



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS**

**INSPECTION REPORT ON  
THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF GRAN CANARIA**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

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Director	<b>Mr Julian Clark</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mrs Araceli Dominguez Perez</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 18</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>549</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (265 boys; 284 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>3-5: 77      5-11: 248 11-18: 224</b>
Inspection dates	<b>23 Feb 2012 to 24 Feb 2012 20 Mar 2012 to 23 Mar 2012</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 May 2006.

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.

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 The British School of Gran Canaria aims to provide pupils of all nationalities from the ages of three to eighteen with an education and cultural background based on British standards. It seeks to prepare them confidently for adult life in an atmosphere in which they feel secure and happy and in which they can develop relationships based on co-operation and mutual respect. The international flavour of the school is intended to promote tolerance and understanding. The school is owned by an organisation called the British School Association, which elects members to the board of governors. The board of governors delegates the day-to-day running of the school to the director.
- 1.2 The school was established in 1966 in Tafira, a rural location in the north east of Gran Canaria on the edge of Las Palmas. It moved to its current site, also in Tafira, in 1969 to accommodate its growth, and consisted of a primary and a secondary school. The school acquired a separate primary school in El Tablero in the south of the island, in 1998. Pupils from the South school are guaranteed a secondary school place in Tafira.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, the South school has moved to new, purpose-built accommodation in Maspalomas. The current director of the school took up his post in January 2012. A new chair of governors was appointed in February 2012. The senior management team has been restructured, and a new tier of middle management has been established in the secondary school.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, 549 pupils were on roll, including 265 boys and 284 girls. Of the 248 pupils in the two primary schools, 77 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children up to the age of five. The sixth form had 53 pupils. The school has identified 37 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and they receive specialist learning support. Of the 540 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), 4 receive specific language support.
- 1.5 The ability profile of the primary schools overall is slightly below the British national average, with a fairly wide spread of abilities represented. The ability profiles of the secondary school and of the sixth form are broadly in line with the British national average. Over nine-tenths of the pupils are native Spanish speakers, the remainder coming from many different ethnic groups and a variety of economic backgrounds. Pupils travel varying distances to school.
- 1.6 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 fully meets its aims of providing pupils of all nationalities with an education based on British standards and of preparing them confidently for adult life in an atmosphere in which they feel secure and happy. Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims and make good progress from the EYFS through to the sixth form. They benefit from a demanding curriculum and especially from its bilingual nature, most subjects being taught in English and a few in Spanish. They are highly articulate and confident, and their work is well organised. They contribute freely to discussion and express their views cogently and with conviction. Pupils work effectively both independently and in co-operation with others. Their attitudes to learning are excellent. The quality of teaching is good.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent. Their understanding of the world around them and their respect for other cultures are outstanding features. They are creative in their art and music, sensitive and positive in their personal relationships, and exceptionally supportive of each other. Pupils in the primary schools benefit from a pastoral care system in which form teachers are able to give considerable individual attention to each of them. Pupils take responsibility seriously, especially in the primary schools, while at all stages they show a concern for the outside community. Older pupils are involved locally in voluntary social work. Arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good and contribute well to pupils' personal development. In response to the previous inspection report, the school has introduced risk assessments for outside trips, as well as implementing child protection training for all staff and making the welfare, health and safety policies widely available.
- 2.3 Governance is satisfactory overall, reflecting the governors' strong commitment to the school. However, recruitment checks on governors are not robust. Whilst leadership and management are good, the definition of senior and middle management roles remains unclear, the monitoring of teaching and learning is not sufficiently rigorous, and the integration of the South school with the Tafira schools is in its early stages. Since the previous inspection, a greater level of curriculum planning has been undertaken, and assessment, while still uneven, has become more effective. In addition, there is now a suitable complaints procedure. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed overwhelming satisfaction with the school in most respects, especially its values and pastoral support, and the standard of their children's behaviour and progress in English, voicing significant concern in respect of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the quality of communication from the school. Inspectors found no evidence to support these criticisms. A number of pupils in their questionnaire expressed the opinion that the school does not listen to their views. Inspection evidence did not support this view.

## **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:

- implement all checks on members of the governing body on appointment [Part 4, paragraph 4.6, under Suitability of staff and proprietors, and, for the same reason, Part 3, paragraph 3.2, under Welfare, health and safety].

### **(ii) Recommendations 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 improvements.

1. Draw up a strategic plan that will in particular support the further integration of the two primary schools.
2. Clarify roles and responsibilities of senior and middle management posts in order to improve the effectiveness of delegation.
3. Strengthen existing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching, to ensure appropriate challenges for the most able pupils.



### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

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

##### ***Whole School***

- 3.1 The overall quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills in all sections of the school is good.

##### ***Primary Schools***

- 3.2 Pupils of all abilities are well educated in accordance with the school's aims. Their speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills are well developed. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their tasks with each other, collaborating successfully in group and paired activities as well as working independently and thinking for themselves. They are highly articulate and confident, as seen in an English lesson in which pupils participated eagerly in discussion and enjoyed using facial expressions to explain vocabulary.
- 3.3 Pupils demonstrate effective information and communication technology (ICT) skills by incorporating a range of techniques into their work, for example using a spreadsheet with considerable facility. Pupils show good numeracy skills, for example when handling data and using tally charts. Creative skills can be seen in the wide range of displays that celebrate pupils' written work and art, for example at Tafira, stimulating presentations on Klimt and ocean life, and at the South school, high quality creative writing and artwork on rainforests. Pupils in both primary schools take a great pride in the presentation of their work. They engage in many physical activities that promote well-being and team spirit. Good organisational abilities were displayed in the Nursery when children dressed up as 'mini-beasts' and used magnifying glasses to look at natural objects. Pupils used cutting and threading skills effectively in an extra-curricular art and design project.
- 3.4 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in English national tests, but on the evidence available it is judged to be good in relation to English national age-related expectations. Inspection evidence, as assessed through lesson observation, pupils' written work and curriculum interviews with them, confirms this level of attainment, which, as judged, indicates that pupils make good progress overall in relation to pupils of similar ability, especially as the majority have English as an additional language. This was demonstrated well in a lesson for children in the EYFS, where they were offering verbal prompts for the identification of an onion. On leaving the primary schools, most pupils proceed to the secondary school.
- 3.5 Pupils work effectively on their own and with others. Their behaviour is good except in lessons in which the pace of teaching is slow and classroom management is not effective. Pupils are usually very quick to settle and apply themselves to their lessons. They are keen and well motivated, and they enjoy their work and activities. They have excellent attitudes to their learning and they experience good relationships. Pupils concentrate well and work in an atmosphere of purposeful endeavour.

### **Secondary School**

- 3.6 Pupils are well educated in line with the school's aims. Their overall achievement is good. They succeed particularly in developing speaking and listening skills, a strong achievement as the vast majority of pupils have English as an additional language. They are eager to articulate opinions and contribute freely and valuably to discussions. They listen well to each other, and are able to develop and challenge ideas. In a sixth-form French lesson, pupils showed a high level of oral ability and handled humour very well in a foreign language. Pupils show good understanding of previously learned material and of subject-specific vocabulary. Their creative skills are strong, as seen in work on metaphor poems and in examination coursework for art. Other displays of artwork around the school are of an exceptionally high standard.
- 3.7 Information and communication technology skills are well developed. Homework promotes effective independent thinking skills and pupils' use of their initiative. Year 9 pupils successfully take part in the British Science Association CREST Awards initiative, a project-based scheme for science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and recently presented their experiment to an engrossed audience of pupils and staff using well-constructed presentations for the bronze award. Pupils also successfully compete in local Spanish and English language competitions. Pupils achieve at a high level in sport, including representing the Canary Islands in swimming.
- 3.8 The following analysis uses the English national data for the years 2008 to 2010. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in the International GCSE (IGCSE) have been similar to the international average, and above the international average in languages. In the IGCSE in 2011, pupils achieved particularly high proportions of A\* or A and A\* to C grades in art and design, geography, first language Spanish and first language English. At A level over the three years from 2008 to 2010, results have been in line with the English national average for maintained schools. In 2008 and 2010, girls achieved a higher proportion of A\* and A grades than boys. This level of attainment indicates that pupils in Years 7 to 11 make good progress, and in the sixth form, appropriate progress, in relation to the average for pupils of similar ability, as shown by standardised measures of progress. The vast majority of pupils proceed to UK universities.
- 3.9 Pupils develop independence and organise their own learning. Pupils with EAL or SEND make good progress, and benefit from whole-school language activities, such as the spoken English initiative and the Year 12 mentoring scheme, in which sixth formers work closely with younger pupils to develop their language acquisition and provide academic and pastoral peer support.
- 3.10 Pupils demonstrate an eagerness to learn. They are supportive of each other and highly co-operative. They have positive attitudes to learning, and their behaviour is outstanding. In lessons they show perseverance, engagement and excellent skills in working together in groups. They listen intently to one another. Pupils celebrate their language skills and success. They are articulate, forthcoming, thoughtful and fair, at ease with themselves and their school environment.

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

#### ***Whole School***

- 3.11 The curriculum is of a good quality and suitable for all ages, abilities and needs, supporting the school's aim to provide an educational background based on British standards, that provides a wide range of physical, social, aesthetic and moral experiences to prepare pupils for adult life with confidence.

#### ***Primary Schools***

- 3.12 The curriculum is effective in its coverage and makes a significant contribution to the pupils' learning and achievements. In both primary schools, the curriculum is broad and balanced, ensuring that opportunities for the development of creative, academic and practical skills and learning are provided. In the EYFS both at Tafira and the South school, the curriculum supports the English six areas of learning and includes a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities. Through child-centred learning, provision is made for all abilities and developmental needs. Throughout the primary schools, pupils with SEND are effectively supported both within the classroom and when they are withdrawn for specialist support. However, provision for gifted and talented pupils is less consistent or effective. The curriculum is well planned and includes all the subjects taught in the English National Curriculum. The recent introduction of laptops for use in the classroom has allowed ICT to become more integrated into the curriculum. In response to a recommendation from the previous inspection, planning and assessment are more thorough and effective, areas of weakness have been identified and strategies have been used to improve teaching. A development plan exists for the primary curriculum.
- 3.13 All pupils have regular Spanish lessons. Pupils from Year 3 in Tafira benefit from specialist teaching in music and, in Year 4, in physical education by staff from the secondary school, which extends in Years 5 and 6 to include art, science, geography, history and Spanish. This ensures that pupils are better prepared for the transition to the secondary school. An induction day in the secondary school includes Year 6 pupils who are about to transfer from both primary schools; they benefit from a full day of lessons and activities, and an insight into secondary school life.
- 3.14 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is a strong feature of the school's curriculum, and helps pupils to become happy and conscientious members of a global community, while developing strong self-esteem and self-knowledge. A group assembly in the Nursery in the South school, focusing on friendship and on fear, showed excellent skills of co-operation amongst children within a caring and nurturing environment. At Tafira, PSHE in Years 1 to 6 has been further developed by the use of a commercial programme in weekly assemblies.
- 3.15 A suitable range of extra-curricular activities, including judo, football, ballet and drama, is provided after school. These enhance pupils' experiences, and help them develop intellectually and creatively. A range of thoughtfully planned and enjoyable visits supports many areas of the curriculum and adds to pupils' personal and academic development. Visits to concerts by the Philharmonic Orchestra of Gran Canaria, or to a local farm or wildlife park encourage links with the wider community and enrich the curriculum.

### ***Secondary School***

- 3.16 The curriculum is effective in providing a good range of subjects, covering the requisite areas of learning. The curriculum is taught almost exclusively in English, although pupils must also follow the Spanish national curriculum for language, literature and citizenship, which is supplemented by a discrete course in the sixth form to support those applying to Spanish universities. In addition to Spanish in Years 7 to 9, pupils follow a broad curriculum of 11 other subjects, including French or German. In Year 10, pupils are able to continue either history or geography to IGCSE, whilst business studies, music, art and physical education are introduced as options.
- 3.17 A broad range of subjects is offered at A level in the sixth form. In addition to Spanish, pupils take four subjects to AS level and continue with at least three of these to A2. The course includes complementary studies, designed to broaden pupils' experience through community service, PSHE and physical education. In interviews and in the pre-inspection questionnaire, pupils expressed a wish to see a greater range of subjects available. Inspectors found that the existing curriculum satisfactorily meets the aims of the school.
- 3.18 Personal, social and health education is taught in Years 7 to 9 and all pupils have a tutor period or assembly each week in which PSHE or other relevant topics, such as university entrance, are discussed. In addition, there are talks intended for particular year groups on topics such as healthy eating, drugs education, and internet and personal safety. Parents come to the school to give talks on careers. The sixth form benefits from regular visits from representatives of Spanish universities. An annual event is organised to introduce university entrance procedures to parents and pupils in Years 10 to 13.
- 3.19 Pupils with SEND are usually taught within their classes and sometimes withdrawn for additional individual tuition. They benefit from individual education plans which include details of how the curriculum is to be adapted to meet their needs. The needs of the most gifted and talented pupils are not always reflected in departmental schemes of work.
- 3.20 The varied extra-curricular programme includes a variety of sporting activities for individuals and teams, as well as chess, drama and calligraphy. Musical activities include an orchestra. Inter-school sporting fixtures take place. Pupils take part in local and international mathematics and science competitions that enhance their sense of achievement and their understanding of the place of those subjects in the wider world.

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

#### ***Whole School***

- 3.21 The quality of teaching is good overall.

#### ***Primary Schools***

- 3.22 The quality of teaching makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievements and learning. It enables the school to meet its aim to help pupils develop their full potential.
- 3.23 Teachers' subject knowledge overall is good. Teachers have an excellent rapport with their pupils in the majority of lessons. They know them well, understanding their

abilities, learning styles and personalities, and are able to plan activities that generally engage the interest of the pupils and meet their individual needs. A particular feature of the teaching is the complex and often technical language used by the teachers. They do not limit their use of language in spite of the majority of pupils having EAL, and constantly challenge and motivate the pupils to enhance and develop their language acquisition skills. A varied range of effective strategies is employed, including the use of appropriate visual aids, which are a common feature of many of the more successful lessons.

- 3.24 The majority of lessons seen were well paced and included practical activities. In a few cases where the pace was slow, pupils became disengaged and noisy. Teaching assistants play a significant part in the success of the pupils' learning and are deployed effectively and sensitively to support pupils with SEND. Excellent and appropriate assessment procedures have been introduced in the EYFS and are linked to baseline assessment in the Nursery. The EYFS is characterised by both teacher-led and child-led activity, which is reviewed on a weekly basis. Marking throughout both schools is at times informative and contributes well to pupils' understanding. However, it is inconsistent in both primary schools and pupils are not always given constructive comments, strategies for improvement or individual targets.
- 3.25 The school places a strong emphasis on measuring attainment and uses a good range of methods to assess and collate the progress of individual pupils. However, monitoring procedures, and the analysis of assessment data to ascertain the effectiveness of the school's provision to inform teachers of the next steps in learning, are still at an early stage of development. Both primary schools are well resourced and good use is made of the outdoor learning environment.

### ***Secondary School***

- 3.26 Teaching is energetic, tightly structured, varied and well planned. It fosters engagement, and it enables pupils to increase their knowledge and develop understanding of the subject. Resources are creatively used, despite the physical limitations of some classrooms, to ensure that lessons are conducive to learning and, as a result, pupils are motivated and develop well-rounded skills. Tasks set are appropriate, directly linked to learning objectives and enabling progress. There is a positive, calm and co-operative atmosphere in classrooms, and relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. In a minority of lessons observed, the pace was slow and the teaching ineffectual, lacking tasks that were appropriately matched to the pupils' needs and variety.
- 3.27 In the most successful lessons, teaching demonstrates detailed knowledge of pupils' abilities and learning styles. For example, in an English lesson, the tasks employed ensured that all pupils, including those with EAL, completed a challenging analytical essay. Effective lesson structure is another strong feature of successful teaching. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and confident. In geography, teaching raises pupils' awareness of their distinctive island environment. In a sixth-form French lesson, imaginative prompts by the teacher enabled pupils to debate and communicate effectively in the target language. Teaching is constructive and positive, and builds rapport. Teachers are aware of the linguistic diversity of their pupils.
- 3.28 Significant progress has been made since the previous inspection in the identification of pupils with SEND, and this has improved the quality of provision in class and where necessary through intervention programmes. Clear procedures

have been introduced. The learning support register identifies pupils' learning needs and strategies that are applied in the classroom. Targets are shared with pupils and parents. However, challenges for the most able pupils are not always sufficiently demanding or imaginative and so they make insufficient progress in relation to their ability.

- 3.29 The school has devised a clear marking and assessment policy, though it is not consistently implemented. Some marking is thorough and identifies clear targets for improvement, as seen in sixth-form English coursework. However, practice varies in quality. In some subjects, marking is cursory and unhelpful, and there is no evidence of assessment data being used to monitor the progress of individual pupils as they move through the school.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### ***Whole School***

- 4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including in the EYFS, is excellent. It fully supports the aim of the school to prepare pupils confidently for adult life in an environment where they feel happy and develop both tolerance and understanding through the international nature of the community.

#### ***Primary Schools***

- 4.2 Pupils' spiritual awareness is good. Pupils develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence through a culture of praise and encouragement both at Tafira and the South school, and they feel valued in the friendly atmosphere of the schools. They have a clear understanding of the world around them and are able to form opinions for themselves, for example at the South school when studying endangered species. At Tafira, younger pupils looked on with wonder and awe as they observed the melting of a large coloured ice ball in a science lesson. Pupils developed well their emotions and feelings by reflecting on bravery and compassion in an English lesson about the Titanic. In the South school, pupils' spiritual awareness of and respect for other beliefs are raised effectively through the study of other religions, and a pupils' wall celebrates any work completed outside school of which they are particularly proud, thus sustaining and reinforcing their feelings of self-esteem and self-confidence.
- 4.3 Pupils' moral awareness is excellent and they are able to distinguish between right and wrong from an early age. The 'golden rules' which are embedded from the EYFS throughout the primary schools ensure high standards of behaviour. Pupils fully respect and understand the need for school rules, judging them to be sensible and created for their well-being and safety. Through sporting and team ethics, pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of fair play. They show tolerance of others by making new pupils very welcome and warmly integrating them into the school community.
- 4.4 The pupils' social development is outstanding. From the earliest age they are courteous to adults and other pupils. They have a very strong commitment to fairness. Through the school council, the suggestion that girls be allowed time to use the football pitch on their own was collectively agreed. Those pupils on the school council take their responsibilities extremely seriously and act diligently to make improvements in school life. For example, they painted the play houses for the Nursery and Reception in bright colours to improve their appearance. Pupils both at Tafira and the South school also support local charities. In an assembly at Tafira, pupils listened attentively to a guest speaker from a local charity and a commitment was made to support the charity in a variety of ways, for example a non-uniform day to raise money.
- 4.5 The cultural awareness of pupils is excellent. Their cultural diversity invites discussion of different customs and beliefs, which are respected. They celebrate their own cultural traditions, for example during the Dia de Canarias when local artisans are invited to demonstrate local crafts, but also other festivals such as Diwali, Chinese New Year, Christmas and Halloween. At the South school, the introduction of the study of different faiths further enhances pupils' respect for and understanding of other cultures.

### ***Secondary School***

- 4.6 Although the curriculum includes no formal provision for religious education, pupils develop confidently in their recognition of the non-material aspects of the world, and in the quality of their personal relationships. Through activities including art and music, they grow in understanding of the impact of creativity in their lives, both as participants themselves and in their appreciation of the artistic achievements of others. Pupils are mature, sensitive and positive. They have an exceptional understanding of the value of difference, shown in their almost bilingual conversations and their delight in recognising and responding to each other's backgrounds. Their excellent personal development has been supported by assemblies during the year, which have included as themes the power of words to hurt, the meaning of Christmas, the value of healthy eating and the fragility of human relationships.
- 4.7 Pupils have an excellent moral awareness and a clear understanding of right and wrong. Their strong sense of justice encourages them to identify perceived inconsistency in the way that sanctions are sometimes administered. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They treat each other with respect and respond particularly well when treated in the same way in lessons. Pupils show considerable concern for each other, particularly older pupils for younger ones. A feature of the Tafira site is the sharing of pathways through the grounds, for example to reach the sports facilities, where pupils of all ages pass each other and an atmosphere of friendly familiarity prevails. Pupils have an extremely well-developed sense of society and social responsibility, but formal opportunities for them to exercise positions of responsibility and leadership within school are limited. Considerable energy goes into fund-raising activities for various charitable causes adopted by the school council. Sixth-form pupils voluntarily help in a nearby residential home for the elderly.
- 4.8 Pupils' cultural development is successfully fostered by a wide range of artistic and musical activities, as well as a programme of educational visits. Pupils show a strong respect for other cultures. Their unusual school environment enables them to leave as ambassadors for understanding between nations. In addition, they have a clear notion of the role of the Spanish contribution to the sweep of European history.

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

#### ***Whole School***

- 4.9 Good arrangements for welfare, health and safety make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development.
- 4.10 The school fulfils its aims to prepare pupils of all nationalities to be confident for adult life in an atmosphere in which they feel secure and happy, and to develop relationships based on co-operation and mutual respect. These aims contribute significantly to pupils' personal development.
- 4.11 Relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst pupils themselves, are excellent, including in the EYFS. This is a significant feature of the school. Respect and support for each other are evident in all areas of school life. Pupils are courteous and polite, and attentive towards visitors. In the EYFS, staff ensure that children are well cared for and encourage good welfare, health and safety routines. A form-based pastoral care system provides pupils in the primary schools with individual attention, which forms an essential element of the caring ethos. In the secondary school, the tutors' role is largely limited to administration. The



introduction of a 'buddy' system and 'friendship bench' encourages primary age pupils to look after and support each other. Secondary school pupils carry out mentoring roles, providing academic and pastoral support for primary pupils, and display responsible attitudes towards the younger pupils. Pupils are very supportive of their school community.

- 4.12 Successful and comprehensive procedures for promoting good behaviour are well established in the school, and reflected in the pupils' conduct. The school's anti-bullying policy sets out clear procedures for dealing effectively with any incidents. Satisfactory levels of supervision are ensured in the playgrounds. Pupils believe that bullying is rare and that any incidents are dealt with swiftly and appropriately.
- 4.13 Staff have high expectations of pupils, who know and understand what is expected of them. Pupil achievement and efforts are celebrated in the primary and secondary schools during weekly assemblies when merit certificates are awarded, for example for improvement, consistent effort and achievement. Primary and secondary pupils' successes are also recognised at the annual prize days. These celebrations of achievement support pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence well and demonstrate the high levels of care and interest shown by staff.
- 4.14 The school has a comprehensive safeguarding policy, with procedures that are clear and available to all staff, although its implementation in relation to recruitment checks on governors has not been robust in the past. At the time of the inspection there was no system to ensure that all staff had read and fully understood the policy and procedures. However, all staff are trained in child protection matters, a number having recently undergone further instruction.
- 4.15 Fire precautions have been recently reviewed and an annual independent assessment is now undertaken. Fire drills are carried out and recorded. Staff are trained in the use of fire extinguishers. Fire notices are placed around the school. Any potentially hazardous substances are safely secured in locked cupboards. Risk assessments are carried out for all school trips and visits. Medical facilities cater for pupils' needs effectively and all staff and sixth formers have undergone training in first aid, which is regularly updated. A healthy lifestyle is encouraged. Pupils enjoy participating in the variety of sports available to them. The quality of meals provided by the schools is variable. Pupils are taught about the dangers of smoking through the PSHE course.
- 4.16 Admissions and attendance registers are appropriately maintained and stored.

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

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

#### ***Whole School***

- 5.1 The quality of governance is satisfactory and contributes to the school's aim of providing an education and cultural background based on British standards.
- 5.2 Governors have a sound oversight of the work of the school, determine its financial strategy, and monitor investment in human and material resources and accommodation. The governing structure is supported by a number of committees that monitor specific areas of the school's operation more closely, including finance and school uniform. Governors bring a wide range of professional experience and personal knowledge of the school to their role.
- 5.3 Current induction procedures for governors are not extensive, though three governors have recently been trained in child protection awareness. Governors visit the school from time to time and support its cultural events. Direct contact with staff and pupils is limited. Regular monthly governors' meetings are held, the business focusing primarily on short- and medium-term objectives rather than longer-term strategic aims. Governors recognise the challenges posed by the administration of three schools on two sites fifty kilometres apart. They have a limited insight into the work and progress of pupils, including in the EYFS.
- 5.4 Governors are placing an increasing priority on safeguarding issues, although their oversight of the checks required for governor recruitment procedures is not sufficiently rigorous. One governor has taken on the responsibility for safeguarding, and an annual review of child protection and welfare, health and safety has recently been carried out by the full governing body.

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

#### ***Whole School***

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is good overall and reflects the aims of the school.
- 5.6 Leadership and management provide good educational direction in both primary schools, including in the EYFS, and in the secondary school, as seen in the high quality of the pupils' education and the excellent standard of their personal development. The ethos of the school, as reflected in the learning within the classrooms, the happiness of the pupils and the appropriateness of the sites result directly from the quality of leadership and management.
- 5.7 The senior management team meets regularly and works collaboratively to support the excellent personal development and effective welfare of pupils, in order to meet the school's aim to prepare pupils confidently for adult life. It is only recently that the senior management of the South school has been incorporated into the overall school management structure, following which a greater integration of curricular and other provision has begun but is not yet fully developed. A new initiative has seen members of the senior management team travelling to the South school for monthly meetings. This connectivity between the two sites aims to promote consistent academic success, pastoral care and personal development, although the recent restructuring of the senior management team has meant that roles and

responsibilities are not yet clearly delegated. The teaching load of many senior managers limits the time available for them to carry out all their strategic roles and operational duties effectively.

- 5.8 The whole-school development plan is at present in the process of being formulated, with targets set for future development, the identification of priorities and more transparent accountability. It is not yet linked to formal self-evaluation and monitoring. Policies and procedures have been produced and implemented for all aspects of school life, including the EYFS. Many systems are informal; however, communication amongst staff works effectively. Administrative and all other support staff provide high quality assistance, upon which the school depends.
- 5.9 The introduction of a new middle management tier in the secondary school has begun to contribute to a more effective team approach. This has included allocating to senior teachers specific responsibility for key areas such as learning support and pastoral care. Whilst some monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning takes place, the process does not enable subject co-ordinators to obtain a sufficiently full overview to lead their departments effectively and ensure that all pupils are being sufficiently challenged. Significant progress has been made in the improvement of provision for pupils with SEND, including clear referral procedures and accurate identification and assessment of individual needs.
- 5.10 Continuing professional development for staff is available, often through the modelling of good practice amongst staff; implementation in other ways proves difficult because of the school's island location. A performance review policy is designed to ensure that the teaching of all academic staff is observed at least annually, but this is not yet fully implemented. An induction programme has been introduced for new staff and training needs for all staff have been identified.
- 5.11 Management is successful in recruiting appropriately qualified and experienced staff although the recruitment checks carried out on governors are not sufficiently robust. All current staff have been checked in accordance with Spanish regulations or the Standards for British Schools Overseas.

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

#### ***Whole School***

- 5.12 Links with parents, carers and guardians are good. Monthly newsletters to all members of the school community inform them of successes and celebrations, as well as administrative, staffing and development issues. Letters are sent home regarding specific events for pupil or parent groups. For parents of prospective pupils, there is a welcome pack available, the contents of which also appear on the school website, containing all relevant information.
- 5.13 In the pre-inspection questionnaires parents were, overall, very positive about the school: in particular they praised the progress their children make, especially in English, the high standards of behaviour and the worthwhile attitudes that the school promotes. A small number felt that pupils with SEND are not suitably supported, that information about the school is not readily available and that the range of activities is not sufficiently wide. During the inspection, no evidence was found to support those views although the concern regarding provision of information appears to have had greater justification in the past. The increasing use of email supports communication with the school and with individual teachers. Complaints and concerns from parents are dealt with thoroughly and with care. Criticisms of the use

of a playground as a car park had been responded to by the time of the main inspection visit.

- 5.14 Weekly English classes are held in order to enable non-English speaking parents to help support their children at home. Parents are also invited to information meetings, for example on the potential dangers of the internet. An annual open day is held for the school and the wider community, and there is strong parental attendance at school events. Each year parents support local and national charities chosen by the pupils. They contribute to after-school activities and clubs. The school operates an 'open door' policy, for which parents are grateful, appreciating the ready accessibility of staff. Parents often contribute to the wider curriculum; in the secondary school, for example, parents come in to school to give advice on careers. Parents and local friends of the school also offer placements for work shadowing.
- 5.15 When a pupil joins the school, parents automatically become a member of the British School Association, and parents are on the governing body. The semi-rural nature of the schools encourages strong links with parents since many bring their own and neighbours' children to and from school, and in doing so regularly meet the staff or create bonds with other parents in the playground. Parents are welcomed and valued when they come to the school.

### ***Primary Schools***

- 5.16 Parents have good opportunities to be actively involved with the work and progress of their children. Meetings and workshops with the teachers of each year group are held for parents at the beginning of each academic year. Message books and 'remembering books' are used for additional communication. Both at Tafira and in the South school, parents have daily access to teachers and senior management staff to discuss any issues that may arise. Parents are involved in hearing reading and helping out on trips. Parents receive clear and useful reports about their children's work and progress, and parent consultation meetings are held three times a year. In Years 3 to 6, reports give grades and a general comment on progress and attitudes to learning, as well as specific information on the main subjects taught. Parents are always welcome in school. Their involvement with the EYFS begins with an induction evening before the children start and contact with teachers is maintained on a daily basis.

### ***Secondary School***

- 5.17 Clear and informative reports are sent four times a year, and complemented by parents' evenings. At other key times of the year, for example when option choices are made and mock examination results are published, parents from specific year groups are invited into school.
- 5.18 Pastoral care issues are channelled through senior members of staff. Parents are informed both quickly and appropriately and lines of communication are clear. Parents feel that the school discipline structure is robust. Parents are encouraged to take an interest in their children's progress by checking and signing their homework diaries at the end of each week. These are also used as a means of sending messages to parents.

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and staff, and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

Mr John Dunston	Reporting inspector
Mrs Valerie Clark	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Mrs Laura Brook	Key Stage Two Co-ordinator, HMC/COBIS school, Italy
Mr Alan Cooper	Housemaster, HMC school, UK
Miss Penelope Kirk	Head, IAPS school, UK
Ms Basman Zora	Head of Professional and Curriculum Development, COBIS school, Egypt