art and craft and movie creation with tablets (Year 1) to fashion design. The pupils go on regular visits to places of historical and cultural interest, such as the residential trips to Luxor and El Alamein. Initiatives, such as mathematics and

science themed weeks, a book week with a visiting author and opportunities to travel to debating, games, poetry and science competitions, provide further enrichment.

- 3.14 The provision for pupils with SEND and for those with EAL is excellent. The recommendation of the previous inspection, that all pupils, especially the more able, are set appropriately paced and challenging tasks, has been addressed. The quality of curricular provision has been strengthened by a major focus on ICT and by the provision of an integrated learning programme.

Senior School

- 3.15 Pupils study the English National Curriculum up to Key Stage 4. The majority study two modern foreign languages and three separate sciences. All are encouraged to choose a humanity and a creative subject in addition to the core subjects in Years 10 and 11. The school strives to meet pupils' particular needs, offering international GCSE courses in languages, including Arabic, and further pure mathematics for pupils in the top mathematics set. All pupils sit GCSE English Language at the end of Year 10 in order to focus on literature in Year 11. In Years 12 and 13, pupils work towards the IB diploma, with a good range of subjects on offer. To supplement IB provision, a Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) course in business has been introduced in Year 12. Pupils with SEND, as well as those with EAL and the more able, are now very effectively identified, supported and monitored: individual education plans are comprehensive, and their implementation is closely monitored. The curriculum is enhanced by a thorough, well-structured PSHCE programme, culminating in excellent preparation for university entrance, and by the use of a sophisticated virtual learning environment.
- 3.16 A wide range of excellent extra-curricular activities supplements the curriculum, ranging from sports to debating, from dance workshops to maths challenges, from drama to the International Award. The pupils' participation in extra-curricular activities is high. In Year 12, many pupils take part in the MUN, with teams travelling abroad to participate. INJAZ (Young Enterprise) also helps enrich the Year 12 curriculum. A high proportion of pupils learn a restricted range of musical instruments. The school library's good and developing stock supplements curricular provision. The opportunities provided by the current house structure to promote friendly competition between pupils are taken up very infrequently.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.17 The contribution of teaching is excellent.

Junior School

- 3.18 Teaching enables pupils to progress extremely well in accordance with the school's aims. In the Foundation Stage, the teaching communicates an enthusiasm for learning that facilitates pupils' engagement. Assessment and planning are extremely thorough and shared with all staff. Teaching themes extend across the curriculum.
- 3.19 In Years 1 to 6, the quality of teaching is underpinned by rigorous and effective planning, and excellent subject knowledge. Most teaching employs good pace and variety. The teachers are very aware of their pupils' capabilities and adapt their teaching well to meet the pupils' differing learning needs. The flair and enthusiasm apparent in much of the teaching proves infectious and sparks interest in the pupils. A Year 2 humanities lesson on continents and oceans had the pupils highly engaged and clamouring to make responses. A Year 6 science lesson investigating the

reflection of light had pupils transfixed, provoking enthusiastic inquiry leading to excellent understanding. Well-resourced teaching areas and the use of tablet computers support exciting approaches to learning. In a very few lessons, a lack of pace and variety, and learning that was too directed, resulted in more limited progress.

- 3.20 The increasing deployment of subject specialist teachers and the development of setting in older year groups serve pupils well and facilitate their progress. Teaching assistants are used for the most part very effectively to enhance pupils' learning and progress.
- 3.21 The good and mostly consistent marking provides helpful comments and highlights where improvements can be made. In some cases, targets are given and followed up. Following a recommendation in the previous report, assessment to inform planning now underpins procedures.

Senior School

- 3.22 All teachers are well qualified, with excellent subject knowledge. They have high expectations, and their teaching aims to attract the pupils' interest and inspire them to further endeavour. They plan their lessons well and are adept at keeping their pupils on target. Much use is made of pair- and group-work to encourage active learning. Teachers use ICT with a high degree of skill as a regular part of their lessons. Pupils' use of personal computers to access the internet in lessons has proved advantageous in supporting exciting approaches to learning.
- 3.23 In much of the teaching, the teacher's infectious enthusiasm in imparting knowledge excites and challenges the pupils, inspiring them to delve further into the subject and stimulating independent learning. In a Year 11 biology lesson, pupils were clearly excited at the prospect of dissecting a cow's heart to investigate blood circulation, Year 13 pupils were galvanised into reflecting on their strong political and cultural awareness, leading them to express mature perception and analysis in their extended essays.
- 3.24 Teachers know their pupils' capabilities and adapt teaching well to meet their differing needs. Pupils with SEND, those with EAL and the more able are well catered for. Teachers are highly effective in building on previous learning and in helping pupils to overcome difficulties.
- 3.25 Marking and assessment are productively focused on guiding improvement and ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of their strengths and areas for development. Assessment for learning is now embedded in the school's culture, in line with the previous report's recommendation. The Teaching and Learning Communities further enhance the skills of teachers by sharing best practice and testing innovative techniques to promote learning, but these are not yet disseminated sufficiently across the curriculum.

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.

Junior School

4.2 The excellent quality of the pupils' personal development meets the school's declared aims of seeking to teach essential human values such as honesty, loyalty, compassion and charity. In the Foundation Stage, pupils grow in confidence as they form warm relationships with both adults and other pupils. Pupils express concern for each other, they share the toys and take responsibility by being the "helper of the day".

4.3 The pupils in Years 1 to 6 demonstrate high levels of self-awareness and self-esteem. They are emotionally mature for their age and express themselves with openness, in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Their appreciation of the non-material aspects of life is evident in their rich creative work in art and their participation in music and drama.

4.4 The pupils develop a strong moral awareness, aided by thought-provoking assemblies and a wide-ranging PSHCE programme. They have a clear sense of right and wrong. They react to high expectations with consistently excellent behaviour. The pupils have a genuine understanding of their moral responsibility, leading to participation in a wide range of fund raising activities.

4.5 The pupils exhibit excellent social awareness. They readily grasp opportunities to play a full part in the school community and participate enthusiastically in a range of activities. They demonstrate responsibility and leadership qualities on the pupil council and on the eco-committee, as well as being house captains and class monitors.

4.6 The cultural development of the pupils is a strength of the school. Pupils from 41 countries bring a rich diversity of cultures to everyday interactions, leading to a personalised awareness of global citizenship. Teachers draw on the pupils' diverse backgrounds to develop understanding of how world issues can be viewed differently. New pupils are made to feel instantly welcome; thus maintaining the outstanding inclusive ethos. The pupils are very aware of British and Western history and cultural traditions. They are proud that their school council is democratically elected. An Egyptian puppet show provides opportunities for foreign pupils and their families to experience Egyptian cultural traditions.

Senior School

4.7 The school's aim to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect, tolerance and regard for all members of society is outstandingly well met. The remarkable development of the pupils' personalities is a major strength of the school, aided by a well thought out PSHCE programme, which addresses a huge range of life's challenges, from negative body image to basic cookery.

4.8 The pupils' spiritual awareness is outstanding. They are eloquent and thoughtful, highly supportive of the school and of their peers. This leads to trusting, open relationships, which are a defining feature of the school. The pupils feel secure in a supportive learning community, where they celebrate each other's successes, such

as in the termly reward assemblies. Articulate discussion features prominently. Striking displays of the pupils' artwork bear testimony to their awareness of beauty, whilst regular dramatic and musical productions hone the pupils' confidence and foster excellent collaborative skills.

- 4.9 The pupils' moral awareness is excellent, strengthened by exposure to a wide variety of issues and moral dilemmas in the PSHCE programme, in the thought-provoking assemblies, and in their studies. Following the attacks in Nigeria, pupils and staff tweeted messages of moral support for the girls and their families under the heading 'Bring back our girls'.
- 4.10 The pupils show an unusually strong degree of social maturity, being motivated to improve the lot of those less fortunate than themselves through the pupil-run *Hopeful Youth* charity fund-raising activity, for example refurbishing local orphanages. During the inspection, Year 10 pupils were observed teaching functional English to Arabic-speaking ancillary staff, playing their part in extending community solidarity.
- 4.11 Through daily interaction in school, the pupils develop an easy approach to those of different nationalities and show conspicuous understanding of cultures other than their own. A regard for difference is strongly promoted in lessons and in activities, such as the annual international week, as well as in special assemblies. During the inspection, the pupils' avid interest in British and Western politics and traditions and their depth of knowledge led to several animated discussions.

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

- 4.12 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent.

Junior School

- 4.13 From the Foundation Stage onwards, the school meets its pastoral aim of providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all pupils. The pupils are well known as individuals by all the staff who teach and care for them. Close attention is paid to their needs, and effective guidance is given on pastoral as well as academic matters such as educating pupils in how they can stay safe online. Pupils feel secure and are confident that the school will keep them safe.
- 4.14 Highly skilled staff enable pupils to develop respect for themselves, their teachers and their fellow pupils, creating a culture of excellent behaviour. The school has a rigorous anti-bullying policy and the pupils' questionnaire responses show their belief that the school would deal effectively with any instances of bullying.

Senior School

- 4.15 The senior school provides a caring and supportive environment. Staff know their pupils extremely well and offer sensitive support and guidance. As one student said, 'teachers trust us, give us responsibility, listen and always try to help'. The exemplary pastoral structures allow ready lines of communication and collaboration between layers of management. Provision is highly co-ordinated. New middle leadership roles have enhanced pastoral effectiveness.
- 4.16 Relationships are excellent. Staff are devoted to supporting pupils. Subject clinics are available in most subjects. Praise, encouragement and challenge are an integral part of school life, boosting self-esteem, promoting good behaviour and fostering intellectual growth. The school has established a very positive ethos, with clear

policies and procedures to guard against bullying and to promote good behaviour being strongly embedded in the school culture.

Whole School

- 4.17 The policy and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils' welfare, health and safety, including for safer recruitment, comply with local regulatory requirements and meet the Standards for British Schools Overseas. Procedures are implemented effectively. All members of staff have been checked for their suitability to work with children. Staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding, several at the required higher level for child protection officers.
- 4.18 All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Suitable risk assessments are carried out before each visit made off-site by pupils. A school doctor and a school nurse are on site and 34 staff are qualified first-aiders, two at the higher paediatric level. Accidents are suitably recorded and medical facilities are appropriate. A suitable three-year accessibility plan is in place. Pupils understand the importance of choosing a healthy diet and many take regular physical exercise, participating in sports teams or International Award expeditions. Lunches are both tasty and nutritious. The admission and attendance registers have been accurately maintained.
- 4.19 Questionnaire responses show that a small minority of pupils feel that teachers are not always fair in their use of rewards and sanctions and do not treat them equally. Having discussed the matter with pupils and staff, and examined documentation, inspectors agree with this view; rewards and sanctions are not always consistently applied. The school is aware of these concerns, and is taking steps to remedy the inconsistencies in approach. A very small minority of pupils feel that their views are not taken into account by the school. Inspection does not support this view and found that the school acts on pupils' feedback. For example, in the Junior School, the school council, elected democratically by the pupils, provides an effective means by which pupils can express their views resulting in improvements, such as additional shaded seating in the outdoor area and the school's '*BISC's Got Talent*' show. In the Senior School, an effective student council is complemented by senior pupils volunteering to help younger pupils who are having difficulties and others mentoring junior classes. The school's willingness to encourage pupils who propose, organise and run initiatives to make a difference in the community is best seen in the 'Hopeful Youth' charity initiative, conceived and led originally by a small group of pupils in Year 11 who, after visiting an orphanage, determined to make a difference and help the helpless. This initiative is now embedded throughout the school, with a formal structure, which runs alongside the student council.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The board's clear strategic vision for the school, allied to sound financial acumen, has been the catalyst for the creation of an outstanding learning environment. Since the previous inspection, the board has presided over the school's settling in to outstanding purpose-built facilities, excellently resourced. In close collaboration with senior leadership, they have enabled the school to fulfil its mission to strive for excellence. The very large majority of the parents' responses to a pre-inspection questionnaire indicate their satisfaction with the school and is evidence of the board's success.
- 5.3 The board has excellent insight into the needs and workings of the school, partly because they are all parents of current pupils, but also because of their close collaboration with senior leadership. A structure of active committees has been created to oversee the implementation of the governors' vision, enabling them to discharge effectively their responsibilities for financial planning, pupils' welfare and educational standards. The academic committee meets monthly and is committed to ensuring that the quality of teaching is as high as possible. The board invests strongly in staffing and in the staff's continued professional development.
- 5.4 The board discharges effectively its responsibility for safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety. Comprehensive policies and procedures covering child protection, staff recruitment, welfare, health and safety, fire safety and medical care are reviewed annually. One governor has delegated responsibility for monitoring their implementation. Governors have benefited from training in safeguarding and in governance.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.6 The school's senior leadership combines a challenging, clear and caring educational vision with a principled belief in using teamwork as the means to achieve it. Leadership and management at all levels offer a stimulating example of commitment and collegiality, which staff are inspired to emulate in the interests of the pupils. The exemplary learning environment that is created is based on an all-pervasive ethos of care, support and trust. Leaders and managers at every level have the confidence to make decisions, because they know that lines of responsibility are clear and support is always available. Almost all pupils and most parents responding to the questionnaires consider the school to be well run.
- 5.7 Senior leadership is adept at analysing the school's needs, setting priorities and ensuring they are achieved. It has successfully focused professional development on raising the standards of teaching and learning and has overseen the regular use of assessment data to measure and improve pupils' progress, in line with the recommendations from the previous report. Development planning, staff appraisal and continuing professional development are strong. ICT has been made a major focus. Teaching quality is underpinned by very effective, albeit difficult, recruitment from the UK, supported by robust performance management and generous provision

for continuing professional development. The school leadership has succeeded in maintaining excellent standards during a period of exceptional national turbulence.

- 5.8 A rigorous system of oversight and self-evaluation is now part of the school's leadership, governance and management culture. The mentoring and development of key managers has resulted in greater consistency of approach. Monitoring is well developed. Ten staff-led teaching and learning communities discuss and trial interesting initiatives, including methods of stimulating gifted and talented pupils. They indicate a widespread willingness to embrace and activate the sharing of effective teaching methods and mutual lesson observation, thus raising standards, but some inconsistency remains. Curricular changes have been made to address the differing needs of pupils. The high retention rate of teachers, especially after the 2011 disturbances, reflects the extent to which they feel valued by the school and the outstanding work done to develop their professional skills. Leadership and management discharge very well their delegated responsibilities for the implementation of policies and the safeguarding of pupils. All staff have been checked for their suitability to work with children; they are regularly trained, several at the higher level, in meeting the needs of all pupils and safeguarding their welfare, health and safety. Emergency planning for contingencies is excellent. The premises are immaculately maintained. Administrative and support staff are integral members of the school community and play an important role in its success.

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

- 5.9 The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent.
- 5.10 The school maintains excellent links with parents in accordance with its aim "to reach out to all of our families". Questionnaire responses show a high level of satisfaction amongst parents with the education that the school provides, particularly the progress their children are making, including their acquisition of strong skills in English, the care shown for their children, the curricular provision, the values the school promotes, the ready availability of information, the ease of communication and the timely response to questions. A few parents expressed concern about the provision for special educational needs. The inspectors found that the school's provision for pupils with differing educational needs was one of its strengths. A very small minority of parents felt that information regarding their child's progress was insufficient and a few were not content with the homework set. Inspectors found reporting to be regular and extremely informative, and the homework set to be appropriate.
- 5.11 The school ensures that the parents of pupils and of prospective pupils receive the required information about the school and its policies, either through the prospectus or through handbooks, available on the useful and helpful school website. The school publishes an informative electronic bulletin describing events and facilitates day-to-day contact through email or text messaging. Parents of older pupils have access, through their children, to extensive data on the school's virtual learning environment. Where substantial numbers of parents have shown concerns, the school has been very ready to discuss them, for example by holding an open meeting for parents or when the chairman of governors invited parents to make direct contact with him over specific matters. A very small minority of parents felt that their concerns had not been well handled. The inspectors judge that the school has an appropriate policy for complaints. On the occasions this has been invoked, the school has followed its published procedures. A bi-annual questionnaire seeks to ascertain parents' views.

- 5.12 Parents receive high quality information about their child's progress. Helpful, detailed reports provide an excellent summary of the pupils' progress, attainment and targets. This addresses criticism in the previous report. The reports are supplemented by consultation days, focusing on the pupils' progress and attainment, by meetings to discuss matters of interest, such as individual education plans and by parents' workshops, discussing topics, such as healthy eating and cyber safety, or advising parents of Foundation Stage pupils on how to support their children in the acquisition of new skills, such as reading and writing.
- 5.13 Parents contribute to a range of school events, such as international week, where they wear national costumes and purvey authentic cuisine from around the world. The Parent and Teachers Association organises an Egyptian puppet show to provide opportunities for foreign families to experience Egyptian cultural traditions.

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 governors, including the chair of 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

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Mr John Sugden | Reporting inspector |
| Mrs Eithne Webster | Junior Team Inspector (Former Head of Key Stage, IAPS school, UK) |
| Mr Mick Jonas | Junior Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, IAPS school, UK) |
| Mrs Linda Hague | Junior Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, IAPS school, UK) |
| Dr Iain Farrell | Senior Team Inspector (Former Director of Studies, HMC school, UK) |
| Mr Ian Mitchell | Senior Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC school, UK) |