



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

## **BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS**

### **INSPECTION REPORT ON KING'S INFANT SCHOOL, CHAMARTIN**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
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| Head                   | <b>Ms Kirsty Sharp</b>  |
| Chair of Governors     | <b>Sir Roger Fry CBE</b>  |
| Age Range              | <b>2 to 7</b>   |
| Total Number of Pupils | <b>189</b>  |
| Gender of Pupils       | <b>Mixed (104 boys; 85 girls)</b>   |
| Numbers by Age         | <b>2-5: 82                      5-7: 107</b>  |
| Inspection dates       | <b>6 to 9 March 2017</b>  |

## 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 2014.

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 King's Infant School, Chamartín is an independent day school for boys and girls from the age of 2 to 7 years. It opened in 2004 and is located in the Chamartín area of central Madrid. Most pupils join the school in the Nursery and remain until Year 2, although a small proportion enter in Years 1 or 2 from Spanish nursery schools. Almost all the pupils remain in schools within the King's Group, moving in Year 3 to King's College Soto de Viñuelas or King's College School La Moraleja. The school is governed by the King's Group Board, which takes all strategic decisions, and operates under the direction and management of the chief executive officer (CEO) and the headteacher. It also receives advice from a separate Council which meets termly. The school's previous ISI inspection was in March 2014.
- 1.2 The school states that its mission is to provide high-quality British education that delivers a transformative learning experience to all its pupils. It aims to enable pupils to achieve their academic ambitions by providing engaging and effective teaching based on its core values and the best and most up-to-date UK educational practice. At the same time, it seeks to nurture individual talents with an emphasis on educating the whole child and to ensure that pupils reach the highest levels of fluency and confidence in their use of the English language.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, the school had 189 pupils, 104 boys and 85 girls. There were 82 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and 107 in Years 1 and 2. There are two classes for each year group. Pupils come from 20 different countries and a variety of religious backgrounds, although two-thirds are of Spanish origin. The school serves families from the highly mobile international business sector, professions and government.
- 1.4 The ability profile of pupils varies throughout the school, but is considered to be broadly average. Just under 10 per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional support. Most pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL) and one-fifth speak a language other than English or Spanish at home. A very small minority of pupils receive support for learning English which is additional to that provided for most pupils through normal classroom teaching. One-third of the pupils are in a year group above where they would be placed in a UK school because of Spanish admission requirements.
- 1.5 The school follows the English EYFS framework and the English National Curriculum. It also provides elements of a Spanish education following programmes of study stipulated by the Spanish Ministry of Education. 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 school fulfils its aims extremely well by educating the whole child and helping pupils to become proficient in the use of the English language. The pupils make excellent progress from the Nursery to the end of Year 2 and leave the school very well equipped for the next stage of their education. Their progress in learning English is particularly good. The pupils quickly develop into enthusiastic and interested learners who enjoy coming to school, participating in lessons and working collaboratively. The teaching is adapted extremely well to the ages, needs and interests of the pupils, enabling pupils of all abilities to flourish. The pupils also receive excellent teaching in Spanish of language and humanities. The teaching provides helpful feedback to pupils, but the marking of pupils' work is, at times, not rigorous enough and pupils rarely respond to teachers' written comments for development. The topic-based curriculum provides plenty of exciting and interesting learning activities and is supplemented by a good range of extra-curricular activities which broaden pupils' educational experiences.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal, social and emotional skills develop rapidly. In accordance with the school's aims, the excellent pastoral care helps pupils to develop self-confidence and a willingness to contribute to their local community. Pupils behave well throughout the school, and relationships at all levels are excellent. Older pupils enjoy carrying out responsibilities, and all pupils are keen to extend friendship and to help new pupils settle into the school. The mix of nationalities and languages helps pupils to develop excellent cultural knowledge and understanding for their age. Pupils feel very safe in school, reflecting the strong emphasis placed on their welfare, health and safety. The school's safeguarding arrangements are extremely thorough.
- 2.3 The King's Group Board and Council maintain thorough and well-informed oversight, ensuring that the school meets its aims and that leaders fulfil their responsibilities. They ensure that the pupils have access to well-maintained facilities, a wide range of learning resources, and teaching staff who are well qualified. Excellent leadership at all levels ensures clear educational direction and effective implementation of the school's policies. Highly effective training for middle leaders has helped them to develop leadership skills and resulted in the introduction of new initiatives which have had a positive impact on pupils' progress and strengthened the school's links with parents, which are excellent. Following changes in the UK, leaders have implemented new procedures to keep track of pupils' progress, but these are not yet sufficiently developed to identify any diminution in the progress of particular classes or groups with precision. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire are pleased with the progress their children are making, the educational experiences offered by the school and the school's values. Although a very small minority expressed concerns about the information they receive about their children's progress, the support for pupils with SEND and homework, inspection findings did not support these concerns, especially as the school works extremely hard to involve parents in every facet of school life.

**2.(b) Action points**

**(i) Compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas**

(The range of the Standards for British Schools Overseas is given in the Preface)

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

**(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that the marking of pupils' work is rigorous and that pupils respond to teachers' comments and follow up the highlighted areas for development.
2. Ensure that the systems used to assess pupils' long-term progress provide greater clarity about the quality of teaching and progress of particular groups of pupils.



### **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. Pupils are educated extremely well in line with the school's aims as they develop independent learning skills, positive attitudes, self-confidence, creativity and fluency in the use of the English language.
- 3.2 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be broadly in line with the age-related expectations for pupils in maintained schools in the UK by the end of Year 2. In addition, pupils acquire competence in the Spanish language and an understanding of Spanish history, geography and science which is well above the level expected for pupils of their age attending Spanish schools. These achievements indicate a good breadth of attainment and represent excellent progress from starting points which, in many cases, are well below the expected level of development for children in the UK when they start in the Nursery. These low starting points reflect the fact that most children join the school having little or no understanding of English and, frequently, having had little pre-school social interaction with children of their own age. Progress in acquiring an understanding of spoken English and in their personal, social and emotional development is rapid throughout the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils are extremely well equipped for their transfer to King's College School La Moraleja or King's College Soto de Viñuelas, the two schools to which the vast majority of pupils transfer. Progress is equally rapid for those with SEND, who receive additional support before school starts in the morning or within the classroom, and for the most able pupils who are provided with additional challenging tasks. All of the parents who responded to the questionnaire are pleased with the progress their children are making.
- 3.3 The school's assessment system demonstrates convincingly that, from the initial assessment when pupils enter the school to the final assessment when they leave, pupils make excellent progress. This judgement was corroborated during the inspection through inspectors' observation of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils. However, whilst pupils' progress towards end-of-year goals is assessed each half term, the information collected does not yet provide a sufficiently clear analysis of progress during the course of the year. This would enable the school to identify more clearly any dips in progress in a particular class or year group or differences in progress between different groups of pupils.
- 3.4 Pupils make excellent progress in learning English. Their understanding of the spoken language develops rapidly in the Nursery and Reception so that, by the time they start Year 1, pupils have an excellent understanding for their age of instructions and explanations spoken in English by their teachers. Pupils' ability to speak in extended sentences follows more slowly, but the individual words and short sentences spoken by children in the Nursery develop into an ability to communicate clearly and thoughtfully by the end of Year 2. Pupils also make excellent progress in developing their reading and writing skills, aided by daily reading practice, either at home or with assistants in school, and many opportunities to write during lessons. Pupils' ability to spell words correctly improves enormously as a result of daily phonics (the sounds made by letters) lessons. At the same time, they make excellent progress in learning to read and write in Spanish.
- 3.5 Pupils also make excellent progress in developing and applying their mathematical skills and in their use of information and communication technology (ICT). They learn

correct mathematical terminology in English, so that pupils in Year 2 confidently add and subtract two-digit numbers, solve problems using multiplication and division, recognise and write simple fractions and identify the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes. They apply their mathematical understanding when calculating what coins to use to purchase items from a shop, showing an awareness of both European euros and British pounds. They handle tablet computers with expertise and great dexterity, for example, as they speed through the various screens of a program to help reinforce multiplication skills or calculate the value of a set of coins. Even children in the nursery use the electronic smartboards and tablet computers intuitively, not only taking photographs on the latter, but zooming in and out to frame the best picture.

- 3.6 Pupils' creativity is evident throughout the school. Children in Reception and the Nursery demonstrate vivid imaginations as they create different endings or reinterpret stories such as *The Gruffalo* or *The Gingerbread Man*. Older pupils display creative flair in their artwork, pupils in Year 1, for example, producing imaginative recreations of the northern lights. Pupils' physical skills also develop well, as indoor physical education (PE) lessons help them to develop co-ordination by climbing and negotiating different types of apparatus, while outdoor PE lessons help them to develop ball skills, when playing tennis or football.
- 3.7 At this age, pupils' extra-curricular achievements are not extensive, but the majority of pupils gain further experience beyond the school's formal curriculum in a range of activities such as football, chess, ballet, skating, swimming, judo, Chinese or learning to play the piano or violin.
- 3.8 The pupils develop excellent attitudes to learning. From the Nursery onwards, they show great interest in class, aided by the lively and engaging presentation of the teachers and assistants, and carefully structured group work which helps them to remain focused. By the time pupils leave the school, they demonstrate the ability to concentrate, to listen carefully to their teachers and other pupils, and to work sensibly on their own or collaboratively with a partner or small group of pupils. From the many opportunities for child-initiated learning in the Nursery and Reception, pupils develop an inner confidence and independence, characteristics which are fostered in Years 1 and 2 as teachers encourage them to think through problems and difficulties themselves before seeking help from the teacher. The school as a whole is characterised by an infectious enthusiasm, a sense of great joy and friendliness, and obvious enjoyment of the new learning experiences which each day brings.

**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, including community links of benefit to pupils, is excellent. The school offers a curriculum which meets the school's mission to provide a high-quality British education.
- 3.10 The curriculum provides pupils of all ages and aptitudes with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic, and creative education. In addition to all English National Curriculum subjects, including personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), it also delivers significant elements of the Spanish curriculum within the timetable, thereby meeting Spanish regulatory requirements and making excellent provision for the large numbers of pupils with Spanish as their first language, as well as supporting pupils for whom Spanish is not a first language. The curriculum takes into account the needs of pupils

of all ages. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the pupils are offered an appropriate range of subjects and areas of experience.

- 3.11 The varied, interesting and challenging curriculum helps the pupils to make rapid progress and reach the UK-expected levels of development by the end of Year 2. In the early years, there is an excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning activities, both inside and outdoors. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 also benefit from child-initiated learning opportunities. Most subjects are taught by class teachers, although the curriculum is enhanced by specialist teaching in music, PE and Spanish. Although a few parents did not feel the school provides worthwhile help for pupils with SEND, the inspection found that pupils with SEND get a particularly good start to their education. Committed staff focus on their individual needs by providing extra support or resources, by teaching them in small groups on specific aspects they are finding difficult, and by working closely with their families. More able pupils are identified, and their learning is extended appropriately within the classroom, in 'stretch-and-challenge' groups, extended homework projects and small-group teaching which look at more challenging texts.
- 3.12 The pupils' learning is enhanced by the use of cross-curricular topics, such as *My City My World*, *Inventors*, *Explorers* and *Poles Apart*, through which pupils explore issues such as global warming, produce pieces of art and study the history, geography and science of the region. High-quality displays around the school support learning and are testimony to the breadth of the curriculum and to the pupils' enthusiasm and success in their learning, both in the classroom and in extra-curricular visits to local farms, museums, castles and botanical gardens. ICT is used well to enhance and support the pupils' learning across the curriculum, and themed events such as Chinese New Year, Carnival Merienda, Diwali, Halloween and *Alice in Wonderland* Week enrich the pupils' experience further. Pupils' musical abilities are fostered effectively by the opportunities provided to play a musical instrument.
- 3.13 Pupils benefit from strong links with the local community, including visits from the local fire station and the police. Every two weeks, a class visits a home for the elderly to sing, weave, paint or dance. Pupils' horizons are extended, and their understanding of the needs of others enhanced, by their generous charity collections to support a number of Madrid-based and international charities.
- 3.14 The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. A recommendation from the previous inspection was that the school should enhance extra-curricular provision to include more team sports and a wider variety of provision for singing. This has been addressed by rearranging the timetable on Friday afternoons to introduce team sports such as football, hockey and netball, as well as mindfulness, well-being and yoga. Inter-house competitions also provide opportunities for team competition. Singing has been introduced into more school assemblies, with the addition of timetabled music lessons for every class and opportunities to sing to the elderly at their local 'residencia'. The school provides opportunities for them to pursue their interests in activities such as ballet, football, judo and chess. A minority of parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire feel that the costs of extra-curricular activities are too high. Although the majority of pupils participate in at least one extra-curricular activity, inspection findings indicate that the charges deter pupils from participating in a wider variety of activities.

**3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is excellent. Throughout the school, the teaching is highly effective in promoting pupils' progress and achievement, enabling them to work towards reaching their full potential in accordance with the school's aim to strive to achieve consistently outstanding educational results for all pupils.
- 3.16 The teaching throughout the school is consistently enthusiastic and often imaginative, cultivating extremely positive attitudes to learning and contributing to high levels of achievement. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They have a highly productive rapport with their teachers, and all lessons are characterised by an air of mutual respect. As a result of positive encouragement and rewards, pupils remain focused, and exemplary behaviour is the norm.
- 3.17 The teachers' comprehensive subject knowledge is used well to promote pupils' progress, as exemplified in a Spanish natural sciences lesson in Year 2 in which the teaching enabled pupils to succeed in rapidly learning the key differences between types of animal and the characteristics of living things. Teachers and learning assistants are knowledgeable about how young children learn and what they can achieve, and they have high expectations for all pupils. They are excellent role models for both learning and behaviour. Skilled learning assistants are deployed effectively and support the pupils' learning well. Interactive whiteboards are used imaginatively, as seen in a highly entertaining Spanish lesson in Reception where pupils were completely engrossed in following two cartoon letter characters, singing songs, drawing letters and making rapid progress in their learning of the Spanish language.
- 3.18 The well-resourced indoor and outdoor classrooms enable calm, purposeful play throughout the school and allow a wide variety of teaching methods to be employed. Lesson time is managed well, and lessons run at a brisk pace.
- 3.19 Appropriate, detailed planning and regular assessments, including photographic records, enable individual next steps to be set and contribute to the pupils' rapid progress. The pupils' interests are given consideration, and child-initiated learning time ensures that pupils, from the youngest upwards, are motivated to explore, play imaginatively, solve problems and work independently. The teaching interests, engages and motivates the pupils to be inquisitive learners and sets firm foundations for future learning.
- 3.20 The needs of pupils with SEND are met with sensitivity and understanding within the classroom, and teachers successfully adapt work to meet all individual needs. Well-planned before-school special classes, carefully targeted learning support within and outside the classroom, and the use of detailed individual education plans (IEPs) ensure that these pupils make excellent progress in relation to their abilities.
- 3.21 The marking of pupils' work is regular and appropriate for the ages of the pupils. However, some of the marking is merely cursory, and common errors and spelling mistakes of key vocabulary that are within pupils' reach are not always corrected. Teachers frequently identify how pupils might improve their work or provide them with some advice, but rarely follow up to see if pupils have acted on their comments.
- 3.22 The assessment of progress during lessons is excellent. Teachers use the information they gain from observing, photographing and questioning pupils to inform their planning for individual needs. They challenge the more able suitably and expect more of them through effective ability grouping within lessons, 'stretch-and-challenge' groups and reading extension activities for higher-ability readers. Good work, rewards

and achievements are often shared instantaneously with parents via the school's online interactive rewards system.

## **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. The school successfully fulfils its aims to create a caring, supportive culture inside and outside the classroom, to foster self-confidence and a sense of responsibility, and to develop values such as integrity, tolerance, honesty, open-mindedness and kindness. Evidence of the importance the school places on educating the whole child is seen in many of the displays around the school and in the way staff interact with the pupils and constantly reinforce the school's key values.
- 4.2 Pupils demonstrate an emerging awareness of the importance of faith and religious belief. During the inspection, for example, pupils in Year 1 showed great respect and interest when they visited a local church and were fully aware that they were entering a place which has special significance for many people. As they move through the school, pupils develop respect for the feelings of others and become increasingly thoughtful in their behaviour. When minor problems arise, they show a willingness to reflect on their actions and to resolve them peacefully and amicably. They show fascination in learning about others and the world around them, and a concern to act in ways which help to protect the natural world. They enjoy using imagination and creativity in their learning.
- 4.3 The pupils' moral development is excellent. They understand the difference between right and wrong and try hard to apply this understanding in their own lives. The overall standard of behaviour throughout the school is excellent and helps to create a positive learning environment in which all can learn and make progress. Occasional lapses in behaviour are quickly resolved, and pupils understand that their choices and their actions have consequences. Even though they are very young, they are already developing an excellent awareness of moral and ethical issues. Some pupils in Year 1, for example, became quite upset when they learnt how human actions are having an adverse impact on the natural environment and threatening the lives of animals in the polar regions. They understand the school's core values, which are on prominent display throughout the school, and which reflect values that are fundamental to the British way of life and to life in other civilised countries.
- 4.4 The pupils' social development is excellent. From the earliest age, pupils respond extremely well to the school's efforts to develop good social habits, such as taking turns, listening to others and working collaboratively. Older pupils co-operate extremely well with each other and with their teachers. Pupils demonstrate good manners in lessons and around the school. They are particularly kind, thoughtful and welcoming towards new pupils, some of whom speak neither English nor Spanish, but who settle quickly into school life because of the friendly nature of the school. The pupils demonstrate a mature sense of responsibility, undertaking a variety of jobs within the classroom with diligence or eagerly fulfilling positions of responsibility, such as that of house captain. They are developing a strong awareness of those who are less fortunate than themselves or who face difficult circumstances. Collections for charity involve pupils thinking actively about how they might help others, such as donating some of their own toys. Every two weeks, classes take it in turns to visit adults in an old people's day-care centre; those who visited during the inspection did so with great sensitivity and impeccable behaviour, bringing joy, and tears, to those they visited as they completed paintings and danced for them.
- 4.5 The pupils' cultural development is excellent for their age. The pupils gain excellent insights into both British and Spanish cultures and, through their celebration of

different festivals, into other cultures around the world. Pupils mix naturally with those who come from a wide range of nationalities, and form firm bonds and friendships. They show genuine interest in finding out how others live and about their backgrounds and cultural differences. They enjoy learning about artists from around the world exploring global issues through their half-termly topics and discovering other languages. More than 20 pupils, for example, are learning Chinese as an extra-curricular activity.

- 4.6 Throughout the school, pupils make great strides in their personal development and are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education which, for the large majority, follows on seamlessly in one of the other two King's Group schools in Madrid.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent. The staff provide outstanding pastoral support and guidance for all pupils, fostering their personal development extremely well in line with the school's aim to promote and sustain a safe, caring, supportive culture inside and outside the classroom.

- 4.8 The arrangements for the care of pupils, based upon the class teacher, are clear and effective. Most parents answering the pre-inspection questionnaire reported high levels of satisfaction with the care given to their children. Pupils say that staff are kind and supportive and that they happily refer to their class teachers if they need to seek help. Class teachers throughout the school know their pupils well, and relationships between pupils and teachers are positive, warm and friendly. Pupils of all ages show care and consideration to each other. New pupils starting at the school during the inspection were observed to settle extremely quickly and confidently. Pupils moving up in the school or on to the next stage in their education benefit from extensive and rigorous transition arrangements.

- 4.9 The school has clear and effective behaviour and anti-bullying policies. In their PSHCE lessons, pupils are taught about the benefits of exercise and healthy eating; making relationships and playing co-operatively, showing sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, resolving arguments and resisting bullying. The high level of sensitive and caring supervision and the effectiveness of the moral and social education mean that bullying is not an issue at this school. Staff use a well-established computerised system frequently during lessons to record instances when pupils have displayed positive attitudes, shown care for others, undertaken some responsibility or produced good work. Parents have live, online access to this computerised system to see how their children are progressing during the school day.

- 4.10 The school's positive behaviour policies and procedures for rewards and sanctions are clear and are applied effectively, and excellent behaviour was observed throughout the school. Most pupils were seen to respond to the first warning given to them. The few instances of poor behaviour are logged on a computerised system so that any emerging patterns for pupils can be spotted and acted upon. Time allocated to 'family groups' in the early years also provides a valuable opportunity for children to talk, share and celebrate their successes in small, calm groups.

- 4.11 The school's procedures to safeguard pupils and to ensure their welfare, health and safety are excellent. Safeguarding arrangements are overseen by a designated safeguarding lead (DSL), a senior member of staff who has a thorough understanding of how to deal with local agencies and keeps careful records of any concerns. Other senior staff have been trained as deputy DSLs to the same advanced level, so that there is always somebody at hand should the DSL be away from school. The school's practice is guided by a comprehensive safeguarding policy which is reviewed at least

annually and reflects current best practice. Every member of staff receives a thorough induction into safeguarding procedures on joining the school, and training is updated at the start of the school year and at regular intervals thereafter. Staff are very clear about what to do if they have a concern about pupils or if an allegation is made against a member of staff. A new system for recording concerns has been introduced, and this gives staff a much clearer overview than before of patterns of behaviour or other issues which might be affecting a pupil's welfare. Pupils know to whom they should turn if they have a concern, and helpful posters with pictures of relevant members of staff are posted throughout the school.

- 4.12 The school takes all necessary measures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. An external specialist company has undertaken a detailed analysis of the school buildings and grounds to assess fire risks, thus fulfilling national requirements for fire safety. The same company monitors and services the school's fire extinguishers, fire alarms and monitoring systems. All staff have received training in what to do in case of a fire or other emergency which necessitates the evacuation of the building. In addition, a number of staff have received further training from the fire brigade in how to extinguish fires. Pupils also know what to do in case of emergency. Fire drills are held once or twice each term, the latest drill being conducted speedily and with great efficiency.
- 4.13 Thorough attention is given to health and safety. Health and safety experts from the King's Group central services team visit the school regularly and tour the school site to identify any health and safety risks. Any concerns that are spotted by school staff are dealt with quickly, either by the school's own personnel or by external contractors. Risk assessments are undertaken for all areas of the school and for any unusual activities, particularly those which take place off the school site. These are subject to careful scrutiny. The school site is secure, and no person is able to gain unauthorised access.
- 4.14 Provision for pupils who are ill or injured or who have any particular medical needs is excellent. The school has an appropriately equipped area to use for pupils who are sick or injured. Every member of staff has undertaken paediatric first aid training, and a number of staff are also trained in the use of a defibrillator. Medicines are labelled, stored and administered appropriately, and records are kept. Accidents are also carefully recorded and parents are notified if there are any concerns. Necessary support is provided for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and, through the use of a centrally located lift, all areas of the school are accessible to disabled pupils.
- 4.15 Close attention is given to pupils' nutrition. Pupils are provided with healthy and nutritious lunches, and arrangements for meeting the needs of those who have particular dietary requirements or allergies are excellent. Although outdoor and indoor space for physical activity is limited, the school provides plenty of opportunity for physical exercise. Breaks in the morning, after lunch and, for most pupils, in the afternoon are sufficiently long to enable pupils to engage in physical activity. Each class has three lessons a week for physical education, and a number of physical activities are available as after-school extra-curricular activities. Children in the nursery have an hour-long siesta each day. Topics relating to healthy eating and the importance of exercise are covered regularly in pupils' PSHCE lessons.
- 4.16 The school's admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and stored.



## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent. Responsibilities for governance lie with the King's Group Board, its chief executive officer and the School Council. Their respective roles are clearly defined and result in highly effective oversight of the school, in line with the aims of the King's Group, and effective discharge of their responsibilities. Financial investment since the previous inspection has resulted in improvements to the playground areas and the creation of a Spanish teaching room, and has ensured that buildings and grounds are well maintained and attractively presented. Although space is at a premium, all areas of the school are used effectively. The Board has ensured that the school is well resourced and has a full complement of appropriately trained and qualified staff to meet the needs of the pupils. It has invested heavily, and to good effect, in the training and ongoing professional development of the staff.
- 5.2 Through regular contact with the chief executive officer and reports from the headteacher and other senior staff, the Board and the Council have an excellent insight into the working of the school. They are effective in exercising their monitoring role and holding leaders to account for the school's performance, the standards achieved and the quality of education provided. By ensuring that those appointed to the Board or the Council have a wide range of expertise and experience, and by buying in the advice of other professionals, governance ensures excellent support for the school's leadership. Involvement with other schools within the King's Group provides a further source of support and stimulus for growth and improvement.
- 5.3 Through its chief executive officer, who assumes overall responsibility for safeguarding for the Group, and through the work of staff from its central services team who have particular expertise, the Board is effective in discharging its responsibilities for child protection and for welfare, health and safety. It ensures that there are appropriate procedures for checking the suitability of staff.

### **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management**

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management is excellent. Leaders at all levels are highly effective in discharging their responsibilities and fulfilling the school's aim to provide engaging and effective teaching and learning. They have not only maintained the high quality of education reported at the time of the previous inspection but also continued to seek ways to improve through the implementation of new initiatives, such as new schemes for the teaching of writing and the development of pupils' reading skills. They have enhanced the curriculum through the introduction of more cross-curricular themed days, the teaching of specialist music and better provision for sport for pupils in Years 1 and 2, the latter two initiatives fulfilling the recommendation from the previous inspection. Through their regular monitoring of pupils' work, leaders have taken steps to ensure that the school's marking policy is implemented consistently by all staff, indicating to pupils where their work has been successful and pointing out areas for development. Staff are, indeed, consistent in the way they implement the scheme, but are not yet rigorous enough in following up the areas for development which they have highlighted at the end of most pieces of work. Since changes have been introduced in the UK to the system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, the school has worked hard to adapt its own assessment systems. However, although the day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is excellent, the overall tracking

system is not yet sufficiently refined to provide a clear picture of pupils' progress term by term.

- 5.5 Leaders at all levels provide staff with clear educational direction and motivate them to give of their best. They are self-critical and constantly seeking ways to improve the quality of education and pupils' progress. These are outlined in a detailed school development plan, which is reviewed regularly to ensure that new initiatives are having a positive impact. A key feature of the school's leadership has been the school's commitment to developing leadership skills amongst the staff. In recent years, at least six members of staff have undertaken extensive training to take on senior and middle leadership roles. As part of the training, staff have had to research, plan, implement and then evaluate specific projects designed to enhance pupils' education. Projects that they have implemented thus far include the introduction of 'Parenting School', special sessions for small groups of pupils, and new ways of introducing writing topics including greater use of new technology. These have been highly successful and have had a positive impact on pupils' learning. Leaders have not only devised successful projects but have enthused other staff and pupils as well. In their response to the questionnaire, the vast majority of parents feel that the school is well run, a view strongly supported by the inspection team.
- 5.6 The school's leaders have been successful in recruiting and retaining well-qualified and highly capable staff and have created an excellent ethos within the school in which staff are highly supportive of each other. A great sense of teamwork is evident, not just amongst the teachers, but amongst the learning assistants, the work-placement students, the administrative, catering and maintenance staff, all of whom know the pupils well and make an excellent contribution to their learning, progress and personal development. All new staff receive a thorough induction before they join the school and so are well prepared for the challenges that face them. The opportunities for professional development are excellent. All staff attend a professional development weekend organised by the King's Group. Staff attend relevant courses during the year, and staff meetings also include further opportunities for professional development. Staff feel that the appraisal process helps them to develop their teaching practice, as does the openness which exists between colleagues, who feel free to see what is going on in other classrooms and so improve their own teaching practice.
- 5.7 The leadership and management of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety are excellent and all leaders are suitably trained in their roles. Although overall responsibility as designated safeguarding lead lies with one person, all members of the senior leadership team have been trained to the same level, illustrating the school's commitment to ensuring a safe environment for all pupils. Induction training for new staff and update training in safeguarding for all staff are thorough, and the school ensures it uses acknowledged experts to carry out the training. The leadership reviews policies and procedures regularly to ensure that they are fit for purpose. In the past, not all checks on the suitability of staff had been carried out in a timely manner. However, the school had identified prior to the inspection where split responsibilities could have caused this to happen and had taken the necessary corrective action. The current register of appointments shows that all necessary checks have been carried out for every member of staff and governors. A rigorous system, which ensures there are no loopholes, has already been implemented, and staff responsible for carrying out pre-appointment checks have a thorough understanding of what is required.

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

- 5.8 The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent. The school takes considerable care to communicate effectively with parents, involve them in the life of the school and maintain constructive relationships with them. Parents have a close involvement with the school and have many opportunities to visit and join in the school events. The school website provides much useful information about the school and the admissions process, and a useful prospectus shares with parents the school's aims and ethos. Most parents reported in the questionnaire that they are highly satisfied with the information provided for them by the school, including information about the school's policies, and that they can communicate easily with the school. A contact book, parent planner, parent portal and online social media sites are particularly well used to share photographs and highlight the pupils' many achievements, and the social and educational events that occur. Parents also benefit from a monthly newsletter and whole-school blog, which incorporates individual class blogs, showing class photos of visits, achievements, news, dates and events.
- 5.9 The school's open-door policy ensures that parents are made extremely welcome in the school at any time. Parents of pupils have numerous opportunities to be involved in the life of the school, whether accompanying pupils on trips and visits, attending parents' information evenings, 'Parenting School' and settling-in evenings, the hugely popular half-termly 'meriendas', school productions and concerts. Charitable fund-raising events organised by the school are well supported by parents. 'Parenting School' is a weekly workshop for parents and grandparents with courses given in both English and Spanish on a diverse range of parenting issues and topics. These have included topics such as strategies for teaching mathematics, body image, eating disorders, mental health and well-being, behaviour management and developing reading. These workshops have provided invaluable advice and support to parents, increased lines of communication and created a greater understanding for parents of the workings of the school, the British curriculum and how to look after their children.
- 5.10 All necessary information, including policies and procedures, is posted on the school website and parent portal, and parents of pupils or prospective pupils are provided with extensive and relevant information about the school.
- 5.11 A few parents stated in the pre-inspection questionnaire that they are not satisfied with the information provided about their children's progress. The inspection judges that the reporting system in the school is thorough and the school takes all reasonable steps to ensure that parents are informed. Two formal parents' evenings are arranged for the first and last term along with a middle term 'book-look' attended by pupils, parents and teachers. The three reports sent out per year are detailed and informative, and highlight pupils' targets and next steps. Appointments to speak to staff are easily arranged, all staff are readily available both before and after school and are also available for discussion after parents receive reports.
- 5.12 Parents receive highly effective support in their children's transition from year group to year group within the school as well as to the next stage of their education with the provision of 'transition days' and 'transition evenings'. Pre-nursery-aged children are also welcomed into the school for several weeks to become used to their new environment before they start in the Nursery.
- 5.13 The very large majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school handles well any concerns that they may have. The small number of concerns that arise are dealt with swiftly, informally and sensitively. The school has

a clear and appropriate complaints procedure, and the very few formal complaints have been dealt with speedily and satisfactorily.

## **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 chief executive officer, 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 to the pre-inspection questionnaire were analysed, and the inspectors examined documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mr Graham Sims

Reporting Inspector

Mr Mark Albini

Team Inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school, UK)