



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS

INSPECTION REPORT ON ST CATHERINE'S BRITISH SCHOOL 8 TO 11 NOVEMBER 2016

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

St Catherine's British School

Full Name of School	St Catherine's British School			
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Head	Mr Stuart Smith			
Chair of Governors	Mr Stavros Taki			
Age Range	3 to 18			
Total Number of Pupils	1131			
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (527 boys; 604 girls)			
Numbers by Age	0-2:	0	5-11:	525
	3-5:	102	11-18:	504
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	1131		
Inspection dates	8 to 11 November 2016			

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 2013.

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) Regulations 2014, which do not apply with legal validity to schools outside the United Kingdom. However, the inspection of overseas schools takes account where possible of compliance with any local requirements and it judges the extent to which the schools comply with the British Government's Standards for British Schools Overseas. The range of these Standards is as follows.

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

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

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

- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures**
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law.**

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Catherine's British School was founded in 1956 as a preparatory school in the grounds of the British Embassy in Athens before moving to its current site in northern Athens in 1971. The school now takes pupils from the ages of 3 to 18. It follows a curriculum which is closely based on the National Curriculum for England and Wales, adapted to local requirements such as the teaching of Greek to all pupils up to the age of 15. At the age of 16 pupils take GCSE and international GCSE (IGCSE) examinations and in the sixth form they study for the International Baccalaureate (IB). The school is registered in the UK as both a limited company and a charity.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection the school has achieved British Overseas School (BSO) status and has become validated to support teacher training programmes. The school is in an advanced stage of planning to develop a new school on land within walking distance of the current site.
- 1.3 The school's motto is *Excellence and Happiness* and it aims to foster a love of learning through a challenging, broad and balanced curriculum. It seeks to develop fully pupils' intellectual, social, physical and creative potential so that they grow into happy, sensitive, informed and capable citizens prepared to lead fulfilling lives and contribute to their wider community.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 1131 pupils of whom 527 were boys and 604 were girls. The Lower School, for those aged 3 to 11, comprises 627 pupils whilst the Upper School, for those aged 11 to 18, has 504. In the Lower School 102 children are in the Nursery and Reception classes of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for those aged between 3 and 5. The majority of pupils come from professional or business families with one Greek parent but with other national inheritances as well. A large minority come from homogenous Greek families and a smaller minority come from international families where one or more parents are working in diplomatic services or in multi-national companies. In total 46 nationalities are represented in the school.
- 1.5 In both the Lower and Upper School the range of pupils' abilities is above the UK national average.
- 1.6 There are 112 pupils recognised as having English as an additional language (EAL) of whom 105 receive support for language development; the overwhelming majority of these are in the Lower School. There are 124 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and 80 of these receive specialist learning support from the school.
- 1.7 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 quality of pupils' achievement is excellent throughout the school from the EYFS to the sixth form. The pupils strongly acquire the required knowledge, skills and understanding of the subjects they study. They are highly committed to their studies, display very good study skills, and are able to work both independently as well as co-operatively with others to a marked degree. Results at GCSE have been well above the UK national average for maintained schools, and IGCSE results have been higher than worldwide norms. Results in the IB have been higher than worldwide norms. In extra-curricular activities and in sport, pupils achieve very well both individually and as part of larger groups. Progression to university is almost universal with the great majority achieving their university of choice. Pupils' excellent progress is a consequence of the high-quality teaching they receive and their attitudes to learning which are extremely positive. Work is generally well matched to pupils' abilities and provides suitable challenge. Pupils benefit from an excellent supporting curriculum. Modern languages are a strong feature with many pupils fluent in three languages. Pupils with SEND or EAL attain and make progress generally in line with their peers. Some teaching approaches are inconsistently implemented, for example in the marking of pupils' work.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils leave the school as confident citizens of the world. Their cultural development is a strength, and a consequence of the school's multilingual setting. Pastoral support and provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety are strengths of the school. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaires pupils were particularly positive about their enjoyment of the school and their progress in English. The criticisms of a minority about a perceived lack of consideration of their views by the school and the fairness of teachers were not corroborated by inspection evidence. Relationships are strong across the board and the school is true to its motto to ensure that happiness is a central feature of school life.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is excellent, the school having responded well to a recommendation of the previous inspection to strengthen the role of governors in supporting the quality of education. Excellent leadership and management at all levels support the success of the school. A clear sense of direction is promoted in most areas of the school. The school forms an excellent partnership with its parents, who were extremely positive in their comments about the school in the pre-inspection questionnaire. A minority had concerns about help for special needs, information received, the handling of concerns and governance. All these aspects were explored in detail by inspectors who were unable to support these criticisms.

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) Recommendation for further improvement

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

Improve the quality and consistency of the marking of work, so as to provide pupils with clearer pointers to future 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 throughout the school is excellent. In the pre-inspection questionnaire responses, the overwhelming majority of parents and pupils registered their strong satisfaction with pupils' progress. The excellent achievement represents the fulfilment of pupils' potential.

Lower School

- 3.2 In the EYFS the children make good and often excellent progress according to their starting points, abilities and needs. By the end of Reception the majority of children reach or exceed the developmental levels typically expected for their age. Children with EAL and SEND also make good and often excellent progress. At this early stage of the school year, the older children can read and write simple words independently, sequence a story and count and order numbers to twenty. The younger children listen to songs and rhymes, joining in enthusiastically. They recognise and name simple shapes. All the children in the EYFS are active learners. They become absorbed in creative activities such as painting and constructing models and in role play, where they develop their language skills independently.
- 3.3 Pupils in the main part of the Lower School also make good and often excellent progress. Pupils listen well during lessons and voice their thoughts and opinions logically and with great confidence. Younger pupils read aloud with a self-assurance and expression, and write correctly punctuated sentences in a neat and legible cursive style. Older pupils competently identify the use of figurative language in writing. By Year 6 pupils acquire excellent mathematical skills, which they adeptly use to solve problems. Pupils make proficient use of information and communication technology (ICT) in order to carry out research and to access mathematical games in turn to reinforce learning in class. Pupils' creative abilities are evident in colourful displays around the school and in their achievement and progress in music and art lessons. They perform successfully in physical activities and in assemblies, drama productions and concerts.
- 3.4 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but from teacher assessments and school tracking data, scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations, this is judged to be excellent overall. This is a significant achievement given that many children are working in a second or third language. The attainment and progress of pupils with SEND and EAL are good and often excellent, as shown by discussions, lesson observations and work scrutiny.
- 3.5 Pupils achieve well in extra-curricular activities. High standards are reached by many pupils in music and drama external examinations, with the great majority of pupils achieving distinction or merits. Pupils keenly embrace all opportunities for sport and display excellent skills across a wide range of sports. They achieve high success in international and local school sports competitions.

Upper School

- 3.6 Pupils' achievement and progress in the Upper School are also excellent. They acquire very good levels of knowledge, skills, and understanding in the subjects they study. Pupils show all the attributes of excellent classroom work outlined above, but

at progressively higher levels of performance commensurate with their age and ability. For example, in a middle Year 7 mathematics set, pupils demonstrated a keen and complex understanding of linear graphs. Pupils approaching IGCSE give highly polished oral presentations in German, whilst in English they apply concepts of analysis to improve their own creative work. Focused and appropriate discussion is a key attribute of pupils, whilst their listening skills are well developed.

- 3.7 Across the sixth form, pupils develop a maturity in their work, often to extremely high levels of sophistication, as in their work in drama. The great majority of pupils are multilingual and this is reflected in the advanced work that takes place in languages. Most display confidence in their mathematics work, with interviewed pupils confirming their happiness with the level of challenge and their ability to meet it. Pupils demonstrate a high level of independent computing and practical skills in physics. Year 13 chemists showed a high level of understanding of the pH scale because of their teacher's creative use of the school's virtual learning environment (VLE).
- 3.8 Pupils display logical and independent thought throughout their lessons. For example, in a business lesson, pupils displayed a reasoned and sophisticated understanding of market segmentation. Lessons are invariably characterised by constructive discussions which develop enjoyment and confidence in pupils' learning. Pupils' creativity is also strongly developed across the school and is evident in the numerous displays of pupils' work as well as in their telling contributions in music, theatre and art.
- 3.9 Almost all pupils proceed to university with the great majority achieving their university of first choice, either in the UK or the United States.
- 3.10 The following analysis uses the data for 2013 to 2015, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Results at GCSE have been well above the English national average for maintained schools, and IGCSE results have been higher than worldwide norms. Results in the International Baccalaureate (IB) have been higher than worldwide norms and were above the English average in 2013 and in line with the UK national average in 2014 and 2015.
- 3.11 Taken with the excellent standards seen in pupils' current work and tracking data scrutinised by inspectors, these results show that pupils, including those with EAL, make excellent progress in relation to that of pupils with similar abilities. At GCSE, the overwhelming majority of pupils with SEND make excellent progress, attaining in line with most of their peers. In the IB, pupils on the learning support register make very good progress in line with their peers. The progress made by the most able pupils is outstanding, as demonstrated by results at GCSE and IB level, and work seen during the inspection.
- 3.12 In extra-curricular activities, pupils achieve well both individually and as part of larger groups. They contribute in a range of activities locally and abroad encompassing the arts, music, science, mathematics and sport. The scope of the school's ambition in this area finds expression in pupils travelling to the University of Oxford for debating, high achievement in acting and stage management examinations, in sport competing in regional sporting competitions in Dubai and performing in a range of high-quality dramatic productions. In addition, pupils play a full role in local sports competitions and perform well in these.
- 3.13 In both the Lower and the Upper Schools pupils' attitudes, enjoyment, collaborative skills, and self-organisation contribute to their achievement. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning and a keen desire to succeed. They are highly motivated and

enthusiastic learners, who are keen to embrace the breadth of opportunities available to them. During lessons, pupils apply themselves diligently, when working either as individuals or collaboratively. They behave well and are increasingly independent, confident and eager to use their initiative as their language skills develop.

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

- 3.14 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision across the school, including community links, is excellent. The overwhelming majority of parents and pupils are positive about the range of the curriculum including the range of activities on offer.

Lower School

- 3.15 In the EYFS, highly suitable programmes and activities cover the seven areas of learning extremely well. The areas of communication and personal development are given a strong emphasis in the programmes for the age group, ensuring that the children have an extremely secure base on which to build their learning and development. Detailed planning, based on half-termly themes, is carefully adapted to follow children's interests and to ensure excellent progress for differing abilities. There is an appropriate balance of teacher-led and child-initiated learning. A stimulating range of activities, both indoors and out, supports the children's independent learning. Children with SEND benefit from regular individual or small group support. Those with EAL make rapid progress in English and the curriculum more generally because of the carefully structured support they receive.
- 3.16 The EYFS programmes are enriched by specialist teaching in PE and music. Resources for ICT are used to effectively support the children's learning. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them and of their local community is effectively promoted by a good range of trips, such as to a local airport, a garden centre, and by visitors to the school, such as theatre groups. The older children also benefit from a number of sports activities which take place after school.
- 3.17 The main part of the Lower School has successfully adjusted its curricular provision since the previous inspection by implementing suitable changes to the content of the English National Curriculum. These changes raised subject expectations particularly in English and mathematics, and have already had a beneficial impact on pupils in that they are now achieving at higher levels than before. To achieve this success, increased lesson time has been given to these core subjects. Anxious to maintain subjects such as art the school has made timetable adjustments and further strengthened its cross curricular approaches.
- 3.18 Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in physical education, music, French (from Year 3) and Greek for bilingual or fluent speakers. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is strongly woven into the everyday life of the school and through having special focused weeks. At the start of term the focus was on social responsibility which culminated in a "make a difference" mufti day.
- 3.19 The teaching of ICT for Year 6 is provided by Upper School subject specialist staff, working alongside the class teachers. The teaching of ICT in Years 3 to 5 is supported through training delivered by the same Upper School colleagues during planning meetings.

- 3.20 Overall the academic curriculum is wide-ranging and more than covers the usual subjects taught in British schools.
- 3.21 The school ensures that the learning needs of all pupils are met. Highly effective support is provided within the classrooms by an experienced team of learning support assistants, working alongside the class teachers. In the light of the questionnaire concerns of a small minority of Lower School parents about specialist or individual support, inspectors discussed the arrangements with staff, and scrutinised individual education plans (IEPs). The provision is of a high standard throughout.
- 3.22 A wide range of extra-curricular activities, complements and extends the curriculum and enables the pupils to pursue their interests beyond the classroom. There are copious examples of this in games, swimming, athletics, drama and music. Participation rates in extra-curricular activities are high.
- 3.23 Well-organised visits and events promote links with the community and broaden pupils' horizons. The school makes extensive use of the rich archaeological heritage on its doorstep. The Lower School has a large number of links to the outside community which enlarges the curriculum. Examples are links to two local orphanages, the nearby centre for those with cerebral palsy, local refugee centres, and many others.

Upper School

- 3.24 The Upper School curriculum meets pupils' needs very well. The wide range of subjects on offer leading up to 16+ examinations and then later in the IB motivates pupils to set out on a stimulating, and challenging, learning journey.
- 3.25 The curriculum for Years 7 to 9 is based on the English National Curriculum with certain modifications for individual subjects given the school's international position. In Years 10 and 11 pupils follow courses leading to IGCSE examinations. The full IB Diploma programme is followed by nearly all sixth-form pupils. Since the previous inspection, IB pupils can now follow Greek curriculum lessons in modern Greek language, literature and history in order to gain *Apolytirio* recognition. The school has modernised its computer based work by phasing out specialist ICT work in favour of IGCSE computer science with an associated shift to more programming lower down the school.
- 3.26 Pupils benefit greatly from being in a multi-linguistic environment which breeds a rich understanding of and empathy with other cultures. An appreciation of the value of ICT and the utility of digital education is a thread that runs through the teaching and learning that they enjoy. Pupils benefit from a wide-ranging PSHCE programme, both taught and supported by assemblies, the Theory of Knowledge programme, the IB creative, action and service programme (CAS) and outside speakers, with an appropriate focus on British culture and values. There are plenty of valuable opportunities for enrichment and extension within lessons and within the IB framework. Supportive careers guidance is detailed and appreciated.
- 3.27 The school provides excellent support for pupils with SEND or EAL. Pupils may be supported in mainstream classes or else receive individual tuition. In some lessons, pupils receive supplementary and very effective individual provision to help them with GCSE and IB subject work. The staff concerned are well-qualified and deployed, and since the previous inspection the school has enlarged its team of learning support staff and improved its training. Some parents in the Upper School

questionnaire sample did not agree that the quality of provision was good but inspectors were unable to share this criticism.

- 3.28 The curriculum also provides appropriate challenge for the most gifted and able pupils, and is flexible enough to enable them to progress at their own rate, allowing for individual investigation and extension work. In some cases pupils complete IGCSE courses a number of years ahead of the British curriculum and move on to Higher Level IB material early, opening up numerous opportunities beyond.
- 3.29 The curriculum is enhanced further by an excellent extra-curricular programme. Pupils enjoy simple participation just as much as elite performance and the winning that goes with it. There are multiple opportunities to be involved in sport. Soccer, for boys and girls, and tennis are particularly strong and the school, the only international school in Athens to do so, participates in events organised by the local independent schools association. Tournaments in football, basketball, volleyball and tennis, as well as competition in local leagues are enjoyed greatly. Music and drama are much valued and strongly supported by those who enjoy such creative and performance activities.
- 3.30 The Upper School also enlarges the curriculum with outside links. Prominent examples are fundraising campaigns with Caritas, *Medicins sans Frontieres*, the Tselios foundation, etc., and the debating club which has participated in Thessaloniki, London and Durham.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.31 The contribution of teaching is excellent. It meets the school's aim of developing each child as a creative, reflective, independent, life-long learner. The questionnaire responses indicate that the overwhelming majority of parents and pupils are pleased with the progress that pupils are making. The great majority of the pupils reported that they find the work interesting and their teachers help them to learn. In the 2013 inspection, the school was advised to bring all teaching to the highest standards already in the school. It has improved teaching by its investment in professional development and in the Upper School by the establishment of a teacher who promotes good practice.

Lower School

- 3.32 In the EYFS, the well-trained and experienced staff are highly knowledgeable about how children learn. Perceptive initial assessments of each child are made which incorporate what parents say their child can do and enjoy. Staff engage and motivate the children and have high expectations of behaviour and learning. Topics, such as Hallowe'en and Harvest, and a range of exciting activities successfully engage the children. Staff plan for pupils' next steps by making regular and detailed assessments of the children's knowledge, skills, understanding.
- 3.33 In the main part of the Lower School, the highly effective teaching is significantly influenced by teachers' strong subject knowledge and their effective methodology. Classroom control is very good; teachers expect calm and measured behaviour from the pupils in order to maximise their learning opportunities. Pupils' needs are well understood, not least those of pupils with EAL and SEND for whom additional classroom support is used very productively.
- 3.34 The great majority of the teaching is thoughtfully planned so that tasks enable pupils to make progress to the best of their ability. It engages pupils and makes them reflect on their learning so helping them to recognise the strategies that lead to

success. Such teaching maintains a brisk pace, is well structured and provides challenge. Much teaching is planned collaboratively in year group teams where it has promoted a creative approach in the planning of lively cross-curricular project work. One such excellent example of team planning was in the Year 6 Fireworks project that called on the pupils to apply skills developed in subject lessons such as mathematics, ICT, English and art.

- 3.35 The quality and frequency of marking is inconsistent. Much is excellent and provides pupils with very good feedback on what to do to improve performance, but some is less helpful. There is also variability in the extent to which teachers teach pupils how to carry out self-assessment on their work; not all teachers make use of this valuable approach.
- 3.36 Systems of tracking the progress pupils make over time have recently been introduced to match the new curriculum. The findings are monitored by senior managers in the Lower School. Results are discussed in meetings with the class teacher and those providing support. This is resulting in more effective identification of pupils who need extra support or challenge, and ensuring that pupils know what to do to improve their work.
- 3.37 Teachers organise the classrooms well and ensure that success, and what high standards look like are celebrated by displaying examples of pupils' work in rooms and corridors.

Upper School

- 3.38 Teaching is supported by strong teacher specialist subject knowledge. Teachers also demonstrate very good subject methodology. Year 11 French, for example, was taught through the target language using supplementary material from French magazines to increase the level of challenge and of relevance to life in modern France.
- 3.39 Teachers show excellent knowledge of their pupils' differing needs. The needs of those with EAL and SEND are carefully planned for and supported by a variety of methods. Examples seen included the use of partners to describe circuit diagrams for another to draw, and end-of-lesson group sessions involving writing to an absent colleague to describe the lesson. Additional subject-specific support strategies are often used.
- 3.40 The teaching frequently makes excellent use of different forms of questioning in lessons, continually assessing pupils' progress and adapting lessons appropriately to help pupils move on and to investigate new ideas either independently or as groups.
- 3.41 The school has successfully implemented its VLE system. It greatly supports teaching and learning by its power to collate resources, enable revision, and to offer extended help in each topic and both at school and at home. Several lessons were seen where the teaching used the platform very adroitly to supplement the presentations of topics. Pupils of all years in the Upper School spoke enthusiastically and rightly about its convenience and the support it provides them.
- 3.42 Pupils felt that they were in 'constant communication' with teachers regarding their work, even when at home, through email and the VLE, and that they were readily able to access additional support from their teachers.

- 3.43 Assessment of pupils' progress is regular although there is wide variation in the consistency across subjects of the marking of homework and classwork. The majority of the marking is good or excellent and provides pupils with regular targeted feedback and guidance for further progress. Pupils themselves say that they receive good oral feedback from teachers. Nevertheless in some years and in some subjects a great deal of pupils' written work, with the exception of tests, goes unmarked and unchecked.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is excellent. Their strong development and understanding of themselves and others supports the aims of the school. By the time they leave the school, pupils demonstrate great maturity and a pronounced sense of responsibility.

Lower School

- 4.2 In the EYFS, the children's personal development is excellent. They co-operate and share extremely well, and respect one another and the resources in their classrooms. Independence in taking care of their own belongings and tidying away equipment is strongly evident from the beginning of Nursery. The children are all highly aware of the school and class rules and of the importance of following them so all can feel safe and happy. They know, for example, that they should not put water in the sand tray. The children in the EYFS raise money to support a local zoo and as part of their Harvest celebrations have donated items of food for those less fortunate than themselves. The children are extremely well prepared for their transitions into Reception and Year 1.
- 4.3 In the main part of the Lower School, spiritual awareness is strongly evident. Pupils are thoughtful and highly reflective. Year 4 pupils showed an appreciation of life and the sacrifices and suffering of others in a poignant PSHCE lesson on Remembrance Day. Pupils have an emerging understanding of different religions through some of their historical studies.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is very prominent. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the classroom rules and are well behaved. They understand that they are accountable for their own actions, learning from their mistakes by spending time with a mediator. Pupils appreciate the circumstances of those less fortunate than themselves.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is of the highest quality. Pupils are friendly, kind and enjoy positive relationships with others. They are socially responsible, empathetic and show respect for others. They play well together, using the Friendship Bench and the Playground Friends' system to help them. Pupils resolve relationship issues where they feel they are able and they seek help if necessary.
- 4.6 Pupils' cultural development is a very strong feature of the Lower School. Through their lives in school, they form friendships with pupils of different nationalities and show understanding of and respect for cultures other than their own. In particular, pupils have a very good awareness of and appreciation for Greek culture. Year 5 pupils showed a deepening understanding of Greek heritage and values, such as democracy, in their assembly on the Acropolis. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of British life, particularly through history lessons and their reading books.

Upper School

- 4.7 The pupils' sense of spiritual awareness is good. It finds expression in artistic and musical pursuits, which are extremely well developed across the school. A drama rehearsal showed empathy with a text of Shakespeare far beyond what is expected for older pupils. In a lesson in theatre studies, a pupil explained that study of the texts and helped him with an understanding of self. Poetry is also an area of study in

which older pupils find themselves learning about themselves by considering the experiences of others.

- 4.8 The pupils' moral development is excellent. Pupils are respectful of each other even when they hold opposing views. They have a well-developed sense of the difference between right and wrong, and a strong awareness of moral issues through their curriculum work. They show significant care and regard towards their fellow pupils. The plight of refugees in the country has clearly touched the pupils and the efforts to raise both the profile of the issue and to provide tangible help through charity work amply illustrates their strong sense of moral purpose.
- 4.9 Pupils demonstrate a keen social awareness. They have a deep understanding of responsibility. They make use of opportunities to take on responsibilities and would relish even more of these. The school council and the senate both afford pupils a voice in the school and allow them to feel a sense of involvement in school life. Although there was a significant minority of pupils in the pre-inspection questionnaire who expressed a view that the school does not listen to their opinions, inspectors found this was not supported by evidence. Year 9 pupils spoke of lunch arrangements being changed after pupil intervention. Throughout, there is a strong culture of pupil-led fund-raising activities, such as *Fairtrade* awareness and the money raised to support members of the Greek Paralympic team.
- 4.10 The pupils' cultural development is excellent. Pupils of different linguistic and ethnic backgrounds integrate successfully upon arrival at the school. There is an overarching sense of one community which is strengthened and complemented by the differing cultural backgrounds in the school. Pupils' proficiency in modern foreign languages underpins a sympathy and knowledge of life particularly in other European countries. Their understanding and appreciation for life in modern Britain is strongly evident in their awareness of British cultural traditions such as Armistice Day as well as their knowledge of parliamentary democracy as evidenced in a lively debate.

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

- 4.11 Throughout the school the quality of the arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the parent questionnaire said they were happy with the pastoral help and guidance given to their child.
- 4.12 In the EYFS, the quality of the support given to children is excellent. Individual staff are designated as a child's key carer, and all are committed to providing a happy, caring and purposeful environment for the children. All staff know the children in their care extremely well and sensitively guide them to develop respect for one another, to share and co-operate so that they develop positive relationships with their teachers and with each other. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and courtesy and the importance of respecting one another is consistently reinforced. Play times and lunch breaks are carefully supervised. Children are helped to understand the importance of healthy eating through class topics. The younger children are well supported in learning to manage their personal needs and the importance of hand-washing.
- 4.13 The school's pastoral support structures are very good and strongly appreciated by parents. In the Lower School, pastoral and academic responsibility resides with class teachers under the oversight of senior managers who also have an academic monitoring role. Staff are trained for their pastoral role and there are effective

communication systems, for example a slip system for passing on any safeguarding concerns. In the Upper School, the pastoral team of senior leaders is devoted to pastoral oversight, which in practice often means supporting teachers with disciplinary matters and liaising with parents. The work of the team is enhanced by a full-time counsellor. Both Lower and Upper teams meet regularly to closely monitor pupils of pastoral concern and ensure that appropriate support measures are put in place where necessary. These meetings and procedures effectively enable extra support to be delivered by the school where and when it is needed.

- 4.14 Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent, both in the classroom and around the school with staff demonstrating real care and knowledge of the individuals in all areas of school, from form groups to extra-curricular groups and lessons. Relationships among the pupils are harmonious. The school has a comprehensive range of effective measures to combat bullying and to empower pupils to identify and deal with such behaviour. These include an anti-bullying week as well as the inclusion of bullying and cyber-bullying in the PSHCE syllabus. A record is kept of any instances of bullying and the measures taken to deal with it, including cyber bullying. This record shows successful interventions and resolutions to incidents that have arisen over the last few years. The school works positively with national agencies to support pupils if needed. A minority of Upper School pupils considered the anti-bullying arrangements ineffective but inspectors, looking at the records and talking to staff and pupils, did not support this view.
- 4.15 Classroom rules are clearly understood and accepted by pupils. There are many opportunities taken by teachers to promote good behaviour in school. As a result, pupils are well behaved. For example, in the Lower School, weekly 'Star of the Week' certificates are given to pupils to celebrate the positive decisions they make and a wide range of roles and responsibilities enables pupils to feel empowered and have a say in their daily lives. When pupils make a mistake, they are counselled in ways to make amends and make better choices in the future. Although a minority of pupils responding to the questionnaire indicated that teachers were unfair to pupils generally and in the way they give rewards and sanctions, inspectors did not find these views corroborated in the discussions they had with pupils and teachers.
- 4.16 The safeguarding arrangements have proper regard for pupils' welfare and take into account the circumstances and context of the school. The school's policy and the gubernatorial and managerial oversight provided meet the expected standards for British Schools Overseas. The school has adopted a commercial distance-learning package for keeping staff up to date with UK safeguarding expectations, including countering extremism and radicalisation. All staff and governors have had up-to-date training and the designated safeguarding leads have both received recent higher level training.
- 4.17 All necessary measures such as evacuation drills are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards, including earthquakes. The kitchens and canteen have been checked for hygiene safety by a local agency and the certification was checked by inspectors. Off-site visits are well planned and appropriately assessed for risks. Classrooms and equipment are checked regularly for safety and security.
- 4.18 Pupils bring in packed lunches from home, the content of which is monitored. Pupils understand the benefits of healthy eating and this is promoted by the school. Older pupils benefit from the nutritious lunches that are provided. There are many opportunities for physical exercise.

- 4.19 Arrangements to ensure health and safety are effective and include suitable provision for pupils who are ill, injured or have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This includes paediatric nursing expertise for the EYFS. Effective procedure are well implemented for the administration of medicines, for safe arrival and dismissal of pupils, and the supervision of pupils throughout the day. The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and archived.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent. The governing body is composed of a small group of professionals committed to providing strong support for the school. They are well qualified and experienced in finance, academia, law and business. Minutes of meetings show that there is excellent strategic oversight of the school's business and direction. The board includes a past and a current headmaster from the English independent school sector, the latter a recent appointment which has strengthened the governing body's capability to have an understanding of educational standards and curricula and to provide the school's management with challenge. The board also provides effective oversight of the financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources as evidenced by the advanced state of its plans to rebuild the school on a new site.
- 5.2 Governor training has a high priority. Each February there is a joint governor and senior leadership workshop which has increased governors' insight into the working of the school. Governors have recently benefited from a full day's training by the UK's professional association for governors. Furthermore, governors are invited to staff training sessions as appropriate.
- 5.3 Governors are well known to senior leaders and frequently visit the school. The questionnaires indicated that whilst the overwhelming majority of parents are satisfied with the governance of the school, a small minority felt otherwise. Particular comments were made about governors not being well known to parents. Inspectors considered that the exercise of governance was of a high standard within the parameters expected of BSO schools.
- 5.4 The oversight given by the governing body to child protection is excellent. Child protection is led by a governor with an expertise in law which enables there to be a reconciling of Greek and English practice and requirements. The governor is kept informed of the procedures followed in any child protection matters and leads and supports the full board in its monitoring and oversight role for child protection.
- 5.5 At the previous inspection, it was recommended that the school develop more fully the role of governors in supporting the quality of education. The school has responded positively to this recommendation through training, new appointments and through the establishment of links made between parts of the school management, departments and individual governors. This has already led to governors increasing their visits to the schools and to the promotion of contacts between staff and governors and is an important step towards improving the critical stance of governors to the school's provision of education.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management throughout the school is excellent. In the EYFS, leadership and management have a thorough oversight of regulatory compliance. Careful induction of new staff, regular staff training at the required intervals and the strong attention to safeguarding procedures ensure that staff are highly vigilant towards the safety of the children. The leadership team has a clear vision for the EYFS to develop the whole child intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally and to meet the individual needs of the children. The setting regularly evaluates its practice and procedures and identifies areas for development.

Careful monitoring of the education programmes and assessment of the children's academic and personal achievements ensure that the children thrive in a welcoming, safe and secure environment. Regular staff discussion and appraisal meetings enable staff to identify areas for their continuing professional development. The strong cohesive EYFS team is an outstanding feature of the setting.

- 5.7 The school overall has an ambitious long-term educational vision for the school and its facilities which supports its aim to create an exceptional learning environment for all pupils and staff. In promoting this vision, the needs of the pupils are at the centre of all decision-making. This clarity of direction is underpinned by a clear strategic financial plan illustrative of the excellent collaborative work of the school's leadership team and the governing body. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that they considered the school to be well managed. Leaders ensure that the key academic priorities for the school are shared and understood. For example, in the Lower School senior and middle leaders are supporting staff effectively in the implementation of the new National Curriculum and in developing the related assessment procedures to track pupils' achievement.
- 5.8 Effective monitoring initiatives have been introduced and these ensure the integrity of educational provision and improve still further the standards of teaching and learning and the quality of pastoral care. This has a direct, positive impact on the quality of the pupils' overall education and on their personal development. Some inconsistencies are still evident, for example in the range of approaches towards marking seen in the work scrutiny and in the precise understanding of their role in school improvement of some middle managers. Development planning is both strategic and local priorities are clear. The implementation of initiatives is carefully and supportively monitored to ensure positive outcomes for pupils.
- 5.9 Management is very successful in recruiting well-qualified teaching and support staff of high quality. Leaders provide them with the support and training required in areas of safeguarding and welfare, health and safety. Safer recruitment policies are followed and due regard is given to the importance of completing all suitability checks for the single central register. The school has thorough arrangements in place for checking the suitability of staff (including volunteers), supply staff and governors.
- 5.10 A highly effective administrative and support staff contribute fully to the successful operation of the school. Comprehensive induction programmes for new colleagues, for the mentoring of newly qualified teachers (NQTs), and the integrated approaches towards staff review and continuing professional development are strong. Discussions around annual review, lesson observations where appropriate, target setting and career development are appreciated. Teachers speak warmly of the support and guidance they are given and the funding for CPD that has been made available. Inspectors note the positive impact this has on teaching and learning.

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

- 5.11 The quality of the links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent. In the EYFS strong partnerships with parents are established when the children enter the school. Parents are warmly welcomed into the school and appreciate its family ethos. They are closely involved with their children's learning through the many opportunities the school provides, such as attending performances and concerts and helping with visits and in the classes. In parental questionnaires and in discussions, all parents of children in the EYFS were highly appreciative of the care and support their children receive.

- 5.12 Throughout the school a comprehensive range of information is readily available to parents on the school website, in the weekly newsletters, the headmaster's blog, and from pupil contact books. Teachers respond quickly to parents' emails and in the Lower School parents are able to talk informally to teachers each morning.
- 5.13 Parents receive much useful information about their child's progress, through highly informative reports which are issued several times each year and parent consultation evenings. Other parent evenings offer parents much valuable information on various educational matters, such as safeguarding and transition to the Upper School. In the parent questionnaire, a small minority of parents indicated they were not satisfied with the information provided about their child's progress. Inspectors closely scrutinised school reports which inform parents, for example in the Upper School, on performance, effort and advice on things to improve, and concluded that evidence does not support this view.
- 5.14 Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children. Parents are welcome in class as parent volunteers, to attend school trips and are encouraged to share any skills with their child's class.
- 5.15 The school maintains highly constructive relations with the parents. A small minority of parents felt that concerns are not handled well. Inspection evidence found that concerns are dealt with effectively and complaints are handled in accordance with the school's published procedures. The 'open door' policy ensures that most concerns are dealt with informally and to the parents' satisfaction.

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, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Dr Stephen Grounds	Reporting inspector
Mrs Monica Davies	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, COBIS/HMC school)
Mr Peter Hamilton	Team Inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mrs Rebecca Layton-Short	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, Prep, COBIS school)
Mrs Susan Rix	Team Inspector (Former Head of Prep, Society of Heads school)
Mr Stephen Rogers	Team Inspector (Principal, COBIS/HMC school)
Mr Robert Youlten	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, COBIS school)