



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS

**INSPECTION REPORT ON
THE BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF STAVANGER**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

The British International School of Stavanger

Full Name of School	The British International School of Stavanger	
Address	Gauselbakken 107 Stavanger NORWAY 4032 NORWAY	
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Email Address	office@biss.no	
Head	Mrs Anne Howells	
Chair of Governors	Mr Valter Jonzon	
Age Range	4 to 16	
Total Number of Pupils	394	
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (174 boys; 220 girls)	
Numbers by Age	4-11: 278	11-16: 116
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	394
Inspection dates	03 Nov 2014 to 06 Nov 2014	

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 March 2010.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CONTENTS

	Page
1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	3
(a) Main findings	3
(b) Action points	4
(i) Compliance with Standards requirements	4
(ii) Recommendation for further improvement	4
3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	5
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills	5
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	6
(c) The contribution of teaching	7
4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	9
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	9
(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	10
5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	12
(a) The quality of governance	12
(b) The quality of leadership and management	12
(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians	14
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	15

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Established in 1977, the British International School of Stavanger is an independent day school for girls and boys aged between four and sixteen. An associated pre-school department, accepting children from the age of 18 months, is not included in this inspection. Originally located at Kannik Skole, Stavanger the school moved to Gausel in 1982, eight kilometres away from the main town. Its original purpose was to meet the needs of children up to the age of 11, whose parents were currently employed in the oil industry, but would return to the United Kingdom. Increasingly, the school has registered permanent residents of Norway as well as a wide range of expatriates from all over the world. The local Kommune provided sufficient adjacent land to build two new premises, so that by 2008 provision was extended to include a senior school for pupils aged between 11 and 16. The school is overseen by a board of six governors, with the day-to-day work being managed by a senior leadership team.
- 1.2 The school's published vision is that pupils should be helped to become role models for the future, possessing qualities that would make them all better people. It aims to achieve high academic standards within a broad and creative curriculum. The school plans to do this by promoting high standards of behaviour and positive attitudes which will enable pupils to become confident, independent individuals who are able to make a valuable contribution as citizens in a global society.
- 1.3 At the time of the previous inspection, academic provision was based on the British National Curriculum. The school now provides International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes, but additionally retains the British curriculum for English and mathematics for pupils aged up to 11.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 394 pupils on roll. The primary school has 278 pupils, 154 girls and 124 boys. Entry into Reception, which forms an integral part of the school, is for children who reach the age of five within the academic year. The senior school has 116 pupils, 66 girls and 50 boys aged between 11 and 16. Pupils can enter the school at any age or point during the academic year. Because of the transitory nature of most parents' employment, the majority stay between three and five years. The school is non-denominational, welcoming pupils from all major world religions as well as those who have no religious affiliation. Most parents work within the local oil industry or North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and come from a range of cultural and economic backgrounds, reflecting the diversity of the local population. Pupils represent 49 different nationalities, with three-quarters having a primary language which is not English. Of these, 58 pupils receive specialist support. The ability of pupils on entry is judged to be broadly in line with the UK average, with a wide range of abilities represented. Ten pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional support.

- 1.5 English National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Primary School

School	NC name
Reception	EYFS
PYP 1	Year 1
PYP 2	Year 2
PYP 3	Year 3
PYP 4	Year 4
PYP 5	Year 5
PYP 6	Year 6

Secondary School

School	NC name
MYP 1	Year 7
MYP 2	Year 8
MYP 3	Year 9
MYP 4	Year 10
MYP 5	Year 11

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school fulfils its aims. A wide-ranging curriculum and high-quality teaching ensures that pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well. The teaching of languages, including Norwegian, is a strength. The school has fully complied with the recommendation from the previous inspection to develop the breadth and range of activities and increase rigour and depth for pupils in the primary school. Pupils with SEND or EAL receive excellent guidance and make rapid progress. Provision for academically able pupils is less consistent. Teachers know their pupils well and in most lessons plan challenging tasks which take account of their needs and different learning styles. A good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the pupils' experiences. Pupils attain success in external public examinations. Their attitudes to learning are positive; hard work and diligence are the norm.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. They are friendly and courteous, working together harmoniously from an early age. They show an aesthetic awareness of the beauty in the world and demonstrate respect and tolerance, having a keen sense of right and wrong. They take on positions of responsibility and are confident to make suggestions for improvement, knowing that their view will be heard and valued. In conversations, and in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, pupils confirmed their happiness and satisfaction with school life with very few exceptions. Inspectors found that pupils are well supported by policies and arrangements for their welfare, health and safety, including safeguarding.
- 2.3 Good governance is based on careful strategic and financial management, ensuring that the school has the resources to realise its aims. Relationships between governors and the school are close, so that senior leaders feel well supported. Governors have careful oversight of academic standards through detailed reports from senior leaders, but do not rigorously monitor key policies because they are insufficiently familiar with current regulatory requirements. Excellent leadership has enabled the school to establish high expectations in all areas of school life. Key appointments to the senior leadership team have been instrumental in raising academic levels. Standards of teaching are well monitored so that overall the quality is high. No established system of peer observation exists so that few opportunities are available for teachers to share best practice. The school has established highly effective systems to ensure that parents receive relevant information about school matters. In their responses to the questionnaire, most parents expressed satisfaction with their child's progress and pastoral care. A few parents expressed dissatisfaction with the school's handling of concerns and with the information they receive. The inspection team examined their views, but found that there were appropriate systems in place. Almost all parents who responded felt that the school was well led and managed.

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 does not meet all the requirements of the Standards for British Schools Overseas, and to do so it should:

- ensure that governors monitor and evaluate all regulatory policies and their implementation to assess their effectiveness and compliance with relevant standards. [Standard 9.3, under leadership and management of the school.]

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.5 In addition to the above action point related to the Standards requirements, the school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Provide opportunities to identify and share the excellent practice observed in much of the teaching so that it meets the learning needs of all pupils, including the most able.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills is excellent.
- 3.2 In accordance with the school's aims, pupils are well educated and achieve excellent standards in relation to their ages and abilities. Pupils of all ages, including the youngest children in Reception, acquire knowledge, understanding and skills for learning at a high level. Standards of oracy are outstanding. Although three-quarters of the pupils speak English as an additional language, they are skilfully supported to acquire swiftly the skills to express their views with confidence and clarity. Children in Reception are highly articulate because they are given plentiful opportunities in creative play to express their thoughts and feelings. They have an excellent knowledge of initial letter sounds and can work confidently with numbers up to ten, with the more able working with larger numbers. They use computers with increasing confidence.
- 3.3 From Year 1, pupils of all ages listen carefully, learn to read in a wide range of genres and write well using a variety of different writing styles. Their numerical skills develop to a high level and they work effectively across all subjects. Their work reflects an increasing ability to think independently and logically so that they are confident to research topics which deepen their knowledge. High levels of creativity are evident across the school in the vibrant displays of pupils' artwork and in their commitment to musical and dramatic performances. In sport, they achieve good levels of physical fitness and skill.
- 3.4 Achievement is high for pupils with SEND and EAL, shown in the excellent progress they make in relation to their starting points. The demands of the curriculum, particularly for older pupils, are challenging so that pupils who are academically able are offered learning tasks which generally, but not consistently, meet their needs.
- 3.5 Pupils' individual and team achievements are notable in their extra-curricular activities. For example, pupils have taken part in an international debating event and received awards in film-making, mathematics and science competitions, whilst others have achieved bronze and silver level in the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award scheme as well as excelling in external music examinations. Pupils with exceptional gifts excel because they successfully combine elite training with a carefully adapted curriculum so that academic progress is sustained. Most recently, pupils have achieved distinction at national level in gymnastics and ice-skating.
- 3.6 Pupils are successful in external examinations. The following analysis uses the English national data for the years 2011 to 2013 for pupils up to the age of 11. Results in standardised tests of attainment for pupils at age seven indicate that pupils' performance has been above the English national average for maintained primary schools. Across the same period, results in national tests at age 11 have been improving, so that by 2013, they were well above the English national average. Although no comparative data is currently available, careful scrutiny of the assessed results for 2014 demonstrates that this standard has been maintained.
- 3.7 In the senior school, pupils' attainment in the International Baccalaureate Programme for the Middle Years (MYP) cannot be measured in relation to average

performance in English public examinations. On the evidence available from observation of lessons and through a scrutiny of completed work, grades achieved and curriculum interviews, the pupils' attainment is judged to be excellent. They leave the school at the end of Year 11 well prepared to successfully make the transition to a wide range of sixth-form provision. Progress of former pupils is being carefully tracked, and records indicate that entry has been gained to universities worldwide, many with highly competitive entry requirements.

- 3.8 Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Standards of presentation are generally high because pupils are proud of their work and understand that personal achievement is dependent upon maintaining focus and commitment. They approach extra-curricular activities in an equally positive way, participating enthusiastically in the varied opportunities to develop their academic, sporting or creative interests.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.10 Provision is highly effective in its coverage of the requisite areas of learning for pupils of all ages, fully meeting the school's aim.
- 3.11 The educational programme for children in Reception meets their needs well, offering excellent opportunities for them to work confidently and with increasing independence. From Year 1, pupils benefit from a wide-ranging curriculum, taught in English, but including tuition in Norwegian as well as French and German the latter commencing in Year 7. From Year 7, curriculum content is divided into units which are detailed online. During interviews, pupils expressed their appreciation of this since it enables an overview which they can use to prepare in advance of the lesson. The content for each subject is well planned and cohesive so that pupils deepen their understanding effectively.
- 3.12 In the primary school, a carefully planned and regularly reviewed allocation of time for each subject ensures a comprehensive coverage of appropriate subject matter. This represents an improved position since the previous inspection. The school has fully complied with the recommendation to balance the breadth and range of activities with rigour and depth, by comprehensively detailing requisite content, and demonstrating links between subjects to enable a more holistic approach to the pupils' learning. The outcome for pupils is that their understanding and knowledge is well advanced and generally above expectation.
- 3.13 In the senior school, the curriculum is highly effective in meeting the needs of pupils of widely varying abilities. It is wide-ranging, in line with the requirements for the IB programme for this age. Pupils submit most work by internet. The criteria for success is clearly detailed in each unit; assessed work is then returned to pupils who are given highly detailed guidance on how they can improve. Pupils' linguistic competence is carefully assessed when they join the school and an effective support programme implemented if required, either from specialist staff working with individuals or more commonly within the classroom. This provides a personalised learning programme for each pupil, fully meeting the needs of those with EAL, SEND or who require additional challenge.
- 3.14 The excellent variety of subjects available to pupils is complemented by a comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme which is particularly effective in addressing pupils' developmental needs. A lesson for older

pupils dealt sensitively with relevant personal issues, enabling pupils to speak freely and without embarrassment. The programme includes comprehensive guidance on future career options which enables pupils to choose appropriate courses when they leave the school.

- 3.15 The varied range of extra-curricular activities allows pupils good opportunities to develop existing talents and pursue new interests. Public debating, science, drama, cookery, computer programming and yoga clubs are open to pupils as appropriate to their age. Musical activities range from choral singing to playing in the orchestra, whilst participation levels in dance and drama are excellent and lead to high quality public performances. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a few parents and pupils were of the view that the range of extra-curricular activities is limited. Inspection evidence found that provision gives the pupils a good variety of options and choice.
- 3.16 The curriculum is enhanced by educational trips and links with the community. These have included visits to a Viking village, an oil museum, a local farm and the theatre. External visitors have led workshops in art, story-telling and music. A local artist worked with pupils to create images of Norse gods, which the school has adopted as the names for the four houses. Pupils participate in national science and engineering competitions as well as being offered the opportunity to travel abroad on residential trips. These activities enrich the curriculum significantly, enabling pupils to learn more about the host country as well as promoting international understanding.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.17 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.18 Across the school, including Reception, a wide range of methods is well used to engage and motivate pupils. Teaching consistently provides pupils with secure information and knowledge so that they make excellent progress in relation to their individual ages and abilities. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used efficiently in much of the teaching to add variety and stimulus.
- 3.19 A strength of the teaching is the focus on the skills for learning such as deduction, inference and independent thinking. The careful planning of lessons includes the skills to be taught as well as lesson content so that pupils' ability to self-evaluate and research are well advanced. Learning objectives are communicated clearly and well-chosen resources enhance the learning experience.
- 3.20 Teachers know their pupils well; their understanding of the educational needs of individual pupils informs lesson planning. Learning requirements are regularly reviewed and updated during staff meetings. In the majority of lessons, the most successful teaching matched stimulating activities to pupils' needs so that their interest and focus was maintained. Pupils with SEND or EAL are consistently supported well so that their progress is rapid. Those who arrive at school with limited linguistic understanding receive intensive support. For example, in a humanities lesson with older pupils, the text being studied was provided in another language so that a pupil with limited English could have full access to the body of knowledge being taught. In their responses to the questionnaire, a very small minority of parents felt that the school did not provide worthwhile help for pupils with SEND. Evidence from planning documents and lesson observations show that excellent adaptations take into account the needs of pupils with SEND or EAL.

- 3.21 In most lessons observed, pupils' interest is maintained by skilful changes of task which add diversity and cater for differences in individual learning styles. For example, in one lesson for senior pupils, careful study of text was followed by a short video clip, with the last section of the lesson organised around group work. In many cases, the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject is infectious and greatly enjoyed by pupils, so encouraging diligence and commitment.
- 3.22 Teachers use questioning skilfully to check pupils' understanding. Class discussion and small group work is effective in making pupils think carefully, analyse and find agreed solutions. Self-reflection is encouraged and guidance given on personal time management of workload for older pupils. Teachers provide homework assessments at regular intervals which offer appropriate challenge. In most lessons, teaching includes activities which meet the needs of the most able, but this is not consistent. For example, able pupils in Year 1 were challenged to work using compass directions in which their understanding was tested effectively and beyond expectation for this age.
- 3.23 In the primary school, marking of work is regular, with much individual assessment taking place orally in the classroom. In the best examples, marking is detailed and suggests further improvement. Occasionally, marking is largely celebratory and does not make consistent use of targets so that pupils are less clear as to how they could achieve a higher standard. In the senior school, assessment of work submitted at the end of units is highly detailed and provides an excellent framework to support the pupils' future learning. Although formal assessment of work completed during class is less rigorous, pupils are appreciative of the readily available oral support and guidance. During interviews and in their response to the questionnaire, all pupils stated that they were satisfied with their progress and found the assessment system helpful in ensuring that they understand how to raise their personal attainment.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 In Reception, children demonstrate excellent personal, social and emotional development. Their self-awareness is supported by their teachers' warm care and encouragement so that they thrive within an atmosphere of co-operation and mutual respect. Children were observed happily playing together, sharing and learning from one another.
- 4.3 From Year 1, pupils' personal development fully meets the school's aim that they should promote the wellbeing of the environment, respect other cultures so that they can become global citizens.
- 4.4 Pupils' spiritual awareness is strong. Pupils are confident and able to express their thoughts well, knowing that their view will be heard and respected. They have a deep awareness of the non-material aspects of life gained from the beauty of the school site, deep within a forest and surrounded by mountains and a fjord. Their awareness is further enhanced by the excellent displays of artwork and by the abundance of opportunities to act, dance or appreciate music. The presence of a widely international community deepens their understanding of values, traditions and cultures very different from their own. The celebration of major festivals from all religions is a valued part of the curriculum. As they mature, pupils grow in self-confidence and are supported in their development of an aesthetic appreciation of the world.
- 4.5 The expectation of high moral standards ensures that pupils develop a strong moral code and have a clear sense of right and wrong. The youngest children accept the importance of adhering to simple rules and understand that they should take turns and wait patiently when appropriate. Across the school, behaviour is consistently excellent. Displays, assemblies and a carefully detailed PSHE programme promote an advanced sense of justice and fairness. Pupils have a genuine understanding of their moral responsibility to support those less fortunate, leading to participation in a range of fundraising activities, both locally and worldwide.
- 4.6 The social development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils work together harmoniously from an early age, being consistently polite and courteous. They are able to show initiative and independence of thought, reflecting upon the existing strengths within their school community and suggesting further improvements. For example, whilst the school council works well in the primary school, pupils in the senior school felt that the pupil voice could be heard more clearly by the adoption of committees to represent particular areas of school life. This was accepted by senior managers, so that pupils now lead or contribute ideas and suggestions to elected representatives from the social, arts or sports committee. A small minority of pupils felt that they were given insufficient opportunities to take on posts of responsibility. Having spoken to pupils and staff during interviews, inspectors found that appropriate opportunities are in place across the school.
- 4.7 The cultural awareness of pupils is an excellent strength of the school. Pupils from 49 countries are represented, bringing a rich diversity of cultures to everyday interactions which leads to an advanced awareness of global citizenship. In many lessons, teachers draw on the diverse backgrounds of the pupils to develop an understanding of how world issues can be viewed differently. For example, an

excellent lesson on how the Second World War began was enhanced by the contributions of pupils able to relate family history from very different perspectives.

- 4.8 Pupils welcome newcomers to the school and work through language barriers so that the ethos is inclusive and non-threatening.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.10 Pupils are provided with a clear framework of support and guidance so that their personal development is excellent. Form tutor periods, individual support sessions and sensitive counselling, where appropriate, all contribute to pupils' strong self-esteem so that they feel included within a friendly and welcoming community. This supports the school's aim to promote high standards of behaviour and positive attitudes which will enable pupils to become confident, independent individuals.
- 4.11 Cordial relationships between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves are evident. In conversations with pupils, they talk about their sense of belonging; they feel valued and supported to identify and achieve personal goals.
- 4.12 A range of strategies is securely in place to encourage good behaviour. These are sometimes devised by pupils so that there is a prevalent sense of ownership and willing participation. In the primary school, 'golden tickets' as a reward for good behaviour have proved highly motivational. The house system also encourages a sense of community and joint purpose towards the same goal. In the senior school, the expectation is that each pupil will behave in an appropriate manner, clearly detailed in the school rules. Minor infringements are dealt with by in-school detentions whilst very rare serious infringement results in temporary exclusion. The focus is on rewarding positive behaviour, so awards and achievements are celebrated during assemblies or prize-giving ceremonies. An appropriate policy is in place to guard against bullying and harassment, but is rarely invoked. Whilst a very few pupils reported that teachers were not fair in the way they gave rewards and sanctions, the inspectors' judgement concurred with the majority view, that existing systems deal with any unacceptable behaviour, whilst taking account of individual circumstances. In conversations with some older pupils, they expressed the view that staff are unaware of some incidents of bullying. These views were not shared by the majority in their interviews. Inspectors found that policies are appropriate and that recording of concerns brought to the attention of staff demonstrates that poor behaviour is tracked carefully and dealt with appropriately.
- 4.13 By the end of the inspection, all safeguarding and other policies and arrangements regarding welfare were amended so that they broadly reflect procedures in the United Kingdom, whilst being in line with local arrangements and current legislation. This includes the correct recording of staff appointments on the central register which now fully complies with current regulations. The requirement that regulatory policies should be rigorously reviewed by governors could not be implemented by the end of the inspection, and so constitutes a non-compliance judgement. Practical guidance given to staff on health and safety matters is clear, and all receive regular training in safeguarding systems and practice. New staff follow a comprehensive induction programme and are given training on safeguarding arrangements before being allowed access to pupils.
- 4.14 Concern for personal welfare is evident in the buildings and environment which are maintained to a high standard. Records show that the school responds readily to reports of any concerns and addresses issues effectively. Resources and

furnishings are regularly assessed as to their fitness for purpose. Appropriate measures are in place to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Fire notices are displayed clearly and practice evacuations carried out regularly and carefully recorded. The local fire service visits annually, checking equipment and giving helpful advice and instruction.

- 4.15 Appropriate provision is made for pupils who are sick or injured. Qualified nursing is available for individual consultation on one afternoon a week whilst all staff receive training in first aid as part of the continuing professional development programme. Due processes are in place for the recording of risk assessments as well as incidents resulting in an injury.
- 4.16 Pupils learn what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle and make sensible choices about meals through the comprehensive PSHE programme, as well as in the cookery and sports clubs available as part of the extra-curricular programme. All pupils provide their own lunch, which is in line with Norwegian tradition in schools. Lunches are eaten in the classroom with their teacher and are highly social occasions, contributing well to the personal development of pupils who enjoy the opportunity to chat to their friends and to their teacher in a relaxed manner.
- 4.17 The admission and attendance registers are correctly maintained and stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The governors provide effective oversight of the school so that it is successful in achieving its aims. They bring a range of skills to support the school's management. Some have a responsibility to monitor the quality of a specific area of the school, which includes the curriculum, welfare, health and safety, maintenance of the buildings and environment and finance. In this way, the board maintains a good oversight of the work of the school. Careful and prudent planning and financial management have enabled appropriate investment to be made in staff, accommodation and resources.
- 5.3 Governors maintain a close relationship with senior managers, working collaboratively to produce a detailed strategic plan, thereby ensuring that all development realistically reflects the school's needs. Governors are well known to parents and staff through their attendance at most school events. They do not all sample the pupils' educational experience at regular intervals, but meet regularly with senior managers, carefully scrutinising reports on academic standards and pastoral care. This allows them to offer informed support and challenge which in turn provides a stimulus for growth and improvement. A recent audit of strengths and areas for development within the board demonstrates the governors' commitment to meeting the needs of the school, thereby supporting effectively the continuance of high standards in all areas of school life.
- 5.4 Governors take seriously their responsibility to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils. They receive training in the safeguarding of pupils and regularly review policies during board meetings, usually accepting reassurance from senior management that all relevant updates have been made. However, monitoring of key policies and their effective implementation is insufficiently rigorous. The regulatory standards are not familiar to some board members, so that the requirement to evaluate compliance has not been undertaken. For example, the minutes of governors' meetings do not record that all members have been involved in a robust review of the safeguarding policy.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.6 Strong leadership ensures that the management of both the primary and the senior school functions as one and plans collaboratively and cohesively to promote the school's aims.
- 5.7 Clear educational direction from a small, but effective management team is projected well to all staff, who share the vision that the school should be a supportive environment where pupils and staff strive to embrace qualities which would make all involved better people. Robust oversight by senior managers ensures governors receive comprehensive reports so that they have the necessary information to be fully informed about the pupils' performance in examinations as well as keeping abreast of any issues or concerns as they arise.

- 5.8 Key appointments to the management of both sections of the school have been made since the previous inspection which has provided a firm framework for curricular development. Senior managers have a broad remit to monitor the quality of the educational experience both academically and pastorally, and do so conscientiously and with considerable success, so that all relevant policies are in place and implemented effectively, including those involving the safeguarding of pupils. The stated view by senior managers that all staff are leaders in their subject works well, because they feel involved in the school's success and appreciate the opportunity to take ownership of subject development and resources. Contribution by individual staff to the development of new initiatives is encouraged. For example, one staff member is currently working on a programme to develop the talents of gifted writers, whilst another has been enabled to train as a counsellor so that high quality pastoral guidance can be provided for older pupils. A real sense of unity of purpose exists between members of staff at all levels.
- 5.9 In the primary school, senior leaders meet all staff regularly to evaluate progress made towards agreed goals and to set priorities for future development. Educational programmes for children in Reception are effectively monitored. Rigorous reviews of progress for all pupils enable senior leaders to have a clear understanding of individual needs. This ensures that pupils are well cared for and that resources are put in place to support personal development well.
- 5.10 In the senior school, senior managers have been highly successful in implementing an ambitious programme to track pupils' academic progress. This has brought about a significant change in the way that pupils' work is assessed. On-line evaluation systems define what constitutes a successful unit of work so that pupils have a clear understanding of what they have done well and how they might improve their present level of achievement. Individual progress against clearly defined targets can be accessed by parents from the school's website so that they have up-to-date information about their child's educational development.
- 5.11 Senior management has been successful in securing the appointment of high quality staff, who have a clear understanding of their roles. A systematic and comprehensive induction process ensures that new staff are fully supported and become quickly familiar with the systems in place. Staff appraisal is an embedded practice. Job descriptions are in place and regularly reviewed. Good further training opportunities are offered which enable staff to reflect upon their professional practice. Senior managers regularly monitor planning of lesson content and observe lessons, giving constructive feedback. Some staff have been offered the opportunity to observe colleagues, but there is no systematic process to share the best practice.
- 5.12 The school implements thorough procedures for checking the suitability of staff. Administrative issues noted at the time of the first inspection visit were rectified by the end of the full inspection. Staff at all levels receive regular training in the safeguarding of pupils. A scrutiny of minutes of staff meetings demonstrates the school's clear commitment to pupils' welfare, health and safety. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the management of the school.

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

- 5.13 The quality of links with parents, carers and others is excellent.
- 5.14 Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they need information and this open door policy supports the school's aim to promote high standards by creating a constructive and supportive relationship.
- 5.15 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of parents stated that they could communicate easily with the school, whilst all agreed that they received timely responses to questions raised. They expressed particular satisfaction with the progress made by their child, the range of the curriculum provision and the amount of homework. Parents expressed their belief that the school promotes worthwhile attitudes and views and that the standard of behaviour is high. The pastoral guidance was agreed by the majority to be highly effective.
- 5.16 Parents are provided with good opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children and in the social life of the school. All parents can join the parents' association and can apply for election as a class representative. Meetings are held regularly to discuss ways to support the school and to promote a sense of collegiality amongst the parent body. Support for school events is encouraged. Each class can request financial support for an appropriate trip or event which promotes a strong connection with the life of the school. Parents with a particular expertise or area of interest are invited to share this with the pupils. Talks for parents around areas of current concern, such as e-safety, are organised as well as regular invitations given to events which showcase pupils' talents. In this way, parents are encouraged to form a strong bond with the school which engenders a unity of purpose to the benefit of all.
- 5.17 Useful information is provided to prospective parents about the school. The website is informative and regularly updated. Families new to the school are given comprehensive induction packs. They are invited to an open day before the start of the academic year, and another soon after joining so that they can raise any uncertainties about routines or systems.
- 5.18 Parents of pupils in the primary school receive a comprehensive report on their child's progress at the end of the academic year, and two further short assessments detailing pastoral development at the parents' conference, held twice yearly. For older pupils, two detailed reports are written and one conference held annually. Parents of pupils with SEND are invited to regular review meetings. The school is pro-active in arranging to meet parents if they are concerned about progress and parents are also able to request a meeting. In their response to the questionnaire, a few parents, mostly in the primary school, did not feel satisfied with the information they receive about their child's progress and did not feel that the school handled well concerns they had raised. The inspection team judged from a scrutiny of reports and systems that parents of pupils in the senior school had ready access to information at any time. However, information for parents in the primary school was insufficiently regular to enable them to be fully cognisant of their child's academic progress. Scrutiny of the school's systems to deal with parental concerns showed that sufficient opportunities are given to raise any problems and that the school follows its published procedures by responding positively and promptly. Careful records show that issues are dealt with sensitively and appropriately.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and staff and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors and a governor, 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

Mrs Elaine Brook	Reporting inspector
Miss Penelope Kirk	Junior Team Inspector (Head, IAPS, United Kingdom)
Mr Stephen Baird	Junior Team Inspector (Head, COBIS, Switzerland)
Mr Alan Cooper	Senior Team Inspector (Senior Teacher, HMC, United Kingdom)