



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**British Schools Overseas**

**Inspection Report**

**The British School of Gran Canaria**

**October 2018**



## Contents

<b>Contents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>School's Details</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. Background Information</b>	<b>4</b>
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
<b>2. Inspection of Standards for British Schools Overseas</b>	<b>5</b>
Preface	5
Key findings	5
Part 1 – Quality of education provided	5
Part 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	6
Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	7
Part 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	8
Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	9
Part 6 – Provision of information	9
Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	9
Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	10
<b>3. Inspection Evidence</b>	<b>11</b>

## School's Details

<b>School</b>	The British School of Gran Canaria			
<b>Address</b>	The British School of Gran Canaria Ctra. Tafira a Marzagán s/n El Sabinal 35017 Las Palmas de Gran Canaria Las Palmas			
<b>Telephone number</b>	+34 928 351167			
<b>Email address</b>	information@bs-gc.net			
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Julian Clark			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Ms Araceli Beatriz Domínguez			
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 18			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	663			
	<b>Boys</b>	319	<b>Girls</b>	344
	<b>EYFS</b>	75	<b>Juniors</b>	282
	<b>Seniors</b>	233	<b>Sixth Form</b>	73
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23 to 24 October 2018			

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 The British School of Gran Canaria is a day school for boys and girls aged 3 to 18. The school was founded in 1966 and is located on two sites. The main school, comprising primary and secondary sections, is located near Tafira in the north east of Gran Canaria. An additional, separate primary section opened in 1998 near Maspalomas in the south of the island. Each primary section has one class per year group, and the secondary section has two classes per year group. New purpose-built classrooms were opened on the Tafira site in 2015. Since the previous inspection in October 2015, new heads of the two primary sections have been appointed.
- 1.2 Ultimate responsibility for the running and management of the school is held by the board of governors, which is elected by the parents of the school, all of whom are de facto members of the School Association during their time as parents at the school.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to provide pupils with a wide range of educational experiences and learning opportunities, based on standards set for British schools. These are designed to develop cultural understanding and international awareness, and prepare pupils for adult life with confidence. It aspires to prepare pupils for university education in Britain, Spain and other countries with high levels of academic achievement. The school's vision is to realise the unique potential of each pupil, to equip each with the skills, knowledge and values to succeed in an ever-changing world, and to inspire social responsibility and a commitment to lifelong learning.

### About the pupils

- 1.4 Most pupils are Spanish; the remaining pupils represent over 30 different nationalities. Pupils come largely from families with a wide range of professional and business backgrounds. Pupils take a range of standardised aptitude and ability tests at different stages throughout the school. These indicate that the ability profile of the senior school is above average, and the ability profile of the sixth form is broadly average. More than nine out of ten pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL); only fourteen of these require and receive additional support for their English. The school has identified 57 pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); all of these receive additional support.

## 2. Inspection of Standards for British Schools Overseas

### Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting independent schools in England and overseas.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the Standards for British Schools Overseas. It also takes account, where relevant, of compliance with any local requirements. Schools may opt for an inspection of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE.

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: an exhaustive health and safety audit; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures; an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law; in-depth consideration of the extent to which the school meets the requirements of local law and custom.

**This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas.** The Standards represent minimum requirements, and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. In order to gain BSO accreditation, a school is required to meet all the Standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report. If a school does not meet all of the Standards, it may elect to be re-inspected once it has taken the required actions in order to gain BSO accreditation.

**Headline judgements against the Standards for British Schools Overseas indicate that the Standards have been 'met' or 'not met' for accreditation.**

Accreditation as a British school overseas lasts for three years. The school's last inspection was in October 2015.

### Key findings

**2.1 The school does not meet all of the Standards for British Schools Overseas and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

#### Part 1 – Quality of education provided

**2.2 The Standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

2.3 Pupils follow a curriculum which is based on the English National Curriculum and the framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children under the age of five. In addition, the school fulfils the requirements of the Spanish government to teach Spanish in all year groups and humanities in Spanish to pupils in Years 8 to 11. All other subjects, apart from modern foreign languages, are taught in English. The curriculum enables pupils to sit examinations for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) at the end of Year 11 and, in Years 12 and 13, to sit A-level examinations and then gain places at a wide range of universities in the UK and other European countries.

- 2.4 The curriculum provides pupils with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. It enables them to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills and a good understanding of English. It also provides a wide-ranging programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE). Policies, plans and schemes of work for all subjects take account of the ages, aptitudes and needs of the pupils. A small minority of parents felt that the school does not offer a good choice of extra-curricular activities or suitable advice about choices of subject or career. The inspection found that pupils throughout the school have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities should they so wish and that an appropriate programme of careers guidance is offered to pupils in the secondary school. The curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life beyond school, underpinned by an understanding of fundamental British values which reflect the value systems of many other countries.
- 2.5 The teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress. Results in IGCSE examinations for the last three years have been higher than worldwide norms. Results in A-level examinations have been in-line with the UK national average. The vast majority of pupils and a large majority of parents felt the school gives pupils the opportunity to learn and make good progress. Inspection evidence confirms this. The teaching encourages pupils to take an interest in their work and to develop the ability to think and learn for themselves. It is generally well planned, employs effective teaching methods, uses a range of resources, and demonstrates good subject knowledge and understanding. The teaching demonstrates a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainment of the pupils and ensures these are taken into account in the planning of lessons and work given. Additional support is provided for pupils who start the school with little knowledge of English. Similarly, pupils with SEND receive specialist support to meet their needs. Strategies for managing behaviour in class are effective and encourage pupils to act responsibly. The teaching does not undermine fundamental British values or discriminate against pupils because of their protected characteristics. The school has a suitable framework to assess pupils' performance and to track their progress.

## **Part 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

### **2.6 The Standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

- 2.7 Through assemblies, its programme for PSHE and the promotion of its core values, the school promotes principles such as democracy, the rule of law, liberty, respect and tolerance, which are fundamental to life in Britain and many other countries. Through its many school trips and programmes such as the ELLI (Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory) for pupils in both primary and secondary sections, and Learning to Lead for older secondary pupils, the school enables pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. Pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong and to accept responsibility for their own behaviour. The school promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions and respect for other people as it celebrates occasions such as Diwali, Family Day, Dia de Canarias and British saints' days. It prepares pupils for the responsibilities of citizenship in Spain and the wider world, and encourages respect for democracy and the democratic process. It helps pupils to develop balanced views on political issues and provides them with opportunities to make meaningful contributions to the lives of others. A very large majority of parents, pupils and staff felt that the school treats pupils fairly, supports their personal development and promotes tolerance and respect for others, and inspection evidence confirms this.

### Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### **2.8 The Standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9 to 16 are met but the Standard in paragraph 7 [safeguarding] is not met.**

- 2.9 The school does not meet the Standard for safeguarding because of shortcomings in the way checks on the suitability of staff are carried out before they start work at the school; further details are provided in the following section. In all other respects, the school has extremely thorough arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and takes into account both local requirements and guidance provided for schools in England. It has a comprehensive programme to train staff in safeguarding when they join the school and to keep them regularly updated with changes in procedure. The safeguarding policy covers all of the areas required of schools in England, takes into account Spanish regulatory requirements and, with the exception of the checking of staff suitability, is implemented effectively. A member of the governing body maintains effective oversight of most aspects of safeguarding procedures, monitors the implementation of the policy and ensures that an annual review of policy and procedures is undertaken. The well-informed designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is supported effectively by a team of appropriately trained senior staff. The DSL maintains confidential records of all child-protection concerns and is readily available to deal with any issues that arise, and does so efficiently. Pupils are made fully aware of issues that might affect their welfare, health and safety through assemblies and topics covered in the school's PSHE programme.
- 2.10 The school has appropriate policies to prevent bullying, in so far as reasonably practicable, and these are implemented effectively. Various initiatives take place during the year to educate pupils about bullying, how to prevent it and what to do should they encounter it. As a result, the large majority of parents and pupils felt that the school does all that it can to prevent bullying from happening. Inspection evidence confirms this. Procedures to promote good behaviour are known and understood by pupils and staff, and the vast majority of parents and staff felt the school actively promotes good behaviour.
- 2.11 The school demonstrates a rigorous approach to health and safety; the school's policies and practice meet the requirements of the Spanish authorities and are in accordance with expectations for schools in England. Thorough records are kept of all health and safety checks, many of which are undertaken effectively by external specialists. Fire alarms and fire-fighting equipment are serviced regularly. Fire drills are carried out at least termly, and pupils know what to do should they hear the fire alarm. An external company carries out a detailed risk assessment of all areas of the school, including a comprehensive fire risk assessment. Hazardous materials, such as those used by cleaners or in the science laboratories, are stored securely. A wide range of risk assessments covering all of the school's buildings and facilities and activities which take place off-site indicates that the school takes seriously its duty to identify and mitigate risks which may affect pupils' welfare, health and safety. A very large majority of parents, pupils and staff felt that the school provides a safe and healthy environment.
- 2.12 The school has appropriate policies for first aid and the administration of medicines, and many of the staff are trained in first aid, including paediatric first aid where appropriate. In their responses to the questionnaire, a small minority of pupils indicated that first aid is not given quickly if they are ill or injured. The inspection found that these views related to pupils being asked to return to their teacher to obtain permission to visit the sick bay as per the procedures set out in the school's first-aid policy; the inspection considered that such delays do not impede the effective treatment of pupils. Staff with responsibility for first aid provide suitable care for those who are ill or injured, and keep appropriate records of any medical incidents or consultations. Medicines are stored securely. First-aid kits are available in different locations around the school and for school sports events and trips. The school communicates promptly with parents should their child be ill or injured.

2.13 Staff rotas provide for members of staff to be on duty at breaks and lunchtimes, and pupils are supervised appropriately throughout the school day. The school has thorough procedures for checking attendance of pupils and for ascertaining reasons for absence. Admission and attendance registers meet local and UK requirements, are backed up electronically every day and are retained for the requisite period of time.

#### Action point 1

- the school must ensure that it fulfils all requirements with regard to the checking of the suitability of staff to work with children [paragraph 7]

### Part 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

2.14 The Standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 18–21 are not met.

2.1 The school carries out the required checks on most staff and proprietors to ensure their suitability to work with children. However, the school's records indicate that there are gaps in the process; specifically that a small number of staff have not been checked for their medical fitness or to have had the appropriate criminal record check. In the case of staff appointed from the UK, not all have been checked against the UK's list of those barred from working with children and/or the list of those prohibited from teaching. Records do not make it explicitly clear that, where the school uses staff provided by a supply agency, the agency has undertaken all of the necessary checks. Proprietors have not been checked for their right to work in the country. The information on the school's single central register of appointments is incomplete as the dates on which certain checks have been undertaken, such as the right to work in Spain and the identity and qualifications of support staff and those providing activities, are not recorded. It is not possible to ascertain, therefore, whether all checks have been undertaken before a new member of staff starts work. In a small number of cases, where dates have been recorded, checks have been carried out after a person has started working at the school. The register does not indicate the date on which proprietors were appointed. Where checks of criminal records and medical fitness have been updated, as required by Spanish law, information regarding the original pre-appointment checks has been overwritten, making it appear that these checks have been undertaken well after the date of appointment.

#### Action point 2

- the school must ensure that all relevant checks regarding their suitability to work with children are undertaken for new members of staff before they start work at the school [paragraphs 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(d), 18(3), 19(2)(a), 20(5)(b), 20(6)(b)]

#### Action point 3

- the school must ensure that its single central register of appointments records accurately the dates on which all of the required checks have been undertaken [paragraph 21(1)]



## **Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools**

### **2.2 The Standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

2.3 Suitable and well-maintained toilet and washing facilities are provided for pupils of all ages. Pupils in the secondary section have access to changing rooms and showers for physical education lessons. The school's first-aid facilities provide appropriate accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils. The buildings are maintained in good condition and are checked regularly for any issues that might compromise the health, safety and welfare of pupils. The lighting and acoustics in teaching rooms are suitable. Drinking water is available for pupils throughout the school. There is adequate space for outdoor play. A small all-weather pitch at the site in Tafira and the use of off-site facilities provide adequately for outdoor games for pupils.

## **Part 6 – Provision of information**

### **2.4 The Standards relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] are met.**

2.5 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and local authorities. This information includes details about the proprietor, the aims of the school and the curriculum offered. Arrangements and policies for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, provision for pupils with SEND and those with EAL are available on the school's website along with useful handbooks for parents for each section of the school and each site. Particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year and its results in public examinations are published. Although a small minority of parents did not feel they receive helpful information about their children's performance and progress, the school meets the Standards by providing progress reports at various times during the year, as well as a full written report outlining each child's progress and attainment. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website. The school was extremely co-operative in providing a wide range of information in connection with this inspection.

## **Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

### **2.6 The Standards relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] are met.**

2.7 The school has an appropriate complaints policy which is available to parents through the school website along with information about the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year. This process seeks to resolve any complaint informally but, if concerns are not resolved, parents may proceed to lodge a formal complaint in writing. If the complaint remains unresolved, the school makes provision for a hearing before a panel which includes at least one person independent of the management and running of the school and which parents may attend, accompanied if they wish. The panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. A confidential record is kept of all complaints and findings, including action taken by the school whether or not the complaint is upheld. The policy provides clear time scales for each stage of the complaints process, and the school's records show that complaints are handled promptly and in accordance with its published policy, and that all were resolved at the informal stage in the preceding school year.

## Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

**2.8 The Standards relating to leadership and management of the school in sub-paragraphs 34(a), 34(b) and 34(c) are not met.**

2.9 In almost all respects, the leadership and management of the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the large majority of the Standards for British Schools Overseas are met consistently, and the well-being of pupils is actively promoted. However, in relation to the checks which the school should undertake to ascertain the suitability of staff to work with children, the proprietors have not ensured that the school's leaders and those responsible for carrying out the checks have sufficient understanding of the requirements in relation to paragraphs 7 and 18 to 21 of the Standards. They have not ensured sufficiently rigorous oversight to ensure that the leadership fulfils its responsibilities for meeting the Standards consistently and for actively promoting the welfare of pupils in these areas. The school's leaders responded quickly and effectively to a small number of issues which were identified during the pre-inspection visit and demonstrated keen intent to meet more than just the minimum standards.

### Action point 4

- **the proprietors must ensure that the leadership and management have sufficient understanding of the requirements for checking the suitability of staff and that leaders and those responsible for carrying out the checks fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the Standards in paragraphs 7 and 18–21 are met effectively [paragraphs 34(a), 34(b) and 34(c)]**

### 3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick and injured pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, pupils and staff to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other regulatory documentation made available by the school.

#### Inspectors

Mr Graham Sims	Reporting inspector
Mrs Sara Wiggins	Assistant reporting inspector
Mrs Diane Durrant	Team inspector (former Headteacher, Society of Heads school, England)