



Penta BSO Inspection Handbook

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Section 1

Introduction and Purpose of the Handbook

1.1 Purpose of the Penta BSO Inspection Handbook for Schools

This handbook has been produced by Penta International to support schools that are inspected under the British Schools Overseas (BSO) framework. Its purpose is to explain clearly and transparently how BSO inspections are conducted by Penta, what schools can expect before, during and after an inspection, and how judgements are reached against the Standards for British Schools Overseas.

The handbook is intended to:

- help school leaders understand the principles and processes that underpin a Penta BSO inspection;
- support effective inspection preparation;
- promote confidence in the fairness, rigour and professionalism of the inspection process; and
- clarify roles, responsibilities and expectations for schools and inspectors alike.

The handbook should be read alongside the Standards for British Schools Overseas and is designed to complement, not replace, statutory guidance or local regulatory requirements.

1.2 Audience

This handbook is written primarily for:

- school principals and headteachers;
- proprietors, owners and governing bodies;
- senior leadership teams; and
- safeguarding leads and inspection coordinators.

It may also be helpful for other staff or parents who wish to understand the inspection process and the expectations placed on schools inspected under the BSO framework.

1.3 What is Inspection of British Schools Overseas (BSO)?

Inspection of British Schools Overseas (BSO) is a system of inspection approved by the UK Department for Education (DfE) for schools outside the United Kingdom that offer a British-style education.

BSO inspections are benchmarked against the standards used for independent schools in England. They are carried out by inspection providers authorised by the DfE. These inspections are externally overseen and quality-assured. Each inspection results in a published report that offers an independent evaluation of the school's provision.

For schools that meet the standards, BSO inspection provides formal recognition that their provision is comparable, in key respects, to that of effective independent schools in England. As a result, schools are awarded a DfE registration number. For parents and the wider school community, BSO inspection offers assurance about the quality of education, safeguarding and leadership provided by the school.

1.4 Penta International as a BSO Inspection Provider

Penta International is an approved inspection provider for British Schools Overseas. Penta is proud to have been inspecting and supporting British international schools for over 25 years. Our inspections are conducted by experienced inspectors with strong backgrounds in education leadership, safeguarding and quality assurance, and with a clear understanding of international school contexts.

Penta's approach to BSO inspection is characterised by:

- **rigour**, grounded in evidence and professional judgement;
- **proportionality**, recognising the size, context and character of each school;
- **professional dialogue**, underpinned by respect and transparency; and
- a strong focus on **safeguarding and pupil welfare**.

All inspections are led by a Lead Inspector, supported by a carefully selected inspection team, and conducted in accordance with Penta's professional standards. Inspectors are bound by Penta's Code of Conduct (Appendix A), which sets clear expectations for integrity, objectivity, confidentiality and respectful professional behaviour throughout the inspection process, as well as safeguarding requirements and quality assurance procedures.

1.5 Principles Underpinning Penta BSO Inspections

Penta BSO inspections are guided by a set of core principles that shape how inspections are planned, conducted and reported. Inspections are:

- **evidence-based**: judgements are made based on a body of varied, triangulated evidence;
- **objective and fair**: inspectors evaluate practice against published standards, not personal opinion;
- **context-aware**: inspectors take account of local laws, cultural expectations and the school's circumstances, while maintaining the integrity of the BSO standards;
- **focused on impact**: inspectors consider not only policies and intentions, but how effectively they are implemented in practice and the difference they make for pupils; and
- **professionally conducted**: inspectors engage constructively with school leaders and staff, maintaining confidentiality and respect at all times.

Penta's core values are rooted in working in partnership with schools, combining rigorous, evidence-based inspection with a collegiate and respectful approach. Through professional dialogue, transparency and consistency, Penta supports schools to understand their practice and strengthen provision, while maintaining independence, fairness and a clear focus on pupils' wellbeing and outcomes.

1.6 How Schools Should Use This Handbook

Schools are encouraged to use this handbook:

- when preparing for a BSO inspection, to understand processes and requirements;
- during the inspection, as a reference point for inspection activity and professional dialogue; and
- after the inspection, to understand next steps, reporting processes and any follow-up actions.

The handbook is **not** intended as a checklist or compliance manual. Penta does not expect schools to produce additional documentation specifically for inspection purposes. Instead, schools should focus on the quality and impact of their day-to-day practice, using their own systems of evaluation and improvement.

1.7 Structure of the Handbook

The sections that follow set out:

- how inspections are planned and prepared for;
- what happens during an inspection visit;
- how evidence is gathered and evaluated;
- how safeguarding is inspected and prioritised;
- how judgements are reached against the BSO standards;
- how feedback and reporting are managed; and
- how schools can raise concerns or complaints.

Each section is designed to provide clarity, reassurance and transparency, supporting a shared understanding of the inspection process between schools and inspectors.

Section 2

The BSO Standards and the Inspection Framework

2.1 The Standards for British Schools Overseas

British Schools Overseas inspections are conducted against the Standards for British Schools Overseas, as published by the UK Department for Education. These standards are closely aligned with the regulatory standards that apply to independent schools in England and are designed to ensure that pupils receive a high-quality education in a safe, well-led environment.

The standards cover the following areas:

1. **The quality of education provided**
2. **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**
3. **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**
4. **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**
5. **Premises of and accommodation at schools**
6. **Provision of information for parents, carers and others**
7. **The manner in which complaints are handled**
8. **Leadership and management**
9. **The quality of provision for boarding (where applicable)**

All standards must be met in order for a school to be recognised as meeting the BSO requirements and receive accreditation status.

2.2 Compliance and Quality: How the Standards Are Evaluated

During a BSO inspection, inspectors evaluate whether each standard is met or not met. This judgement is based on whether the school's arrangements comply with the requirements of the standards in practice, not simply whether policies exist.

However, inspectors do more than confirm compliance with the standards. In evaluating the standards, they also consider the quality and effectiveness of the school's provision, the impact of that provision on pupils' safety, wellbeing and learning, and the extent to which practice is secure, embedded and applied consistently across the school. This broader evaluative approach allows inspection reports not only to confirm whether standards are met, but also to identify strengths in provision and to highlight areas where further development would strengthen practice, even in cases where standards are met.

In particular, the quality of provision for Standards 1 (Quality of Education), 2 (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development), 3 (Welfare, Health and Safety) and 8 (Leadership and Management) is evaluated against the Penta Judgement Criteria and reported on (Appendix B).

2.3 Context and the Application of the Standards Overseas

Penta recognises that schools inspected under the BSO framework operate in a wide range of international, legal and cultural contexts. Inspectors take careful account of this context when evaluating evidence, recognising and respecting local laws and regulations. Inspectors are sensitive to cultural and social norms, and understand that schools may operate differently from independent schools in England. Where there is a difference between UK law and the law of the host country, local law takes precedence; this is taken into account when considering how schools operate in practice.

However, the requirement to meet the Standards for British Schools Overseas remains consistent across all contexts. Inspectors do not lower expectations or dilute the standards themselves. Where local law or custom affects how a school operates, inspectors consider how the school remains compliant with the BSO standards within those legal constraints and how leaders ensure that pupils' safety, welfare and educational entitlement are protected and promoted.

2.4 Safeguarding - the 'Golden Thread'

Safeguarding is not a standalone aspect of BSO inspection; it is a golden thread that runs through all standards. While Standard 3 focuses explicitly on pupil welfare, health and safety, safeguarding considerations also inform inspectors' evaluation of:

- staff recruitment and vetting (Standard 4);
- leadership oversight and governance (Standard 7);
- behaviour, relationships and pupil development (Standards 1 and 2); and
- communication with parents and pupils (Standard 6).

Inspectors consider not only whether appropriate safeguarding policies are in place, but also how effectively those policies operate in practice. They evaluate whether staff are suitably trained in safeguarding, and whether staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and reporting procedures. Inspectors consider how consistently safeguarding expectations are applied across the school. They also evaluate how promptly and effectively concerns are identified, recorded and acted upon, whether safeguarding records are clear, accurate and handled with appropriate confidentiality,

The inspection will consider aspects of safer recruitment, including training records and how robust and embedded safer recruitment practices are in recruitment and appointment processes.

A key aspect of safeguarding is whether pupils feel safe in school and know how to seek help if they are worried.

A school may meet most standards securely, but significant weaknesses in safeguarding practice are likely to affect the overall inspection outcome.

2.5 Evidence and Judgement-Making

Inspectors reach judgements by considering a range of evidence, gathered over the course of the inspection. Evidence is triangulated, meaning that inspectors look for consistency across different sources, such as:

- documentation and records;
- discussions with leaders, staff, pupils and parents;

- lesson observations and learning walks;
- scrutiny of pupils' work; and
- inspection team professional discussion.

No single piece of evidence is relied upon in isolation. Inspectors test what they are told against what they see and what records show.

Judgements are reached through collective professional discussion within the inspection team and are moderated by the Lead Inspector to ensure consistency, fairness and alignment with the standards.

2.6 Strengths, Weaknesses and Areas for Improvement

BSO inspection reports identify:

- whether each standard is met or not met; and
- key strengths of the school's provision.

Where standards are met but practice is not yet fully secure or consistent, inspection reports will also identify areas for improvement. These are intended to support accurate school self-evaluation, inform strategic planning and promote continued improvement. Areas for improvement are not judgements of failure; rather, they reflect the inspection team's professional evaluation of where further development would strengthen provision and improve outcomes for pupils.

2.7 Transparency and Professional Dialogue

Penta is committed to transparency throughout the inspection process. Inspectors explain their lines of enquiry to school leaders and share emerging themes during the course of the inspection. They ensure that inspection judgements are clearly linked to secure evidence and to the relevant standards.

Professional dialogue is an important part of inspection, but it does not replace evidence. Inspectors listen carefully to leaders' explanations and contextual information while maintaining a clear and consistent focus on impact and outcomes for pupils.

Section 3

Planning and preparing for a Penta BSO Inspection

3.1 Planning the inspection

British Schools Overseas are required by the UK Department for Education to undergo inspection every three years in order to maintain their BSO accreditation.

BSO inspections are normally scheduled over three days. Inspection dates are agreed between the school and Penta, with liaison taking place through Penta head office to identify suitable timings. Formal confirmation of the inspection is provided in writing by Penta and confirms the inspection dates, the type of inspection being undertaken, the number of inspectors and the name of the Lead Inspector. This communication also sets out key preparatory steps and timelines.

Each inspection is led by a Lead Inspector, supported by an inspection team whose size and composition reflect the size, structure and complexity of the school. Factors such as pupil numbers, multiple campuses and the presence of boarding provision are taken into account when determining the inspection team. In most cases, inspections include a minimum of two additional inspectors, and the full team is usually present for the duration of the inspection.

Following confirmation, the Lead Inspector will contact the school to introduce themselves, confirm practical arrangements and respond to any initial questions. Early communication is encouraged, particularly where schools wish to clarify expectations or discuss contextual factors that may affect inspection planning.

3.2 Pre-inspection support and guidance

If this is the school's first BSO inspection, a one- or two-day pre-inspection visit is recommended. This involves a Penta senior consultant working closely with SLT on-site to review the school's arrangements for all aspects of the BSO framework. Any areas which may require strengthening before the inspection can be identified and the senior team supported to create an improvement plan to address these.

In addition, Penta provides online training sessions for schools to support awareness and understanding of the BSO Standards and help guide inspection preparation. Themes such as safeguarding and child protection are looked at in detail, providing clear guidance and support.

3.3 Principles of Preparation

Preparation for a Penta BSO inspection should reflect the school's normal ways of working. Inspection is designed to evaluate the quality and impact of normal, day-to-day practice. Schools are therefore not expected to create additional documentation, rewrite policies, or set up systems not usually in place. The most effective preparation is ensuring that existing systems are secure, understood and operating consistently. Inspection provides an opportunity for schools to present an accurate picture of their provision and to engage in professional dialogue about its effectiveness.

3.4 The School Inspection Coordinator

Schools are asked to nominate an inspection coordinator to act as the main point of contact before and during the inspection. This role is often undertaken by a senior leader or experienced administrator.

The coordinator supports the smooth running of the inspection by liaising with the Lead Inspector, facilitating access to documentation and coordinating schedules and meetings. The role is organisational rather than evaluative, and coordinators are not expected to provide evidence beyond what aligns with their normal responsibilities within the school.

3.5 Pre-Inspection Communications and Documentation

In the period leading up to the inspection, schools can expect regular communication with the Lead Inspector, including written correspondence and, wherever possible, online meetings. As part of inspection planning, it is suggested that schools complete a written self-evaluation against the Standards for British Schools Overseas, setting out how effectively they believe the school meets each standard. The self-evaluation is valuable in enabling inspectors to understand the school's context, identify initial lines of inquiry, review safeguarding arrangements and ensure inspection time on site is used effectively. The lead inspector will prepare a pre-inspection briefing, which will be shared with the school prior to the start of the inspection, outlining the plan for the inspection.

Appendix C contains advice on preparing your school's self-evaluation document.

3.6 Staff and Pupil Awareness

Staff should be informed of the inspection arrangements and reassured about the purpose and nature of BSO inspection. Inspection focuses on the quality of provision and its impact on pupils, not on the performance of individual staff members.

Inspectors will speak with staff and pupils as part of evidence gathering. These discussions are conducted professionally and, in the case of pupils, in an age-appropriate and supportive manner. Schools should avoid briefing staff or pupils with scripted responses; authentic engagement provides the most reliable and useful evidence.

3.7 Safeguarding Preparation

Safeguarding is a central focus of all Penta BSO inspections and should be a priority in preparation. Schools should ensure that safeguarding policies are current, reflect local context and laws, and are understood by staff. Designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) and deputies should be clearly identified, and staff should be confident about reporting procedures.

Records should be well organised, accurate and handled confidentially. Any safeguarding issues identified should be addressed promptly and investigated robustly. Inspectors will

focus on how concerns are identified, recorded and managed, including escalation routes and the use of external agencies where appropriate.

3.8 Practical Arrangements and Logistics

Ahead of the inspection, schools will agree practical arrangements with the Lead Inspector. This includes timetabling, access to key staff, working space for inspectors and arrangements for meetings and feedback.

Penta recognises the diversity of international school contexts and aims to agree arrangements that are realistic and proportionate. Flexibility is built into planning to reflect school size, phase and local conditions.

3.9 Preparing Governors, Proprietors and Boards

Where schools have governing bodies, boards or proprietorial structures, members should be informed of the timings of the inspection and available for discussion as required. Inspectors will want to explore how governance supports safeguarding, educational quality strategic leadership, and financial management, as well as how accountability and challenge are exercised.

Boards and proprietors are not expected to prepare formal presentations or additional documentation beyond what is normally used to fulfil their role.

3.10 Managing Anxiety and Workload

Penta recognises that inspection can generate anxiety for schools and staff. Preparation should be approached in a way that minimises unnecessary workload and supports staff wellbeing. The focus should remain on pupils' experience and outcomes.

Schools are encouraged to contact the Lead Inspector if concerns arise about timing, workload or practical arrangements. Inspections are conducted firmly and fairly, with due regard for the professional context in which schools operate.

Section 4

The Inspection Process

4.1 Overview of the Inspection Visit

A Penta BSO inspection is designed to provide an accurate, fair and evidence-based evaluation of a school's provision against the Standards for British Schools Overseas. The inspection process is structured, but flexible, allowing inspectors to respond to the context of each school and developing lines of inquiry.

Inspection activity normally takes place over three days. The inspection is led by a Lead Inspector, who is responsible for planning the inspection, coordinating the inspection team and ensuring that judgements are consistent with the standards and inspection methodology.

Throughout the visit, inspectors work collaboratively with school leaders and staff, maintaining a professional and respectful approach.

4.2 The Inspection Team

The inspection team is selected to reflect the school's context, size and range of provision. All inspectors are experienced education professionals who are trained, accredited and quality-assured by Penta. Inspectors are familiar with international school contexts and with the Standards for British Schools Overseas.

The inspection is led by a Lead Inspector, who has overall responsibility for planning and managing the inspection. The Lead Inspector checks that safeguarding processes are rigorous and any concerns are identified and addressed promptly and appropriately. They coordinate evidence gathering and professional discussion within the inspection team and ensure that judgements are secure, fair and firmly supported by evidence. The Lead Inspector also maintains a quality assurance oversight of the work of the team, professional conduct and communication with the school throughout the inspection.

Other inspectors contribute by gathering evidence across relevant standards. This includes participating in meetings, observing practice, reviewing documentation and engaging in professional dialogue with staff and pupils. All inspectors work collaboratively to build an accurate and balanced evaluation of the school's provision.

4.3 Inspection Activities and Evidence Gathering for the BSO Standards

Inspectors gather evidence from a range of sources in order to evaluate how effectively the school meets the BSO standards. Evidence is triangulated, meaning that inspectors seek consistency between what they are told, what they see and what documentation shows. Inspection activities may include:

- discussions with senior leaders, staff, pupils and governors or proprietors;
- observation of teaching, learning and pastoral practice;
- scrutiny of pupils' work and assessment information;
- review of policies, records and safeguarding documentation; and
- observation of the school environment, routines and culture.

No single activity or document is used in isolation to form judgements. Inspectors consider the overall picture that emerges across the inspection.

Requests for evidence are designed to be proportionate and manageable. Schools are not expected to generate new evidence or duplicate existing documentation. Where information is normally held digitally, electronic access is usually appropriate. Clear guidance and deadlines are provided, and schools are encouraged to seek clarification if any request is unclear. Appendix D explains the types of evidence that inspectors may wish to evaluate for each of the BSO standards.

Schools are also encouraged to share any additional evidence with the inspection team as the inspection progresses, where they feel this would further support their self-evaluation of practice and impact against the BSO standards.

4.4 Evaluating British Values and “Britishness” in a BSO School

An important aspect of inspection under the British Schools Overseas framework is evaluating how effectively a school reflects and promotes the distinctive features of a British education. This does not require schools to replicate the English education system or cultural context. Rather, inspectors consider how the school upholds the principles and values that underpin British education, while operating appropriately within its host country context.

Inspectors evaluate how the school actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Evidence is considered across the curriculum, wider school life, leadership and management, and pupils’ experiences. Inspectors look for these values to be embedded in practice, rather than presented as isolated statements or activities.

In curriculum terms, inspectors consider how British values are reflected through subjects such as personal, social, health and economic education, humanities, citizenship, and relationships education, as well as through opportunities for debate, discussion and critical thinking. Inspectors also consider how pupils develop an understanding of democratic processes, legal frameworks, rights and responsibilities, both in a British context and in relation to their host country.

Beyond the curriculum, inspectors evaluate how British values are lived out in the daily life of the school. This includes how pupils are encouraged to express views respectfully, how behaviour expectations are fair and consistently applied, how equality and inclusion are promoted, and how differences are acknowledged and respected. Opportunities for pupil voice, leadership and participation are also relevant evidence.

4.5 Evaluating the quality of education

In a Penta BSO inspection, evaluation of Standard 1 (the quality of education provided) considers the quality of education as a coherent whole, rather than as separate elements. Inspectors explore how well the school’s curriculum is designed and structured, how

effectively it is implemented in day-to-day teaching, and what this means for pupils' learning over time. This includes reviewing how the curriculum is planned for progression and depth, how subject content is sequenced across phases and year groups, and how leaders ensure that what is intended is what pupils actually experience in classrooms. Evidence for curriculum quality typically includes curriculum documentation such as schemes of work, long- and medium-term planning, subject overviews and curriculum maps, alongside leaders' and teachers' explanations of the rationale for curriculum choices and how curriculum coverage and progression are monitored.

Inspectors then consider how the curriculum is taught and assessed in practice, and whether classroom implementation supports pupils to build secure knowledge and skills. This involves looking at the consistency and effectiveness of teaching over time, how well assessment is used to check understanding and inform next steps, and how well teaching supports different groups of pupils, including those with SEND and those who are new to English or the school. Lesson observation and learning walks contribute to this picture, but inspectors also place significant weight on what pupils' work shows about typical learning, expectations and progress over time.

Finally, inspectors evaluate academic outcomes as an important indicator of impact, interpreted sensibly in context. Inspectors will consider the extent to which pupils achieve appropriate outcomes for their age and starting points, and how leaders know this through their own assessment systems. Evidence may include pupils' books and portfolios, internal assessment information (including how it is standardised and checked for reliability), and externally benchmarked measures where available, such as national or international tests and public examination outcomes (for example, IGCSE/GCSE, A level or equivalent). Inspectors do not rely on a single dataset; instead, they test whether outcomes align with curriculum intent and classroom reality, and whether they show secure learning and progress over time across subjects and groups

4.6 Meetings and Professional Dialogue

Meetings with school leaders, staff, pupils and other stakeholders are an important part of a Penta BSO inspection. These discussions help inspectors understand the school's context, how decisions are made, and how leaders evaluate the effectiveness of the school's provision against the BSO standards. They also support the triangulation of evidence gathered from documentation, lesson observation and wider inspection activity. Discussions with senior leaders focus on the school's vision, priorities and self-evaluation, including how curriculum intent is translated into classroom practice and how leaders assure themselves that standards are met consistently. Inspectors may test explanations, ask follow-up questions and seek clarification where needed. Professional dialogue is conducted respectfully and transparently and supports accurate judgement-making, but it does not replace evidence.

Meetings with teachers and other staff help inspectors understand how policies and expectations operate in practice across the school. Inspectors speak with staff in a range of roles, including teaching, support and leadership positions, to explore consistency of practice, understanding of responsibilities and confidence in systems such as safeguarding and pastoral care.

Discussions with pupils are age-appropriate and conducted in a way that supports pupils' wellbeing and confidence. These conversations help inspectors understand pupils' experience of learning, behaviour and safety. Parents' views may also be considered, for example through survey information or meetings where appropriate, and are treated as one strand of evidence alongside others. Where a school has a governing body, board or proprietor, inspectors will usually meet with those responsible to explore oversight, accountability and assurance, including in relation to safeguarding and educational quality. Meetings with school leaders, staff and pupils are an important part of inspection. These discussions help inspectors to understand the school's context, decision-making and self-evaluation.

Professional dialogue is conducted respectfully and transparently. Inspectors may test explanations, ask follow-up questions and seek clarification where needed. Inspectors also take care to handle sensitive information appropriately and maintain confidentiality.

4.7 Ongoing Communication During the Inspection

Penta aims to ensure that inspection is conducted transparently and that schools are kept informed about how the inspection is progressing. Throughout the inspection, the Lead Inspector maintains regular communication with the principal and senior leaders, ensuring that practical matters are addressed promptly and lines of enquiry are clearly understood.

The Lead Inspector will also share emerging themes so that leaders are aware of the areas being explored and how evidence is shaping inspection activity. Clear and timely communication throughout the visit supports professional dialogue, promotes clarity and ensures that there are no unexpected judgements raised for the first time at the end of the inspection.

4.8 Proportionality and Context

Inspectors apply the BSO standards consistently while taking account of the school's context. This includes factors such as school size, age range, curriculum model and local regulatory environment.

Proportionality means that inspection activity is focused on what matters most for pupils' safety, wellbeing and education. Inspectors do not seek exhaustive evidence where existing evidence is already secure.

4.9 The End of the Inspection Visit

At the conclusion of the inspection visit, the inspection team will meet with the school's senior leadership to provide verbal feedback. This feedback summarises the main findings of the inspection and confirms whether the Standards for British Schools Overseas are met. It highlights key strengths in the school's provision and outlines any areas for improvement that have been identified.

The school may decide who attends this meeting; typically the principal, some senior leaders and representation from the board of governors. Keeping the group appropriately sized helps ensure that feedback is communicated clearly and effectively. Attendees should be those who are best placed to understand the inspection findings and lead the school's response.

Verbal feedback is provisional. It reflects the inspection team's professional judgement based on the evidence gathered during the inspection. Final judgements are confirmed through Penta's quality assurance processes before the inspection report is completed and published.

Section 5

Safeguarding and Pupil Welfare

5.1 Safeguarding as a Core Priority

Safeguarding and pupil welfare are central to all Penta BSO inspections. Schools must be able to demonstrate that they take all reasonable steps to ensure that pupils are safe, protected from harm and supported effectively when concerns arise.

Safeguarding is not viewed as a standalone function or a set of policies. Inspectors evaluate how safeguarding is embedded within the culture, leadership, systems and daily practice of the school. This includes how adults behave, how pupils are listened to, how concerns are managed and how leaders assure themselves that arrangements are working effectively.

While safeguarding is most directly associated with Standard 3, inspectors consider safeguarding evidence across all standards. Significant weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements are likely to affect inspection outcomes, regardless of strengths elsewhere.

5.2 Leadership Responsibility for Safeguarding

Schools must appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and, where appropriate, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. Inspectors will explore whether safeguarding leadership is effective, well supported and clearly understood across the school.

This includes consideration of whether safeguarding leaders have appropriate and up-to-date training, sufficient authority to act, and direct access to senior leadership and governance where necessary. Inspectors will also consider whether safeguarding responsibilities are realistic and manageable, particularly in smaller schools or those operating in complex contexts.

Safeguarding leadership should be visible. Pupils and staff should know who the safeguarding leads are and how to contact them, including through clear communication and displays around the school. Inspectors will look for evidence that safeguarding is treated as a shared responsibility, led clearly and modelled consistently by senior leaders.

5.3 Safeguarding Culture and Staff Awareness

A strong safeguarding culture depends on staff awareness, confidence and professional judgement, together with a joint belief that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Inspectors will evaluate how safeguarding expectations are communicated and reinforced across the school community. This includes how staff are trained, how concerns are reported and how confident staff feel about raising issues. Inspectors will explore whether safeguarding training is regular and relevant, whether staff understand indicators of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and whether they know what to do if they are worried about a pupil.

Safeguarding responsibilities extend to all adults working with pupils, including support staff, volunteers, drivers, contractors and temporary staff. Inspectors will consider how schools ensure that safeguarding expectations are clear and consistently applied across all roles. While inspectors recognise that safeguarding operates within different legal and cultural contexts internationally, these contexts must not prevent appropriate action to protect pupils. Schools should be able to explain how they manage safeguarding concerns lawfully and safely within their host country.

5.4 Safer Recruitment and Vetting

Safer recruitment is a critical component of safeguarding and is examined carefully during a Penta BSO inspection. Schools must demonstrate that safeguarding considerations are embedded throughout recruitment processes and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that adults working with pupils are suitable and safe to do so.

Inspectors explore recruitment practice from planning through to appointment. This includes how safeguarding expectations are reflected in job descriptions and recruitment

materials, how interviews are structured, and how appointment decisions are informed by suitability checks. Inspectors consider whether those involved in recruitment are appropriately trained in safer recruitment and whether safeguarding questions form a routine and meaningful part of the selection process.

As part of this evaluation, inspectors scrutinise the school's Single Central Record and will sample personnel files containing original documentation to confirm that required checks are accurately recorded and appropriately evidenced. Inspectors consider how the school assures itself that vetting processes are complete and timely, including how it responds where checks are delayed or unavailable. Where interim arrangements are necessary, inspectors will expect these to be managed sensibly and reviewed appropriately, with safeguarding remaining the priority at all times.

5.5 The Single Central Record (SCR)

Schools are required to maintain an accurate and up-to-date Single Central Record. The SCR should provide a clear overview of safeguarding and suitability checks for all staff and relevant adults working in the school, and it should be supported by well-organised personnel files.

Inspectors will expect the SCR to include checks for all staff working in the school, including interns, volunteers, governors or proprietors. This will normally include:

- identity verification;
- medical fitness;
- qualifications relevant to the role;
- right to work in the host country;
- criminal record checks, ideally covering the last ten years;
- international police clearance certificates (ICPC), where staff have lived or worked in the UK;
- employment history, including explanation of any gaps; and
- minimum of two references; and

Additional documentation such as birth certificates and prohibition checks are recommended rather than mandatory and reflect a best practice approach.

Where staff have lived or worked in more than one country, inspectors will expect to see evidence that international police clearance certificates have been obtained. Where any check cannot be obtained, schools should be able to demonstrate that a clear, proportionate risk assessment has been completed and that interim safeguarding measures are in place.

Records for staff who have left the school should be retained in line with policy and local requirements. Inspectors will also expect to see evidence that governors or proprietors have been subject to appropriate suitability checks, in accordance with host country law.

The SCR should be actively maintained and regularly reviewed. Inspectors will check a sample of personnel files to verify the accuracy of entries and the consistency of record-keeping.

5.6 Training and Qualifications Related to Pupil Safety

Inspectors consider how effectively schools ensure that staff are competent to manage risks to pupil safety. This includes how safeguarding and safety-related training is planned, delivered and kept up to date, and how leaders assure themselves that staff understand their responsibilities.

Schools should be able to demonstrate that designated safeguarding leads and any deputies hold **current safeguarding training at Level 3 or higher**, and that staff involved in recruitment have up-to-date safer recruitment training. Inspectors also look at how first-aid cover is managed for on- and off-site activities, and whether staff in specialist roles, such as lifeguards, hold appropriate and current qualifications.

Schools should be prepared to provide evidence of relevant training and qualifications during inspection. Inspectors consider not only whether training has been completed, but whether it is current, role-specific and appropriate in supporting pupils' safety and wellbeing

5.7 Managing Safeguarding Concerns

Inspectors examine how safeguarding concerns are identified, recorded and managed over time. This includes reviewing safeguarding records and logs, considering how decisions are made, how actions are followed through, and how escalation routes are used to protect pupils effectively.

Inspectors recognise that safeguarding concerns can be complex and sensitive, particularly in international contexts where external services and referral pathways may differ from those in England. Schools should be able to explain how they decide when and how to involve external agencies, how they balance confidentiality with the need to act, and how ongoing risk is monitored and reviewed.

The focus of inspection is not on whether safeguarding concerns have occurred, but on whether the school's response has been timely, proportionate and effective in protecting pupils

5.8 Oversight and Accountability for Safeguarding

Effective safeguarding requires clear and robust oversight. Inspectors consider how safeguarding is monitored, reviewed and challenged at leadership level, and how this oversight contributes to the school's ability to protect pupils effectively. This includes

examining how safeguarding information is reported, how concerns and risks are scrutinised, and how leaders ensure that actions are taken and followed through.

Where a school has a governing body, board or proprietor, inspectors will explore how safeguarding responsibilities are exercised at this level. This may include how safeguarding information is shared with those responsible for governance, how leaders are held to account for safeguarding effectiveness, and how governance bodies assure themselves that safeguarding arrangements are working well in practice. Inspectors will also consider whether governors or proprietors receive appropriate safeguarding training, how regularly safeguarding is discussed and reviewed, and how patterns, risks or emerging concerns are identified and addressed over time.

5.9 Safeguarding During the Inspection

Safeguarding is a priority throughout the inspection process. Inspectors review safeguarding arrangements early in the visit and remain alert to safeguarding issues as inspection activity continues.

If inspectors identify safeguarding concerns during the visit, these will be raised immediately with the Lead Inspector, senior leaders and DSL for immediate action. Safeguarding issues are never deferred until the end of an inspection.

Inspectors' actions in relation to safeguarding are governed by Penta's safeguarding procedures and the Penta Code of Conduct for Inspectors, which requires prompt reporting, appropriate escalation and strict confidentiality at all times.

Penta inspectors will act in the best interests of pupils at all times.

Section 6

Leadership, Management and Governance

6.1 Leadership in the Context of BSO Inspection

Leadership and management are central to a school's ability to meet the Standards for British Schools Overseas. Inspectors consider how leaders at all levels demonstrate appropriate skills and knowledge for their roles, set direction, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards are met consistently. This includes evaluating how leaders understand the school's strengths and areas for development, how they establish strategic priorities, and how they promote continuous improvement in the quality of education and pupil welfare.

Inspectors also consider how leadership operates in practice. This includes how effectively leaders ensure that policies and expectations are translated into consistent and effective action across the school, how systems are monitored and reviewed, and how leaders hold themselves and others to account. Where a school has a governing body, board or proprietor, inspectors explore how oversight is exercised, how leaders are supported and challenged, and how those responsible for governance assure themselves that the school meets the BSO standards and actively promotes pupils' wellbeing, including through effective safeguarding arrangements.

6.2 Strategic Leadership, Self-Evaluation and School Improvement

Inspectors will consider how effectively leaders establish and communicate a clear vision that reflects the school's context, values and community. This vision should be translated into coherent planning and sustained action that supports pupils' learning, wellbeing and personal development.

Self-evaluation plays a key role in this process. Inspectors do not expect schools to follow a particular self-evaluation or school improvement model or format, but they will explore how leaders evaluate the quality of provision and how they know whether improvement actions are making a positive difference. Self-evaluation should be honest, reflective and rooted in practice. Effective self-evaluation is characterised by honesty, clarity and a focus on impact rather than aspiration.

6.3 Operational Management and Consistency of Practice

Alongside strategic leadership, inspectors evaluate how effectively schools are managed on a day-to-day basis. This includes how leaders ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, manage staffing and resources, and maintain safe and suitable premises.

Inspectors will consider whether:

- roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood;
- policies and procedures are implemented consistently;
- systems are reviewed and updated regularly; and
- leaders respond effectively to emerging risks or issues.

Operational effectiveness is judged by how reliably systems function in practice. Inspectors are interested in whether procedures are understood and followed by staff, whether issues are identified and addressed promptly and whether leaders maintain oversight of key areas such as safeguarding, staffing and premises. Documentation is considered in this context, but it is not evaluated in isolation from practice.

6.4 Governance and Proprietary Oversight

Where a school has a governing body, board or proprietor, inspectors will evaluate how effectively this body provides oversight and accountability. Governance structures vary

widely in international contexts, and inspectors take these differences into account when evaluating effectiveness.

Inspectors will explore how those responsible for governance:

- oversee safeguarding and pupil welfare;
- monitor the quality of education;
- monitor compliance with the BSO standards;
- hold senior leaders to account; and
- ensure that statutory and regulatory requirements are met.

Effective governance is reflected in informed oversight, clear accountability and a willingness to engage with difficult issues where necessary.

6.5 Safeguarding and Governance Accountability

Safeguarding oversight is a key governance responsibility. Inspectors will examine how safeguarding information is reported to and reviewed by governors or proprietors, and how they assure themselves that safeguarding arrangements are effective.

This includes how safeguarding risks and concerns are monitored over time, how governance bodies ensure that safeguarding training is appropriate and current and how they satisfy themselves that safeguarding arrangements are effective in practice. While governance models differ internationally, accountability for safeguarding must be clear and robust in all settings.

6.6 Staff Management, Professional Development and Wellbeing

Inspectors will consider how leaders ensure that staff have access to appropriate professional development, including training related to safeguarding and their specific roles. They will also explore how leaders manage workload and support staff wellbeing, recognising the pressures that can exist in international school contexts.

Inspection does not involve evaluation of individual staff performance. Instead, inspectors focus on whether leadership creates conditions in which staff can fulfil their responsibilities effectively and safely.

6.6 Staff Management, Professional Development and Wellbeing

Inspectors recognise that all aspects of staff performance and therefore pupil outcomes are closely linked to how well staff are supported, developed and managed. In evaluating leadership and management, inspectors consider how leaders ensure that staff are appropriately recruited, inducted and supported to fulfil their roles effectively.

A key aspect of this is the school's approach to continuous professional development. Inspectors consider how leaders identify staff development needs and provide access to training that supports both individual roles and whole-school priorities. This includes

professional development related to teaching and learning, curriculum delivery, assessment, safeguarding and leadership capacity. Inspectors are interested in how professional development is planned over time, how it is evaluated for impact, and how it contributes to consistent and effective practice across the school.

Inspectors also consider how leaders support staff wellbeing and manage workload, particularly in the context of international schools where staff may be adapting to new cultural, legal or educational environments. Effective leadership is reflected in clear expectations, appropriate support and a professional culture in which staff feel valued, supported and able to raise concerns. Inspection does not involve evaluating individual staff performance; instead, inspectors focus on whether leadership creates the conditions in which staff can develop professionally and work effectively in the best interests of pupils.

6.7 Communication, Culture and Professional Relationships

Effective leadership is underpinned by clear communication and a positive professional culture. Inspectors will consider how leaders communicate expectations, policies and priorities to staff, pupils and parents, in a clear, timely and accessible manner. They will also consider how leaders promote a culture of trust and respect between all stakeholders.

Inspectors will also explore whether staff, pupils and parents feel able to raise concerns, including safeguarding concerns and whistleblowing, without fear of reprisal. A culture in which concerns are welcomed and addressed constructively is a strong indicator of effective leadership and governance.

6.8 Accountability and Continuous Improvement

Inspectors will consider how leaders and those responsible for governance evaluate the impact of their work and respond to feedback from inspection, internal review or other external evaluation. Schools are expected to demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement, using evidence to inform development rather than viewing inspection as an end point.

Leaders should be able to explain how inspection findings are used to strengthen provision and improve outcomes for pupils over time.

Section 7

Evidence, Judgements and Reporting

7.1 How Evidence Is Considered in a Penta BSO Inspection

Judgements in a Penta BSO inspection are grounded in secure, triangulated evidence. Inspectors evaluate evidence gathered across the inspection to build a coherent and accurate picture of how effectively the school meets the Standards for British Schools Overseas. Evidence is drawn from a range of sources, including meetings with leaders, staff, pupils and parents; observations of teaching and learning; scrutiny of pupils' work; review of assessment information and data; scrutiny of policies and other documentation; and consideration of pupil voice.

Evidence is not considered in isolation. Inspectors look for consistency between what leaders describe, what documentation shows and what is observed in practice over time. Judgements are based on what is typical across the school, rather than on isolated examples. This approach supports fair and balanced judgement-making and reduces the risk of over-reliance on any single source of information.

Throughout the inspection, inspectors test and refine their understanding through professional dialogue, observation and review. Evidence gathering is purposeful and proportionate, focusing on the aspects of provision that matter most for pupils' safety, wellbeing and education. Safeguarding evidence may arise in any area of inspection activity and is considered as part of the overall evaluation.

7.2 Professional Judgement and Evaluation Against the Standards

Inspectors apply professional judgement when evaluating evidence against the Standards for British Schools Overseas. While the standards set out clear requirements, their application requires careful consideration of the school's context, the impact of provision on pupils, and the consistency with which practice is implemented across the school. Inspectors consider not only whether arrangements exist, but how effectively they work in practice and over time.

Judgements are based on whether each standard is met securely in day-to-day operation. In reaching these judgements, inspectors also evaluate the quality and effectiveness of provision within each standard, including how well it supports pupils' learning, wellbeing and safety. This evaluative approach informs the identification of strengths and any areas for improvement included in the inspection report and helps ensure that findings are proportionate and meaningful.

Inspectors do not compare schools with one another, nor do they apply personal preferences or expectations. Judgements are not based on individual examples of practice or isolated incidents. Instead, inspectors consider what is typical across the school and anchor their conclusions firmly in the published standards, supported by secure, triangulated evidence gathered during the inspection.

7.3 Moderation and Team Decision-Making

Judgement-making in a Penta BSO inspection is a collective process. Inspectors discuss evidence regularly within the inspection team in order to test assumptions, explore emerging findings and ensure that conclusions are secure and well founded. This shared approach supports consistency in judgement-making and reduces the risk of individual bias.

The Lead Inspector has overall responsibility for overseeing this process. This includes ensuring that evidence has been gathered from a suitable range of sources, that interpretations of evidence are consistent with the published standards, and that judgements are fair, proportionate and firmly grounded in evidence. The Lead Inspector also ensures that safeguarding considerations are fully integrated into decision-making throughout the inspection.

Where evidence is incomplete, unclear or appears inconsistent, inspectors do not rely on assumptions or partial information. Instead, they seek further clarification during the inspection through additional discussion, observation or review of documentation. This approach helps ensure that judgements accurately reflect the school's practice and are robust, balanced and defensible.

7.4 Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Inspection reports identify whether standards are met. They will also highlight strengths within the school's provision, which reflect aspects of practice that are effective, embedded and having a positive impact on pupils.

Where appropriate, reports may also identify areas for improvement. These are included to support school development and to highlight where further work would strengthen provision or improve consistency. Areas for improvement do not necessarily indicate non-compliance with the standards.

Inspectors take care to ensure that strengths and areas for improvement are clearly linked to evidence and explained in a way that is constructive and proportionate.

7.5 Verbal Feedback to the School

At the end of the inspection visit, the inspection team will provide verbal feedback of the inspection findings to the school's leaders. This will include whether the BSO standards are met, the key strengths identified and any areas for improvement.

The agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Thanks to owner, principal and key members of staff for collaboration in the inspection process
2. Thanks to teachers, pupils and parents for their cooperation

3. Outline process for meeting
4. Identify key features of the school
5. Provisional judgements for each BSO Standard, with brief explanation
6. Overall judgement – to recommend/not recommend for BSO accreditation
7. Suggest key areas for development
8. Outline post-inspection process: drafting of report, quality assurance processes (including complaints policy), factual accuracy checking of report and indicative timeline for publication
9. Questions invited for clarification of any aspect of the feedback or report process
10. Thanks and depart.

Verbal feedback is intended to be clear, balanced and professional. It reflects the inspection team's provisional judgements based on the evidence gathered during the visit. Schools should note that final judgements are confirmed through Penta's quality assurance processes before the inspection report is published.

Where safeguarding concerns have been identified, these will be addressed explicitly and, where necessary, followed up separately from the general feedback discussion.

7.6 Where the School Does Not Meet the BSO Standards

Where a school does not meet one or more of the Standards for British Schools Overseas, this will be clearly communicated with the school during the inspection. The lead inspector will identify the standard or standards that are not met and explain the reasons for this judgement. Where safeguarding or pupil welfare is affected, these matters will be given particular priority.

Following the inspection, the school is required to take action to address the unmet standards. Schools are expected to review their provision and implement appropriate steps to bring practice into compliance. This may involve strengthening leadership oversight, improving systems or processes, addressing gaps in training or staffing, or securing greater consistency in practice. While Penta does not require a specific format for improvement planning, schools should be able to demonstrate clearly how they are responding to the inspection findings.

Where standards are not met, a follow-up inspection or other monitoring activity will normally be required. The timing, scope and focus of this activity will depend on the nature and seriousness of the unmet standards and will be communicated clearly to the school. The purpose of follow-up activity is to evaluate whether the school has taken effective action and now meets the required standards.

Where standards are not met, a follow-up inspection or other monitoring activity will normally be required. The timing, scope and focus of this activity will depend on the nature

and seriousness of the unmet standards and will be communicated clearly to the school. Throughout this process, Penta consultants are available to offer guidance and clarification, helping schools to understand inspection findings and the steps needed to secure compliance. The purpose of any follow-up activity is to evaluate whether the school has taken effective action and now meets the required standards.

In some circumstances, particularly where significant non-compliance or unresolved safeguarding concerns remain, further action may be required in line with BSO accreditation requirements and Department for Education expectations. Schools will be kept informed of any additional requirements and the processes involved.

7.7 The Inspection Report

Following the inspection, the Lead Inspector prepares a written inspection report. The report:

- confirms whether each of the BSO standards are met;
- evaluates the school's provision against each relevant BSO standard;
- identifies strengths and areas for improvement; and
- provides an overall evaluative narrative for school leaders, parents and stakeholders.

Reports are written clearly and professionally, avoiding unnecessary technical language. The aim is to provide an accurate and accessible account of the inspection findings that reflects the evidence gathered.

7.8 Quality Assurance of Inspection Reports

All Penta BSO inspection reports are subject to rigorous quality assurance before publication. This process is designed to ensure that judgements are secure, evidence-based and consistent with inspection methodology and standards.

Quality assurance includes review by experienced quality assurance staff, who consider:

- the clarity and accuracy of the report;
- the alignment between evidence, judgements and standards;
- the handling of safeguarding issues; and
- the fairness and proportionality of conclusions.

Where necessary, inspectors may be asked to clarify evidence or revise sections of the report as part of this process.

7.9 Factual Accuracy Checks

Schools are given the opportunity to review the draft inspection report for factual accuracy. This stage allows schools to identify any factual errors or omissions, such as incorrect terminology, dates or descriptions, and to help ensure that the final report is accurate and clear.

Comments submitted should focus on factual matters and, where relevant, be supported by appropriate evidence. This process does not replace the formal complaints procedure, which is available if a school has concerns about inspection processes or outcomes.

The Lead Inspector considers all factual accuracy comments carefully and makes amendments where appropriate before the report is finalised and published.

7.10 Publication of the Report

Once quality assurance and factual accuracy processes are complete, the inspection report is finalised and published in accordance with Penta's reporting arrangements and DfE requirements.

Schools will be informed of publication timelines and expectations. Published reports provide assurance to parents and the wider community and form part of the school's inspection history.

7.11 Use of Inspection Findings

Inspection findings are intended to support improvement as well as accountability. Schools are encouraged to reflect on inspection outcomes, celebrate strengths and address areas for improvement in a proportionate and constructive manner.

Inspection should be viewed as part of a school's ongoing self-evaluation and development, rather than as a one-off event.

Section 8

Concerns, Complaints and Professional Conduct

8.1 Penta's Approach to Concerns and Complaints

Penta is committed to conducting BSO inspections with professionalism, fairness and transparency. Open and constructive dialogue between inspectors and school leaders is encouraged throughout the inspection process, and Penta aims to address concerns at the earliest possible stage.

Penta recognises that, on occasion, schools or other stakeholders may wish to raise a concern or make a complaint about inspection activity. All concerns and complaints are taken seriously and are handled in line with Penta's complaints policy, which is designed to ensure that matters are considered fairly, promptly and transparently.

8.2 Raising Concerns During an Inspection

If a concern arises during an inspection visit, school leaders are strongly encouraged to raise it as soon as possible with the Lead Inspector while the inspection is ongoing. Raising concerns promptly allows issues to be clarified or resolved at an early stage and helps ensure the smooth running of the inspection.

Inspectors will treat any concern raised respectfully and will record the discussion and any agreed actions. Where a concern cannot be resolved directly with the inspection team, school leaders may contact Penta head office during the inspection so that urgent matters can be considered while the inspection is still in progress.

8.3 The Difference Between a Concern and a Complaint

A concern is usually raised informally and is intended to seek clarification or resolution. Many concerns are resolved successfully through discussion during or shortly after the inspection.

A complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction with inspection activity, procedures, conduct or outcomes and follows a defined process and timescale. Understanding this distinction helps ensure that issues are addressed at the most appropriate stage.

Penta operates a staged complaints procedure, which includes informal resolution, formal investigation and, where appropriate, independent external review. Schools wishing to raise a formal complaint should do so in accordance with the timescales and requirements set out in Penta's complaints policy. Full details of each stage of the complaints process, including timescales and responsibilities, are provided in Appendix E of this handbook.

8.4 Complaints and Inspection Judgements

The complaints process is not intended to act as an appeal against inspection outcomes or to replace professional judgement. However, schools may raise concerns where they believe that inspection processes, conduct, fairness or the application of inspection methodology may have affected the reliability of inspection judgements.

Where a complaint identifies procedural errors, failures in evidence handling or other issues that could reasonably call inspection findings into question, these will be investigated carefully and appropriate action will be taken. Where inspection judgements are found to be secure, fair and supported by evidence, they will not be changed solely because they are disputed.

8.5 Professional Conduct of Inspectors

All Penta inspectors are required to act in accordance with Penta's professional expectations, as outlined in the Penta Code of Conduct for Inspectors (Appendix A). The Code of Conduct sets out clear expectations for professional behaviour before, during and after an inspection. It is designed to ensure that inspections are carried out with integrity, fairness and respect, and in a manner that reflects both international best practice and Penta's professional values

Concerns about inspector conduct are taken seriously. Any concerns should be raised immediately with the lead inspector, and may be pursued through Penta's concerns and complaints process. Where appropriate, outcomes may inform quality assurance processes or further training.

8.6 Record Keeping, Confidentiality and Learning

Penta maintains records of formal complaints and their outcomes in line with data protection requirements. Information is shared only with those who need it in order to investigate or respond to a complaint. Any information is stored securely.

Complaints and concerns are viewed as opportunities for reflection and improvement. Patterns or themes identified through complaints are reviewed by senior management and used to inform inspector training, quality assurance processes and the ongoing development of inspection practice.

Section 9

After the Inspection: Next Steps and Ongoing Engagement

9.1 Following the Inspection Visit

The conclusion of the inspection visit marks the end of on-site inspection activity, but not the end of the inspection process. Following the visit, inspectors complete report writing and quality assurance procedures, and schools are supported through the remaining stages in a clear and structured way. Schools will be kept informed of timelines, including report drafting, factual accuracy checks and publication.

As part of Penta's commitment to continuous evaluation and improvement, schools are invited to provide feedback on their experience of the inspection process, from initial contact through to receipt of the final inspection report.

9.2 Using Inspection Findings

Inspection findings are intended to provide schools with an accurate, independent evaluation of their provision against the Standards for British Schools Overseas. Schools are encouraged to reflect carefully on the inspection outcomes, considering both the strengths identified and any areas for improvement.

Strengths highlighted in the inspection report reflect effective and embedded practice and may provide assurance to leaders, staff, parents and the wider school community. Areas for improvement are included to support further development and should be viewed as opportunities to strengthen provision. Schools may find it helpful to discuss inspection findings with senior leaders, governance bodies and staff to ensure a shared understanding of priorities and next steps.

Inspection reports are published in line with Penta's reporting arrangements and Department for Education requirements. They form part of the school's public record. In line with BSO requirements, schools are responsible for communicating inspection outcomes to parents and the wider school community via the school's website or other means.

9.3 Follow-Up, Re-Inspection and Ongoing Engagement

In most cases, inspection marks the completion of the BSO inspection cycle. Where standards are not met, follow-up activity or re-inspection may be required in line with BSO requirements and Penta's procedures. Any follow-up expectations or timescales will be communicated clearly to the school.

British Schools Overseas are required by the Department for Education to undergo inspection every three years in order to maintain BSO accreditation. Penta aims to work constructively with schools across inspection cycles and values ongoing professional relationships that support schools in preparing for future inspections. While inspection judgements remain independent and evidence-based, Penta is committed to clear communication and supportive engagement so that schools understand expectations and feel confident in sustaining compliance with the BSO standards over time.

Penta values constructive and professional relationships with the schools it inspects. Schools may continue to engage with Penta after inspection for clarification or procedural matters, and to provide feedback on their inspection experience.

BSO inspection should be viewed as part of a school's ongoing journey of reflection and improvement. Effective schools use inspection findings alongside self-evaluation, stakeholder feedback and professional judgement to strengthen provision over time. Penta's approach to inspection is rooted in the belief that high-quality inspection supports improvement through clarity, fairness and professional dialogue, with the ultimate aim of enhancing pupils' educational experience and wellbeing.

Appendix A

Code of Conduct for Inspectors

This Code of Conduct sets out the expectations for inspectors during a school inspection. It is designed to ensure inspections are carried out with professionalism, fairness, and integrity, in line with international best practice and the values of Penta International.

1. Professional Behaviour

- Inspectors must uphold the highest professional standards at all times.
- All interactions with staff, pupils, parents, and governors should be conducted with courtesy, respect, and sensitivity.
- Inspectors must avoid behaviour that could be interpreted as intimidating, dismissive, or unprofessional.
- Judgements must be based only on evidence, never on personal opinion or bias.

2. Dress Code

- Inspectors are expected to dress professionally, reflecting the importance of the inspection process.
- Attire should be formal and appropriate for a school setting (e.g. business suit, smart dress, shirt and tie, formal shoes).
- Clothing must respect local cultural expectations.
- Casual wear such as jeans, trainers, T-shirts, or sportswear is not acceptable.

3. Confidentiality and Integrity

- All information obtained during the inspection is confidential.
- Information must not be shared outside the inspection team or with unauthorised individuals.
- Reports, notes, and feedback must be accurate, evidence-based, and impartial.
- Inspectors must act with integrity, avoiding conflicts of interest or inappropriate disclosure.

4. Communication and Collaboration

- Inspectors must communicate honestly, constructively, and consistently with evidence.
- Team members are expected to collaborate effectively, ensuring coherence in judgements.
- Professional dialogue and challenge within the team should be welcomed to secure consistency and fairness.

5. Respect for the School Community

- The well-being of pupils and staff must always be the priority.
- Inspectors should minimise disruption by working within normal school hours wherever possible, showing courtesy and flexibility, and respecting school routines and local customs.

6. Impartiality and Conflicts of Interest

- Inspectors must declare any prior connection with the school, its staff, or stakeholders that could undermine objectivity.
- Decisions and judgements must be free from prejudice, favouritism, or external influence.
- Any potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed immediately to the lead inspector.

7. Reporting Concerns to the Lead Inspector

- Concerns regarding safeguarding, staff conduct, or inspection processes must be raised immediately with the lead inspector.
- Inspectors should not address such concerns directly with school staff unless directed by the lead inspector.
- If the concern relates to the lead inspector, the matter must be escalated to Penta International senior management.

8. Safeguarding Responsibility

- Inspectors have a duty to act immediately if they observe or suspect any safeguarding concern.
- Such matters must be reported promptly to the lead inspector, who will determine next steps in line with safeguarding protocols.

9. Adherence to Process

- Inspectors must follow Penta International's inspection procedures and uphold the spirit of the process.
- All judgements should reliably and accurately reflect what the school does, without exaggeration or omission.

Appendix B

Penta BSO Criteria for Making Judgements (2026)

This framework brings together the June 2025 Penta International BSO Criteria for Making Judgements and the September 2025 Schools Inspection Toolkit descriptors into a single integrated reference document. It is designed to support British Schools Overseas inspections, internal self-evaluation, and quality assurance. Descriptors are written in Penta style, using a four-tier scale: Outstanding, Good, Satisfactory, and Inadequate. This version maintains the integrity of the Penta structure while incorporating the latest updates relating to inclusion, safeguarding culture, SEND, equality, and personal development. Prepared for professional use by Penta International, December 2025.

Part 1a: The Curriculum (Including Early Years and Post-16 Provision)

Outstanding

- The curriculum is broad, balanced, ambitious, and coherently designed from Early Years to Post-16, ensuring seamless progression and exceptional preparation for future learning and life.
- Intent, implementation, and impact are consistently strong; leaders articulate a compelling vision that inspires teachers and pupils alike.
- Reading, writing, communication, and mathematics are embedded across all subjects; early reading and phonics teaching are exemplary.
- Curriculum sequencing is precise and progressive, allowing pupils to revisit and deepen knowledge over time.
- All pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, have SEND, or speak English as an additional language, access the full curriculum and achieve highly.
- Early Years provision is rich and stimulating, focusing on language, curiosity, and confidence through purposeful play and exploration.
- Post-16 pathways are ambitious and well-matched to students' aspirations, offering academic and vocational breadth with excellent guidance and enrichment.
- British values, global awareness, and personal development are woven through all learning.
- Curriculum review is continuous, evidence-based, and research-informed, promoting innovation and sustained excellence.

Good

- The curriculum is broad, well-balanced, and clearly sequenced, enabling pupils of all abilities to make good progress.
- Subject and phase planning ensures coherence and progression from Early Years to Post-

16.

- Reading and mathematics are prioritised; early reading is taught systematically and effectively.
- SEND, EAL, and disadvantaged pupils access the curriculum with well-targeted support.
- Schemes of work are regularly reviewed, ensuring appropriate challenge and consistency.
- Early Years provides a well-planned balance of guided and independent learning; most children meet or exceed expected milestones.
- Post-16 programmes prepare students effectively for higher education, employment, or training.
- Enrichment and cross-curricular learning extend interest and deepen understanding.
- Curriculum leadership is strong and promotes improvement through collaboration and reflection.

Satisfactory

- The curriculum meets BSO requirements but lacks ambition or consistency between subjects and phases.
- Coverage is sufficient, but sequencing and progression vary; some subjects show repetition or gaps.
- Teaching of literacy and numeracy is adequate but inconsistent across phases.
- Provision for SEND, EAL, and disadvantaged pupils meets minimum expectations but lacks precision.
- Early Years and Post-16 programmes meet learners' needs but are not yet consistently good.
- Enrichment opportunities are available but limited in scope or participation.
- Monitoring occurs but is irregular or focuses more on compliance than quality.
- Curriculum intent is clear but not yet fully realised in classroom practice.

Inadequate

- The curriculum lacks breadth, balance, and ambition, leading to significant gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Planning is weak or disconnected, with little evidence of coherent sequencing or progression.
- Reading, writing, and mathematics are not effectively prioritised; early reading provision is weak.
- Adaptations for SEND, EAL, or disadvantaged pupils are ineffective or reduce entitlement.
- Early Years provision is poorly structured, failing to develop children's communication or readiness for Key Stage 1.
- Post-16 provision is mismatched to learners' needs and aspirations, with limited participation or poor outcomes.
- Enrichment is sparse, tokenistic, or inaccessible to many pupils.
- Curriculum leadership is ineffective, policies outdated, and evaluation minimal.
- The curriculum fails to promote British values, inclusion, or equality effectively

Part 1b: Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching across the school is inspirational, expertly planned, and sharply focused on pupils' learning needs.
- Teachers demonstrate deep subject knowledge and an understanding of how pupils learn best, using questioning and dialogue to probe, extend, and secure understanding.
- Lessons are dynamic, ambitious, and intellectually challenging, sustaining pupils' engagement and curiosity.
- Assessment is precise, reliable, and used intelligently to identify gaps, accelerate progress, and celebrate success.
- Pupils demonstrate exceptional independence, resilience, and enthusiasm for learning; they respond positively to feedback and take responsibility for improvement.
- Support and challenge for SEND, EAL, and disadvantaged pupils are seamlessly embedded within lessons, ensuring equitable access to the full curriculum.
- Behaviour for learning is exemplary; classrooms are calm, purposeful, and characterised by mutual respect.
- Teachers routinely adapt instruction based on assessment evidence and reflection.
- Collaborative professional practice enables continual refinement and innovation across departments.

Good

- Teaching is consistently effective across subjects and phases, enabling pupils to make good progress.
- Lessons are carefully planned with clear objectives, structure, and pace.
- Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and use varied strategies to sustain engagement and consolidate understanding.
- Assessment systems are well organised and provide accurate information about pupils' progress.
- Feedback is regular and constructive; pupils act upon it to improve their work.
- Expectations are high, and most pupils respond with focus and enthusiasm.
- Provision for SEND, EAL, and disadvantaged pupils is effective and increasingly consistent.
- Relationships are respectful, and classrooms are productive learning environments.
- Leadership ensures teaching quality is monitored and supported through professional dialogue and coaching.

Satisfactory

- Teaching enables pupils to make adequate but uneven progress across subjects or phases.
- Lesson planning is compliant and structured but may lack depth or creative differentiation.
- Some teachers use assessment effectively, while others rely on generic tasks that limit challenge.

- Feedback is present but inconsistent in quality or impact.
- Pupils are generally compliant but may show passive engagement or over-reliance on teacher direction.
- Support for SEND and EAL pupils exists but is inconsistently targeted or monitored.
- Lesson evaluation and peer collaboration occur but focus more on coverage than improvement.
- The overall quality of teaching secures satisfactory outcomes but does not yet inspire excellence.

Inadequate

- Teaching fails to ensure pupils make expected progress; significant weaknesses are evident across subjects or phases.
- Expectations are too low, and work lacks challenge or relevance.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is insecure, leading to misconceptions and superficial understanding.
- Assessment is inaccurate, infrequent, or unused to inform teaching.
- Feedback is minimal or unclear; pupils do not know how to improve.
- Behaviour frequently disrupts learning, and routines are poorly managed.
- Support for SEND, EAL, and disadvantaged pupils is weak or absent.
- Lessons lack focus and pace; time is wasted.
- Leadership oversight of teaching is ineffective, and staff underperformance is unaddressed.

Part 1c: Standards Achieved by Pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils make sustained and substantial progress across all subjects, phases, and groups, demonstrating deep understanding, mastery, and a love of learning.
- Attainment is well above UK benchmarks, reflecting consistently high expectations and challenge.
- Disadvantaged, SEND, and EAL pupils achieve exceptionally well; attainment gaps are minimal or closing rapidly.
- Pupils produce work of exceptional quality — fluent, creative, and accurate — showing clear progression over time.
- Reading, writing, and mathematics are secure and applied confidently across the curriculum.
- Pupils demonstrate high levels of independence, motivation, and pride in their achievements.
- Examination and assessment outcomes are robust, externally validated, and show sustained excellence over time.

- Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their next stage of education, training, or employment.

Good

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress in most subjects and phases.
- Attainment is above UK averages and shows consistent improvement over time.
- Gaps between groups, including SEND, EAL, and disadvantaged pupils, are closing securely.
- Work across subjects demonstrates accuracy, care, and effective use of key skills.
- Reading, writing, and mathematics are strong, and pupils use these skills confidently in different contexts.
- Assessment data is reliable and used to track and support progress effectively.
- Pupils display positive attitudes, perseverance, and confidence in tackling new learning.
- Outcomes prepare pupils well for the next stage of education or employment.

Satisfactory

- Pupils' achievement meets minimum BSO expectations but lacks consistency across subjects or groups.
- Progress is steady but not sustained; some pupils make better progress than others.
- Attainment is broadly in line with UK averages but shows little upward trend.
- SEND, EAL, and disadvantaged pupils make variable progress; targeted interventions are uneven in impact.
- Pupils' work is adequate but lacks depth or ambition.
- Reading, writing, and mathematics are secure but not yet applied fluently across subjects.
- Pupils are adequately prepared for the next stage, though with variable confidence and resilience.

Inadequate

- Pupils make insufficient progress; significant underachievement is evident across subjects or groups.
- Attainment is below UK expectations and declining.
- Gaps between groups persist or widen; support for SEND, EAL, or disadvantaged pupils is ineffective.
- Work lacks accuracy, depth, and progression; pupils show low expectations and limited effort.
- Reading, writing, and mathematics are weak and hinder access to the wider curriculum.
- Assessment evidence is unreliable or missing; teachers cannot demonstrate progress over time.
- Pupils are not prepared for the next stage of education or employment.
- Leadership fails to secure consistent achievement or effective use of assessment data.

Part 2: The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils (SMSC)

Outstanding

- The school's ethos and culture embody the principles of British education — respect, tolerance, integrity, and equality — and these values are lived and modelled daily by staff and pupils.
- Pupils demonstrate a highly developed understanding of moral responsibility and fairness, showing empathy, compassion, and honesty in their actions and relationships.
- Opportunities for spiritual reflection are deeply embedded in the curriculum and daily routines, encouraging pupils to explore meaning, belief, creativity, and self-awareness.
- Moral reasoning and ethical discussion are promoted through lessons, assemblies, and debates; pupils demonstrate confidence in discussing complex social issues.
- Social development is exceptional: pupils collaborate, lead, and contribute actively to school and community life through mentoring, charity work, and leadership programmes.
- Cultural development is rich and inclusive, celebrating diversity, heritage, and artistic expression. Pupils appreciate and respect different faiths, traditions, and perspectives.
- British values — democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect — are embedded across the curriculum and school culture, shaping pupils' attitudes and conduct.
- Pupils demonstrate confidence, resilience, and empathy; they contribute meaningfully to a safe, inclusive, and harmonious school community.
- The personal development curriculum is exemplary, fostering wellbeing, global awareness, and civic responsibility.

Good

- The school promotes SMSC development effectively through curriculum design, assemblies, and enrichment activities.
- Pupils are reflective, respectful, and aware of moral and ethical issues; they behave responsibly and support one another.
- Opportunities for spiritual reflection and cultural appreciation are built into lessons, particularly in humanities, arts, and PSHE.
- Pupils understand and apply British values, recognising the importance of democracy, respect, and fairness.
- Social skills are well developed; pupils work cooperatively and demonstrate leadership through roles such as prefects, peer mentors, or student councillors.
- Cultural education is broad and inclusive, fostering curiosity and respect for diversity.
- Pastoral care supports wellbeing and personal growth effectively; pupils show confidence and self-esteem.
- While the school's provision may lack the depth or integration of outstanding practice, SMSC is clearly valued and contributes positively to pupils' attitudes and conduct.

Satisfactory

- The school meets BSO expectations for SMSC, but provision lacks consistency or strategic depth across subjects and phases.
- Pupils show awareness of right and wrong and generally behave respectfully, but opportunities for moral reasoning and ethical discussion are limited.
- Spiritual development is addressed through assemblies or specific lessons but is not systematically planned or evaluated.
- Social interaction is positive, though leadership and collaboration opportunities are unevenly distributed.
- Cultural education takes place through discrete events or celebrations but is not embedded across the curriculum.
- British values are referenced in documentation and displays but are not consistently reinforced through teaching and daily practice.
- Personal development and wellbeing are promoted but not yet tracked or evaluated for impact.
- While pupils feel safe and included, the school has not yet built a coherent strategy to integrate SMSC principles into all aspects of school life.

Inadequate

- The school fails to meet BSO standards for SMSC; pupils show limited understanding or respect for British values.
- Incidents of disrespect, intolerance, or discrimination occur and are not effectively addressed.
- Pupils lack opportunities for reflection on moral or spiritual issues and demonstrate minimal awareness of ethical or social responsibility.
- Spiritual development is tokenistic; assemblies and lessons rarely encourage thought, creativity, or self-reflection.
- Moral development is weak — pupils may not understand right from wrong or the consequences of their behaviour.
- Social and cultural provision is narrow or neglected, leaving pupils ill-prepared for life in a diverse society.
- Personal development and wellbeing are poorly supported, and pupils lack confidence, empathy, or resilience.
- Leadership fails to embed SMSC principles within the curriculum, resulting in a culture that does not promote inclusion, respect, or equality.

Standard 3: The Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils

Outstanding

- The school has an exceptionally strong culture of safeguarding, underpinned by clear policies, robust systems, and vigilant practice at every level.
- Leaders, governors, and all staff share a collective responsibility for ensuring pupils' welfare, and this is embedded in every decision, policy, and interaction.
- The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** and deputies are highly trained, knowledgeable, and proactive in promoting best practice and ensuring compliance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) and BSO expectations.
- Record-keeping is meticulous, secure, and evidence-based; safeguarding files demonstrate prompt action, accurate chronology, and multi-agency collaboration.
- All staff receive high-quality, role-specific safeguarding training, with updates on emerging risks such as online safety, peer-on-peer abuse, and child-on-child harm.
- The **Single Central Record (SCR)** is exemplary — complete, audited, and reviewed regularly by leaders and governors, with robust oversight of safer recruitment.
- Pupils feel entirely safe and know how to seek help; they speak confidently about trusted adults and safeguarding procedures.
- Behaviour is exemplary, and relationships are characterised by kindness, empathy, and mutual respect.
- Health and safety systems, including risk assessment, first aid, and supervision, are consistently effective and reviewed regularly.
- Leaders use safeguarding data to evaluate trends, strengthen preventative work, and inform pastoral planning.

Good

- The school's safeguarding arrangements are effective and meet all statutory and BSO requirements.
- The DSL and deputies maintain accurate and confidential safeguarding records and act swiftly on concerns.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding training and demonstrate secure understanding of their responsibilities.
- The SCR is accurate, up to date, and checked periodically by leaders and governors.
- Pupils report feeling safe and well cared for; they are confident in how to raise concerns.
- Policies for child protection, behaviour, anti-bullying, and online safety are current and implemented consistently.
- Health and safety procedures are sound and effectively managed.
- Risk assessments are in place and reviewed at suitable intervals.
- The school works cooperatively with external agencies to support vulnerable pupils.
- While minor administrative issues or documentation delays may occasionally occur, these are quickly identified and resolved.

Satisfactory

- Safeguarding and welfare arrangements meet minimum BSO expectations but lack consistency or depth of monitoring.
- The DSL and deputies fulfil their duties but may not yet evaluate safeguarding trends or measure impact strategically.
- Staff receive safeguarding training annually, though updates and refreshers are sometimes delayed.
- Record-keeping is adequate but may lack detail or chronological clarity in some cases.
- The SCR meets requirements but shows minor gaps in annotation, verification, or date recording.
- Pupils feel generally safe, but communication about safeguarding procedures is not fully embedded.
- Health and safety procedures are compliant but inconsistently reviewed; risk assessments vary in quality.
- Behaviour and anti-bullying policies are in place but require more active monitoring or pupil input.
- Leadership oversight focuses on compliance rather than proactive safeguarding culture.
- While no serious concerns exist, systems rely heavily on a few key individuals rather than a whole-school culture of vigilance.

Inadequate

- Safeguarding and welfare arrangements fail to meet BSO or statutory expectations, placing pupils at risk.
- The DSL and leadership team lack oversight or fail to act promptly on safeguarding concerns.
- Record-keeping is poor, incomplete, or insecure; evidence of follow-up or agency engagement is missing.
- The SCR is inaccurate, incomplete, or not maintained, and pre-employment checks are missing or undocumented.
- Staff lack confidence in safeguarding procedures or have not received recent training.
- Pupils report feeling unsafe or uncertain about whom to approach for help.
- Policies are outdated or inconsistently applied, with weak oversight of anti-bullying or behaviour management.
- Risk assessments and site safety checks are missing, outdated, or ignored.
- Leadership and governance fail to ensure accountability for pupils' welfare or compliance with regulations.
- The school's arrangements for welfare, health, and safety are seriously deficient and non-compliant with BSO standards.

Standard 8: Leadership and Management

Outstanding

- Leadership at all levels is inspirational, visionary, and rooted in moral purpose; the headteacher and senior leaders embody integrity, professionalism, and ambition for every pupil.
- The school's aims are clear, inclusive, and fully aligned with British educational values, fostering excellence, equality, and wellbeing.
- Self-evaluation is rigorous, evidence-based, and outward-looking, driving continuous improvement across all areas of provision.
- Strategic planning is sharply focused, measurable, and responsive to pupils' needs and inspection evidence.
- Governance is exemplary: governors and proprietors combine strong support with rigorous professional challenge.
- Leaders ensure full compliance with BSO and statutory standards, particularly in safeguarding, safer recruitment, and health and safety.
- Staff morale is high; leaders promote a collaborative, reflective, and empowering culture where all staff feel valued.
- Professional development is ambitious, research-informed, and linked directly to the school's strategic priorities.
- Leadership succession is effectively planned, with distributed leadership strengthening consistency across phases.
- Communication is transparent and effective, ensuring trust and accountability among staff, parents, and the wider community.
- Leadership impact is evident in exceptional pupil outcomes, sustained compliance, and a culture of innovation and excellence.

Good

- Leadership and management are strong, effective, and focused on ensuring high standards of teaching, learning, and pupil welfare.
- The school's vision is clear and well understood by staff, pupils, and parents.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and identifies appropriate priorities for improvement.
- Development planning is coherent and monitored effectively.
- Governance provides both challenge and support, maintaining oversight of safeguarding, finance, and compliance.
- Policies are current and consistently implemented.
- Staff are well supported through effective performance management and professional development.
- Middle leaders are developing their roles and contribute positively to school improvement.
- Communication across the school community is open and respectful.
- While leadership is strong, areas such as strategic succession planning or data analysis could be refined further to move towards outstanding practice.

Satisfactory

- Leadership and management meet minimum expectations but lack consistency or strategic depth.
- The school's vision and values are understood but not fully embedded in everyday practice.
- Self-evaluation is descriptive rather than analytical, limiting its impact on improvement planning.
- Development planning identifies broad priorities but lacks measurable outcomes or regular review.
- Governance is functional but tends to accept information at face value, providing limited challenge.
- Safeguarding and compliance are secure but rely on a few key individuals rather than embedded systems.
- Staff morale is generally positive, though workload pressures or communication issues affect consistency.
- Professional development is available but not systematically linked to whole-school priorities.
- Leadership capacity below senior level is underdeveloped.
- The school functions effectively but lacks the coherent drive and accountability to achieve sustained excellence.

Inadequate

- Leadership and management are weak, disorganised, or ineffective, resulting in poor outcomes and non-compliance with BSO standards.
- The school's vision is unclear, poorly communicated, or not shared by staff.
- Self-evaluation is inaccurate or absent; leaders do not understand the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Development planning lacks coherence, measurable targets, or monitoring.
- Governance fails to provide oversight or challenge, particularly in safeguarding, finance, and health and safety.
- Policies are outdated or not implemented; compliance is poor.
- Staff morale is low, communication is poor, and accountability is weak.
- Professional development is minimal or irrelevant, and underperformance is not addressed.
- Safeguarding and safer recruitment oversight are unreliable or unsafe.
- Leadership decisions lack transparency and consistency, undermining trust and pupil outcomes.
- The school is not effectively managed and fails to meet the expectations of a British school overseas.

Appendix C

Effective school self-evaluation

A school self-evaluation (SEF) is a critical document for British Schools Overseas (BSO) inspections, reflecting how the school assesses its own strengths and areas for improvement. The self-evaluation should be thorough, evidence-based, and aligned with both UK and BSO standards. It should demonstrate the school's commitment to continuous improvement and be a clear reflection of its current performance.

1. Vision, Mission, and Values

1. The SEF should begin by outlining the school's vision, mission, and values, explaining how these guide the school's strategic direction, daily operations, and educational priorities.
2. Evidence should be provided showing how the school's ethos reflects British educational principles and international understanding.

2. Leadership and Management

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management structures, including governance. Include details about the roles and responsibilities of school leaders, middle management, and governors. The SEF should reflect on how leaders promote a culture of high expectations and accountability, ensuring alignment with the BSO framework.
2. Describe how leadership supports staff development, performance management, and succession planning.

3. Curriculum

1. Assess the breadth, balance, and structure of the curriculum, demonstrating how it is based on the English National Curriculum (or other UK-based curricula) and tailored to meet the needs of an international student body.
2. Show how the curriculum supports students' academic, personal, social, and cultural development, and provides opportunities for developing skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity.
3. The school should outline how the curriculum is regularly reviewed and adapted to ensure it remains relevant and challenging.

4. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

1. Provide an evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning across the school, using evidence such as lesson observations, work scrutiny, student progress data, and feedback from pupils and parents.
2. Address how the school promotes high standards of teaching and how it ensures consistency across different year groups and subjects.
3. The SEF should demonstrate the use of effective formative and summative assessments to track pupil progress.
- 4.

5. Inclusion and SEND Provision

1. Evaluate the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), showing how the school meets the needs of all learners.
2. Demonstrate how the school promotes an inclusive learning environment where diversity is respected and all students can thrive.
3. The SEF should assess the effectiveness of interventions and support systems in place for students with additional needs.

6. Pupil Progress and Achievement

1. Provide data on pupil outcomes, including academic attainment and progress across key stages, ensuring that this aligns with UK standards.
2. The SEF should include comparative analysis of results with UK benchmarks (e.g., SATs, GCSEs, A-Levels, or equivalent international qualifications).
3. Outline how the school tracks pupil progress and uses this information to identify underachievement and implement interventions.
4. Special attention should be given to groups such as students with SEND, those for whom English is an additional language (EAL), and gifted and talented students.

7. Pupil Behaviour and Attitudes

1. Evaluate pupils' behaviour, their attitudes to learning, and the general school culture in terms of discipline and respect.
2. Provide evidence of how the school promotes positive behaviour and manages challenging behaviour.
3. This section should include data on attendance, punctuality, and exclusions (if applicable).
4. The SEF should reflect how well the school fosters British values such as democracy, tolerance, and respect for diversity, ensuring pupils' personal development.

8. Personal Development and Wellbeing

1. Assess how well the school promotes the personal development and wellbeing of its pupils, including their social, emotional, physical, and mental health.

2. This section should highlight the school's pastoral care system, safeguarding measures, and how the school supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development.
3. Describe how the school fosters pupils' independence, resilience, and ability to take responsibility for their own learning and development.

9. Safeguarding and Health & Safety

1. Provide a detailed evaluation of the school's safeguarding practices, ensuring compliance with UK and local safeguarding laws.
2. The SEF should reflect on how effectively safeguarding policies are implemented and understood by all staff and students.
3. Outline procedures for managing health and safety, including risk assessments for school activities, and ensuring that the physical environment is safe and secure.

10. Staffing and Professional Development

1. Assess the quality and impact of the school's recruitment, retention, and professional development practices.
2. Reflect on how the school ensures staff are well-qualified, experienced, and continuously improving their practice through professional development, coaching, and mentoring.
3. Include how the school supports staff wellbeing and workload management, ensuring staff are able to maintain a high quality of teaching and learning.

11. School Environment

1. Evaluate the quality and suitability of the school's facilities and resources, ensuring they support high standards of education.
2. Reflect on how the school's physical environment, including classrooms, libraries, IT facilities, and outdoor spaces, enhances learning and wellbeing.
3. Include consideration of the maintenance of the school's infrastructure and plans for any future development.

12. Parental Engagement and Community Links

1. Evaluate how well the school engages with parents and the wider community, including communication strategies, parental involvement in school life, and opportunities for parents to give feedback.
2. Demonstrate how the school uses parental feedback to inform improvements and decision-making.
3. Highlight any partnerships with local or international organisations, schools, or community groups that enhance the school's provision.

13. Financial Management and Resource Allocation

1. Provide an evaluation of how effectively the school manages its financial resources, ensuring it remains sustainable.
2. Reflect on how the budget is aligned with the school's strategic priorities, ensuring that sufficient resources are allocated for staffing, professional development, and the curriculum.

14. Governance

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the school's governance structures, including how well the governing body holds the school's leadership to account and ensures continuous improvement.
2. Include details about the role of governors in strategic planning, financial oversight, and safeguarding.
3. Demonstrate how the governing body ensures compliance with BSO standards and its own accountability processes.

15. Self-Reflection and Improvement Plan

1. The SEF should include an outline of the school's priorities for improvement based on the areas identified as needing development.
2. This should include specific, measurable targets and timelines for achieving these goals, with responsibilities clearly assigned to school leaders and staff.
3. The SEF should demonstrate a commitment to continuous self-reflection and improvement.

16. Compliance with BSO Standards

1. A key part of the SEF should include an evaluation of how well the school meets the BSO standards, ensuring that it complies with UK expectations in areas such as safeguarding, governance, teaching, curriculum, and leadership.
2. The school should provide evidence of meeting these standards and identify any areas where further work is required.

Appendix D

Evidence for BSO Standards

When evaluating whether a school meets, or does not meet BSO standards, inspectors consider a wide range of evidence sources. This typically includes meetings with leaders, staff, pupils and, where appropriate, governors or proprietors; lesson observations and learning walks; scrutiny of pupils' work; review of curriculum documentation and assessment information; consideration of academic outcomes; and examination of safeguarding arrangements, including the Single Central Record, safeguarding records and training information.

Inspectors also take account of the school's self-evaluation and pupils' experiences. Evidence is evaluated holistically, with judgements based on what is typical in practice rather than on isolated examples.

The following sections contain examples of the types of evidence typically considered.

The British Nature of the school

School characteristics that may denote Britishness:

Safeguarding

- Safeguarding and child protection policies are derived from UK best practice. All staff are required to complete regular training through the online platform, as well as attend annual refresher sessions with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

Curriculum and Teaching & Learning

- The curriculum is based on the National Curriculum for England, the Early Years Foundation Stage programme and iGCSE, AS and A level public examination requirements.
- All students follow the National Curriculum for England. The school's interpretation of it has been carefully designed to reflect its British nature, but also take into account demographics. Consequently, students can enter schools in the UK without significant disruption. The school also closely follows the national statutory requirements and is committed to providing a curriculum that is in line with the expectations of the host country Ministry of Education (MOE).
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities is in place to support and extend the formal curriculum.
- Off-site visits and relevant visitors offer further enrichment to the stated curriculum, as do celebrations and school events which have a distinctly British nature, for example Remembrance Sunday and Carol Concerts.
- Styles of teaching and learning are informed by UK best practice, and staff professional development is used to develop consistency of approach in this area.
- The school's assessments are UK sourced and benchmarked against UK standards.

- Pupils develop a love of learning, and the skills of enquiry and teamwork they will need in the future.
- The school is a member of BSME/FOBISEA/COBIS, which provides access to a plethora of academic and extracurricular experiences for pupils.

Values

- The school's values reflect the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- The education of the whole child and the development of the broader skills and awareness towards becoming a valuable, contributing citizen in society are important aspects of school life.
- The school promotes British values through its vision, curriculum activities, displays and events.
- The school has a palpable British feel and appearance.

Campus

- The school campus and facilities support the curriculum in place and provide appropriate areas for learning, socialising and recreation.
- The school is maintained to high levels of safety and cleanliness.
- The school is well resourced with books and materials of the type that are in use in other British curriculum schools.
- The library has a collection of British and world literature.

Pastoral Care

- The school has a pastoral care system that is recognisably British, operating through form tutors and senior tutors.
- There is high importance placed on pastoral care, with dedicated staff positions created to foster and support pupils' welfare and well-being.
- The school's house point and rewards system reflect those used in UK schools.
- The pupils are divided into year groups, Key Stages and school sections consistent with British definitions and age-groups.
- Pupils wear a school uniform.

Staffing

- The school employs a significant proportion of native English teachers, the vast majority of whom are PGCE trained and have experience in the UK.
- The school leadership hierarchy is common to British schools, with clearly described roles for leaders and teachers in both junior and senior sections of the school.
- There is a generously-funded continuous professional development (CPD) programme for all staff, a significant proportion of which is for UK-based training.
- When conditions allow, staff both attend and present at HMC, COBIS and other relevant conferences.
- The school is a member of BSME/FOBISEA/COBIS, which provides a range of excellent training opportunities for staff and leaders.

Standard 1 - The quality of education provided by the school

Inspection of Standard 1 considers how well the school's curriculum intent is designed to meet pupils' needs, how effectively it is implemented through teaching and assessment, and the impact this has on pupils' outcomes and development over time. Inspectors evaluate evidence holistically and in relation to the school's context, while ensuring full compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas.

1a. Curriculum (Intent – what the school plans)

Inspectors evaluate the curriculum the school intends pupils to follow and the extent to which this reflects statutory requirements, the school's aims and the needs of its pupils.

Evidence typically includes:

- A written curriculum policy, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which is implemented effectively and reviewed regularly
- Clear curriculum aims and rationale, including how leaders articulate the purpose of the curriculum and how it reflects the school's ethos and context
- Curriculum breadth and balance, ensuring pupils receive full-time supervised education across linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative areas
- Curriculum frameworks and compliance, including alignment with the National Curriculum for England or another stated curriculum framework adopted by the school
- Curriculum sequencing and progression, demonstrated through long-term plans, curriculum maps and schemes of work showing how knowledge and skills build over time
- Provision for literacy, numeracy and communication, including spoken and written English where English is not the principal language of instruction
- Provision for PSHE, including relationships education (primary) and relationships and sex education (secondary), supported by up-to-date policies, parental consultation and appropriate withdrawal arrangements
- Careers education (secondary), including access to accurate, impartial and up-to-date careers guidance that supports informed decision-making
- Early years and post-16 provision, where applicable, ensuring programmes are appropriate to pupils' age, stage and needs
- Inclusion and equality, including how curriculum planning takes account of pupils' ages, aptitudes and needs, particularly pupils with SEND, EAL learners and the most able
- British values and preparation for life in British society, ensuring the curriculum does not undermine and actively supports democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance

- Enrichment and extracurricular opportunities that extend learning beyond the classroom
- Use of technology and digital literacy, where relevant, as part of curriculum planning
- Curriculum review and improvement, including how leaders evaluate curriculum effectiveness and respond to identified strengths and areas for development

Inspectors will consider curriculum documentation, subject plans, schemes of work, leaders' explanations, enrichment programmes and curriculum review records.

1b. Teaching and Assessment (Implementation – how the curriculum is delivered)

Inspectors evaluate how effectively the curriculum intent is translated into classroom practice and how assessment supports learning and progress.

Evidence typically includes:

- Lesson planning and preparation, aligned to curriculum intent and adapted to meet pupils' differing needs
- Teaching methods and subject knowledge, including clarity of explanation, questioning, modelling and activities that support learning
- Understanding of pupils' prior attainment and needs, including how teaching is adapted for pupils with SEND, EAL learners and other groups
- Classroom practice and learning environments, including effective use of time, resources and positive behaviour management that supports learning
- Deployment of support staff, including how additional adults contribute to learning and inclusion
- Assessment frameworks, including regular and thorough assessment of pupils' work and systematic use of assessment information to inform planning
- Formative and summative assessment practices, and how these align with curriculum goals
- Feedback to pupils, including timeliness, quality and how pupils use feedback to improve
- Consistency of practice, including expectations for teaching and assessment across subjects and year groups
- Non-discrimination in practice, including fair access to learning and assessment for all pupils
- Professional development and collaboration, including training, moderation, mentoring and sharing of best practice

Inspectors will conduct lesson observations and learning walks, scrutinise pupils' work, consider assessment records, planning documentation and training records and hold staff discussions.

1c. Impact and Outcomes (Impact – what pupils achieve)

Inspectors evaluate the outcomes pupils achieve as a result of the education provided and whether these outcomes are appropriate to pupils' starting points.

Evidence typically includes:

- Pupils' progress over time, measured against starting points and across subjects and phases
- Attainment and academic outcomes, including internal assessment data and external examination results, interpreted in context
- Quality and consistency of pupils' work, seen in books, portfolios and coursework over time
- Outcomes for different groups, including pupils with SEND, EAL learners and the most able, and the effectiveness of support and adaptation
- Reliability of teacher assessment, including moderation processes and alignment with external benchmarks where appropriate
- Pupils' attitudes, engagement and independence, including motivation, resilience and enthusiasm for learning
- Wider outcomes, including personal development, wellbeing and participation in enrichment activities
- Preparation for next steps, including post-16 and post-school destinations where relevant
- Impact of careers guidance, particularly for secondary-age pupils

Inspectors will consider pupils' work, tracking and attainment data, examination outcomes, moderation records, pupil discussions and destination information.

Bringing the evidence together for Standard 1

Inspectors consider evidence across curriculum intent, teaching and assessment, and impact in the round. Judgements are based on what is typical over time, not isolated examples. Inspectors evaluate how well the school's planned curriculum is implemented in practice and the extent to which this leads to positive outcomes for all pupils, including those with SEND, and effective preparation for life in British society.

Standard 2 – The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students

Inspection of Standard 2 evaluates how effectively the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development and how this supports their personal growth, wellbeing and preparation for life in British society and the host country. Inspectors consider how SMSC development is planned, promoted and embedded across the curriculum, pastoral provision and wider school life.

The standard is met where the proprietor actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and ensures that these principles are reflected consistently in practice.

Spiritual Development

Inspectors consider how the school supports pupils' spiritual development by enabling them to explore beliefs, values and meaning, and by fostering reflection and self-awareness.

Evidence typically includes:

- Opportunities for reflection and contemplation, within lessons, assemblies or other structured activities
- Experiences that promote a sense of awe and wonder about the natural world, human achievement or creativity
- Religious education or belief-based learning, where provided, that is inclusive and respectful of different faiths and beliefs
- Activities that support self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence, enabling pupils to reflect on their own values and identity
- Evidence that pupils are encouraged to think deeply, ask questions and develop insight into moral, spiritual or philosophical issues

Inspectors will consider curriculum plans, assemblies, lesson observations, pupil discussions, and the school's ethos as reflected in daily practice.

Moral Development

Inspectors evaluate how effectively the school helps pupils to understand right and wrong and to develop a clear moral framework for decision-making and behaviour.

Evidence typically includes:

- Clear expectations for behaviour and conduct, supported by policies that promote responsibility, fairness and respect
- Teaching and discussion of ethical issues and moral dilemmas, enabling pupils to consider different viewpoints

- Evidence that pupils understand and respect rules, laws and authority, including respect for the civil and criminal law of England
- Opportunities for pupils to accept responsibility for their actions, show initiative and reflect on the consequences of behaviour
- The presence of positive role models, including staff conduct and leadership that reinforces moral expectations

Inspectors will consider whether moral development is promoted consistently through teaching, behaviour management, pastoral systems and daily interactions.

Social Development

Inspectors consider how well the school enables pupils to develop the skills, attitudes and understanding needed to participate positively in school, community and wider society.

Evidence typically includes:

- Opportunities to develop social and communication skills, including collaboration, teamwork and conflict resolution
- Pupils' participation in school and community life, including leadership roles, councils, committees or service activities
- Teaching and experiences that help pupils understand how they can contribute positively to society, both locally and more widely
- Evidence that pupils acquire a broad understanding of public institutions and services in England, alongside awareness of citizenship responsibilities in the host country
- Inclusive practices that promote belonging and participation for all pupils, including those with SEND or from different cultural backgrounds

Inspectors also consider how the school supports pupils' independence, initiative and readiness for adult life.

Cultural Development

Inspectors evaluate how effectively the school promotes respect for and understanding of different cultures, traditions and perspectives.

Evidence typically includes:

- Curriculum content and activities that promote cultural awareness and appreciation, including pupils' own and other cultures
- Opportunities to engage with music, art, drama, literature and cultural events
- Evidence that diversity is valued and celebrated, and that pupils develop tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions
- Promotion of a global perspective, reflecting the international context in which the school operates

- Clear commitment to equality and respect, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, within the laws of the host country.

Inspectors will consider whether cultural development is inclusive, authentic and embedded across school life.

Political Impartiality and Balance

Inspectors evaluate how the school actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance. This includes consideration of how pupils learn about democratic processes and participation, how laws are made and applied, and how respectful dialogue is encouraged.

Inspectors also consider whether the school precludes the promotion of partisan political views. Where political issues are raised, whether through lessons, assemblies, extracurricular activities or materials, inspectors will consider whether pupils are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views, appropriate to their age and understanding.

As part of this evaluation, inspectors consider how the school protects pupils from exposure to extremist views and the risk of radicalisation, and how it fulfils its Prevent Duty. This includes how staff are trained, how safeguarding arrangements support pupils' resilience, and how values education helps pupils to reject intolerance and extremism.

Evidence Sources and Inspection Activities

Inspectors typically gather evidence through:

- Review of policies and curriculum documentation, including SMSC, PSHE and pastoral plans
- Lesson observations, learning walks and scrutiny of pupils' work
- Observation of assemblies, events and extracurricular activities
- Discussions with pupils, staff and leaders about values, experiences and impact
- Staff training records, including extremism awareness where applicable
- Consideration of parental feedback, where available
- Review of records relating to enrichment, community engagement and pupil leadership

Standard 3: The Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils

Inspection of Standard 3 evaluates how effectively the school safeguards and promotes the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Inspectors consider whether appropriate policies, procedures and practices are in place, implemented consistently, and effective in protecting pupils and supporting their wellbeing, taking account of the relevant laws of the host country.

This standard focuses on operational safeguarding and welfare arrangements. Leadership oversight and governance of safeguarding are considered separately under Standard 8.

Safeguarding and Pupil Welfare

Inspectors evaluate whether effective arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and whether these arrangements are understood and applied consistently across the school.

Evidence typically includes:

- **Safeguarding policies and procedures**

The school has clear, up-to-date safeguarding and child protection policies that comply with host country law and reflect UK safeguarding principles (KCSIE). Policies set out procedures for responding to concerns such as abuse, neglect, peer-on-peer abuse, bullying, exploitation and wellbeing issues, and are accessible and understood by staff, parents and pupils.

- **Designated safeguarding leadership**

A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies are in place, with clearly defined responsibilities, minimum Level 3 training and a secure understanding of local safeguarding systems and relevant UK guidance. Safeguarding responsibilities are covered effectively at all times.

- **Staff training and awareness**

All staff, including teaching, support, administrative and temporary staff, receive regular safeguarding training. Staff understand how to recognise concerns, know how to report them, and feel confident to do so. Training covers child protection and wider safeguarding themes, including online safety and peer-on-peer abuse.

- **Safer recruitment and vetting**

Robust safer recruitment practices are in place for staff, volunteers and contractors. Appropriate background checks are completed, including ICPC or equivalent checks. Identity, qualifications and employment history are verified, and the Single Central Record is complete, accurate and up to date, and audited regularly by a member of SLT.

- **Safeguarding culture and pupil awareness**

The school promotes a strong safeguarding culture in which pupils feel safe, listened to and supported. Pupils know how to raise concerns and access help, and receive age-appropriate education on personal safety, relationships, consent and online safety.

- **Safeguarding records and case management**

Safeguarding concerns are recorded clearly, securely and confidentially. Records demonstrate timely decision-making, appropriate escalation and follow-up, with actions focused on protecting pupils. Oversight of records is clearly assigned, usually to the DSL.

- **Handling concerns and allegations**

Clear procedures are in place for managing safeguarding concerns and allegations against staff or pupils. Allegations are taken seriously, handled consistently and escalated appropriately to external agencies where required.

- **Online safety and protection from extremism**

Policies and practices protect pupils from online risks, including cyberbullying, inappropriate content and exploitation. Proportionate measures are in place to protect pupils from extremist views and the risk of radicalisation, supported by staff awareness and clear reporting routes.

- **Engagement with external agencies**

The school works effectively with local safeguarding agencies and services, understands referral pathways, and can explain how decisions are made about involving external support to protect pupils.

- **Monitoring and review of safeguarding**

Safeguarding arrangements are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective. Leaders monitor practice, respond to emerging risks and take action to strengthen safeguarding where needed. A member of the board of governors has oversight of safeguarding and regularly reviews practices with senior leaders.

Inspectors focus not on whether safeguarding concerns have occurred, but on whether the school's arrangements, responses and culture are effective in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils, taking account of the laws of the host country.

Behaviour, Bullying and Attendance

Inspectors consider whether the school promotes positive behaviour and attendance and takes effective steps to prevent bullying.

Evidence typically includes:

- A **written behaviour policy**, setting out expectations, rewards and sanctions, implemented consistently in practice
- Records of **serious behavioural incidents and sanctions**, where applicable
- An effective **anti-bullying strategy**, including procedures for prevention, reporting and response
- Evidence that pupils understand expectations for behaviour and feel safe from bullying and harassment
- **Attendance and admissions registers** maintained in line with host country requirements
- Procedures for monitoring attendance and responding appropriately to concerns

Inspectors consider whether behaviour systems promote responsibility, respect and pupil welfare.

Health and Safety and Risk Management

Inspectors evaluate whether the school complies with relevant health and safety requirements and manages risk effectively in day-to-day operations. Premises standards are inspected separately under Standard 5.

Evidence typically includes:

- A written health and safety policy, compliant with host country law and implemented effectively
- A written fire safety policy, including procedures and records of drills and staff awareness
- A written first aid policy, including evidence of timely and competent first aid provision
- Appropriate risk assessments, including for activities, trips and events, and evidence that risks are reduced where identified
- Systems for incident reporting and follow-up, including learning from incidents
- Clear emergency procedures, understood by staff and pupils

Inspectors consider whether health and safety arrangements are in line with local law and regulations. They also consider if arrangements are understood by staff, pupils and where appropriate parents, and consistently applied.

Supervision of Pupils

Inspectors consider whether pupils are appropriately supervised to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

Evidence typically includes:

- Deployment of staff to ensure effective supervision during lessons, breaks, transitions and activities
- Supervision arrangements for off-site visits and activities, supported by risk assessment
- Clear expectations for staff responsibility and duty of care

Where boarding provision exists, inspectors also consider arrangements for the welfare and supervision of boarders, having regard to the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools where applicable.

Evidence Sources and Inspection Activities

Inspectors typically gather evidence through:

- Review of safeguarding, behaviour, health and safety, fire safety and first aid policies
- Scrutiny of safeguarding records, behaviour logs and attendance registers
- Discussions with leaders, staff and pupils
- Observation of daily routines, supervision and pupil interactions

- Review of risk assessments and incident records

Standard 4 - The suitability of the proprietor and staff

Inspection of Standard 4 evaluates whether the proprietor has ensured that all staff, supply staff and proprietors are suitable to work with children. Inspectors consider whether required checks are carried out before appointment, whether safer recruitment practices are robust, and whether records are complete, accurate and maintained appropriately, in line with host country law and BSO requirements.

This standard focuses on recruitment, pre-appointment checks and record-keeping. The effectiveness of safeguarding practice is evaluated separately under Standard 3.

Suitability of Staff (Employed by the School)

Inspectors consider whether appropriate checks are completed for all staff before appointment.

Evidence typically includes confirmation that, for each member of staff:

- identity has been verified;
- medical fitness has been assessed;
- the right to work in the host country has been confirmed;
- relevant qualifications have been checked;
- an International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) has been obtained where the individual has worked, or currently works, in the UK;
- where staff have worked in other countries additional overseas checks have been completed;
- appointments comply with all laws relating to the role in the host country.

Inspectors evaluate whether the proprietor has reviewed the information obtained and determined that the individual is suitable for the role.

Safer Recruitment Practice

Inspectors also consider the quality of the school's safer recruitment processes and whether these are applied consistently in practice.

Evidence typically includes:

- recruitment procedures that embed safeguarding considerations at all stages, including advertising, shortlisting, interview and appointment;
- evidence that staff involved in recruitment have completed safer recruitment training, which is refreshed regularly;

- secure reference-checking practices, including a minimum of two written references, obtained before appointment, and verification by telephone where appropriate;
- checks to ensure that references explore suitability to work with children and any safeguarding concerns;
- evidence that prohibition checks are undertaken (best practice);
- verification of identity documentation, including birth certificates (best practice).

Inspectors consider whether safer recruitment practice is understood by those involved and applied consistently, rather than operating solely as a paper exercise.

Suitability of Supply Staff

Inspectors evaluate whether appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure the suitability of supply staff.

Evidence typically includes confirmation that:

- supply staff are offered in line with host country legal requirements;
- identity checks are completed before supply staff begin work at the school;
- the proprietor is satisfied that supply staff are suitable for the work they undertake.

Suitability of Proprietors

Where the school has an individual proprietor or a body of proprietors, inspectors consider whether:

- relevant suitability checks have been completed in accordance with host country law; and
- records demonstrate that these checks have been carried out appropriately.

Record Keeping: The Single Central Register

Inspectors examine whether the proprietor maintains a Single Central Register (SCR).

The register should include:

- confirmation of identity checks;
- confirmation of right to work in the host country;
- confirmation of qualification checks where required;
- records of ICPC checks and dates obtained;
- records of additional overseas checks undertaken with dates;
- confirmation that proprietor checks have been completed where applicable.

The SCR should include:

- all staff (including supply staff and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school
- all others who work in regular contact with children in the school
- volunteers or interns
- all members of the governing body

- the proprietors in proprietor-led schools

Inspectors also consider whether:

- the SCR clearly identifies current and former staff, with accurate start and end dates;
- records for staff who have left the school are retained appropriately;
- the SCR is regularly reviewed and audited, including by senior leaders and, where applicable, governors or proprietors.

Inspection Focus

Inspectors focus on whether:

- all required checks are completed before appointment;
- safer recruitment practice is robust and consistently applied;
- decisions about suitability are informed; and
- recruitment and vetting records are complete, accurate and well maintained.

The standard is met where the proprietor can demonstrate that only suitable staff, supply staff and proprietors are permitted to work with pupils, supported by clear processes and secure record-keeping.

Standard 5: Premises and Accommodation

Inspection of premises and accommodation focuses on whether the school's facilities are fit for purpose, safe, and appropriate for the pupils who attend the school, taking account of age, numbers, needs and the host country context.

Inspectors do not carry out a technical building inspection. Instead, they consider whether the physical environment supports pupils' health, safety, welfare and learning.

Inspectors will typically consider whether:

- **Facilities are suitable for pupils**
Toilets, washing and changing facilities are sufficient, accessible and appropriate for pupils' ages and needs, including provision for pupils with disabilities where required.
- **Medical needs can be met**
There is suitable space to care for pupils who are unwell or injured, and appropriate accommodation where pupils have more complex medical or physical needs.
- **Premises are safe and well maintained**
Buildings and grounds are maintained to a reasonable standard, free from obvious hazards, and support pupils' wellbeing during the school day.
- **Learning spaces are appropriate**
Classrooms and specialist spaces have suitable lighting, ventilation and acoustics for the activities that take place in them.

- **Basic facilities support daily school life**
Pupils have access to safe drinking water, appropriate sanitation, and outdoor space for play and physical education.
- **Facilities support inclusion**
The premises enable pupils with additional needs to access education safely and with dignity, with reasonable adjustments where required.
- **Boarding accommodation is appropriate (where applicable)**
Where the school offers boarding, accommodation and facilities support pupils' welfare and are suitable for their age and needs.

How Evidence Is Gathered

Inspectors typically gather evidence through:

- site walks and observation of how facilities are used;
- discussions with staff responsible for premises and health and safety;
- consideration of how the physical environment supports pupils during the school day.

Standard 6: Provision of Information for Parents, Carers and Others

Inspection of this standard considers how well the school provides clear, accurate and accessible information to parents, carers and others. Inspectors evaluate whether information is available, up to date and communicated in a way that supports parents' understanding of the school and their child's education.

The focus is on openness, accessibility and quality of communication, rather than volume of information.

Information About the School

Inspectors check that parents and prospective parents can readily access basic information about the school.

This typically includes:

- the school's name, address and contact details;
- the name of the headteacher;
- details of the proprietor and, where applicable, the governing body;
- a clear statement of the school's ethos and aims.

Inspectors usually review the school's website and other published materials as part of this evaluation.

Policies and Key Documents

Inspectors consider whether required policies and information are available to parents and provided on request where appropriate.

This includes information about:

- admissions, behaviour, exclusions and complaints;
- safeguarding and welfare arrangements;
- provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and pupils with English as an additional language (EAL);
- arrangements for meeting relevant BSO standards;
- academic performance, including public examination outcomes where applicable
- The most recent BSO inspection report is published and accessible to parents

Inspectors check that policies are current, accessible and clearly presented.

Reporting on Pupils' Progress and Attainment

Inspectors evaluate the quality of information provided to parents about their child's progress.

This includes whether:

- parents receive regular written reports on pupils' progress and attainment;
- reports are clear, informative and reflect pupils' learning over time;
- information supports parents' understanding of strengths, next steps and outcomes.

Inspectors do not evaluate individual reports in isolation, but consider typicality and consistency.

Communication and Engagement with Parents

Inspectors consider how effectively the school communicates with parents and carers.

This may include:

- availability of newsletters, emails or digital communications;
- parent meetings, consultations and information events;
- opportunities for parents to raise concerns or ask questions;
- systems for gathering and responding to parental feedback.

Inspectors may draw on parent survey responses and discussions to inform this evaluation.

Standard 7: Handling of Complaints

Inspection of this standard considers whether the school has a clear, fair and accessible complaints procedure and whether it is implemented effectively in practice. The focus is on whether the procedure works as intended and gives parents confidence that concerns will be handled properly.

Inspectors typically consider whether:

- **A clear written complaints procedure is in place**
The school has a written complaints policy that is available to parents, written in accessible language and clearly explains how concerns and complaints are managed.
- **Concerns can be raised informally**
The procedure allows for concerns to be raised and addressed informally at an early stage, with the aim of resolving issues promptly and constructively.
- **Formal stages are clearly set out**
Where concerns are not resolved informally, the policy sets out a formal process, including clear timescales and arrangements for escalation.
- **Independent review is available**
The procedure includes provision for an independent panel or reviewer at the final stage, where required, and explains how parents may participate in this process.
- **Records are maintained appropriately**
The school keeps a written record of formal complaints and actions taken, and handles complaints with appropriate confidentiality.
- **Outcomes are communicated clearly**
Parents are informed of the outcome of their complaint and, where relevant, any actions taken as a result.

Inspectors typically gather evidence through:

- review of the complaints policy;
- confirmation that the policy is accessible to parents;
- discussion with school leaders about how complaints are handled in practice;
- consideration of records relating to formal complaints, where relevant.

Standard 8: Leadership and Management

Inspection of leadership and management considers whether those responsible for running the school have the skills, knowledge and capacity to ensure that the BSO standards are met consistently. Inspectors focus particularly on how leaders and governors secure and improve the quality of education (Standard 1), pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (Standard 2), and welfare, health and safety (Standard 3).

The standard is met where leaders fulfil their responsibilities effectively and actively promote pupils' wellbeing, including pupils' physical and mental health, emotional wellbeing, protection from harm and neglect, education and recreation, contribution to society, and social and economic wellbeing.

Inspectors typically consider whether:

- **Leadership is knowledgeable and effective**
Leaders understand the BSO standards and can explain how they ensure compliance and quality in practice. Responsibilities are clearly defined, and leaders have the capability to discharge them effectively.
- **Self-evaluation and strategic direction is focused and accurate**
The school has a clear sense of purpose and priorities. Plans are implemented and reviewed, and leaders use evaluation to focus improvement work on the aspects that matter most for pupils.
- **Governance and proprietorial oversight are effective**
Where a governing body or proprietor is in place, inspectors consider whether there is appropriate oversight of the school's performance, safeguarding and compliance. Governors/proprietors understand the school's strengths and risks, ask appropriate questions, and provide challenge and support.
- **School culture, ethos and wellbeing**
The school's vision and values are clearly articulated and reflected in daily practice, including relationships, expectations and behaviour. The school environment is inclusive for pupils and staff, and leaders effectively promote and support the wellbeing of the whole school community.
- **Quality assurance supports Standards 1–3**
Leaders monitor and evaluate the curriculum and teaching quality, pupils' personal development and wellbeing, and safeguarding and welfare arrangements. Any weaknesses are identified promptly and addressed. Improvement work is sustained rather than reactive.
- **Staff are supported through professional development**
Leaders ensure staff are trained, supported and developed so that standards are met consistently. Professional development is purposeful and linked to school priorities, including curriculum development, assessment practice, inclusion/SEND, safeguarding and behaviour.
- **Inclusion and SEND are effectively led**
Leaders ensure that provision for pupils with SEND and other additional needs is planned, resourced and evaluated. Staff understand expectations, and the impact of support is monitored over time.
- **Day-to-day running supports pupils' wellbeing**
Operational systems (such as supervision, behaviour, attendance, pastoral support and communication) are organised effectively and promote pupils' welfare. Leaders ensure that pupils feel safe, supported and able to thrive.
- **Resources and finances are managed responsibly**
The school's resources—including staffing, facilities and budgets—are aligned to educational priorities and pupil welfare. Leaders plan sustainably and allocate resources in a way that supports the curriculum, inclusion and safeguarding.

How Evidence Is Gathered

Inspectors typically gather evidence through:

- meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders and those responsible for safeguarding, SEND and pastoral care;
- discussions with governors/proprietors where applicable;
- review of improvement planning, self-evaluation and quality assurance processes;
- scrutiny of relevant policies and records (including training and safeguarding monitoring);
- triangulation with evidence gathered under Standards 1–3.

Appendix E

Complaints Policy

Introduction

1. Purpose and Policy Statement

Penta International is an independent provider of inspection and consultancy services for international schools worldwide. We are approved by the UK Department for Education (DfE) to inspect British schools overseas (BSO). Penta International is committed to maintaining the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and fairness in all our inspection and consultancy services.

We recognise that, on occasion, individuals or organisations may wish to raise a concern or make a complaint. This policy sets out how complaints will be handled promptly, respectfully, and transparently, ensuring that all parties are treated fairly and that lessons are learned to improve our practice.

2. Scope

This policy explains how school leaders or other stakeholders may raise concerns or make complaints about our inspection activities. It sets out the stages through which we will handle complaints and the standards of service you can expect.

We will consider complaints that relate to:

- the conduct or professionalism of Penta inspectors or consultants;
- school inspection processes or procedures;
- the judgements, findings, or outcomes reached in an inspection report;
- administrative or operational processes;
- other aspects of our service delivery.

This policy does **not** cover:

- employment-related matters;
- matters already subject to legal proceedings.

We take every complaint seriously, treat all parties respectfully, and use outcomes from the process to strengthen the quality of our work.

3. Definitions

- **Concern:** An issue raised informally in order to seek clarification or prompt resolution.

- **Complaint:** A formal expression of dissatisfaction with Penta International's actions, decisions, or service quality.
- **Complainant:** The person or organisation making the complaint.
- **Respondent:** The individual or team whose conduct or actions are the subject of the complaint.

4. Wording

Throughout this policy 'us', 'we' and 'our' refer to Penta International; 'you' and 'your' refer to the most senior leader in a school that has recently worked with Penta International.

5. Principles

All complaints will be handled in accordance with the following principles:

- **Fairness:** complaints will be investigated objectively and without bias;
- **Confidentiality:** information will be shared only on a need-to-know basis;
- **Timeliness:** complaints will be dealt with promptly at each stage;
- **Accessibility:** complaints may be submitted in writing or another reasonable format;
- **Learning:** findings will be used to improve service quality and professional practice.

6. Responsibilities

- A **Senior Consultant** oversees the process and ensures that timeframes and procedures are followed;
- A **Senior Director** or a designated senior leader may review cases at later stages;
- An **External Reviewer** is an independent professional appointed to ensure impartiality at Stage 3.

7. Stages of the Complaints Process

We encourage open, professional dialogue between inspectors and school leaders throughout an inspection. If concerns arise, the school's senior leader should raise them immediately with the lead inspector so they can be addressed on site.

If the concern cannot be resolved, the head of the school may contact Penta head office to discuss the matter. This ensures any urgent issues can be handled promptly while the inspection is still in progress.

Inspectors will note all concerns raised, the discussions held, and any agreed actions.

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

If the issue was not resolved during the inspection visit, the complainant may raise an informal concern following the inspection.

Process:

- Concerns must be submitted within five working days of the end of the inspection.
- Initial concerns should be raised with **Penta head office**, who will discuss the issue with the lead inspector.
- Concerns will be acknowledged within five working days; the head office will respond with a response or resolution within 10 working days.
- If the matter is not resolved, the complainant may proceed, after receiving the draft inspection report, to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

If the concern cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint should be submitted within 5 working days of receiving the draft report. The complaint must be made in writing to **Penta head office** via **Sue@penta.co.uk**, including:

- name and contact details;
- a clear description of the complaint;
- relevant dates, persons involved, and supporting evidence;
- the desired outcome or resolution sought.

Process:

- Written acknowledgement will be provided within five working days.
- The complaint will be investigated by a **senior consultant** not previously involved in the inspection or informal complaint.
- A written response, outlining findings and any actions taken, will be issued within 20 working days of acknowledgement.

The outcome will state whether the complaint is upheld in whole or in part and describe any actions to be taken, which may include correction, apology, or review of procedures.

Stage 3 – Independent External Review

If the complainant believes the internal process has not been handled fairly or that the decision was unreasonable, they may request an **Independent External Review**. This will be conducted by a senior advisor appointed by Penta International.

Process:

- The request must be made in writing within five working days of the Stage 2 outcome.
- The external reviewer will examine the process and evidence. They will assess whether the process of handling your complaint was fair and proportionate; and whether the findings and decision were a reasonable in the circumstances.
- The external reviewer may request additional documentation or interviews where necessary.

- A final written decision will be issued within 30 working days of the reviewer's appointment.

This decision will represent the **final stage** of Penta International's complaints process.

Timescales

All efforts will be made to remain within the deadlines set out in this policy wherever possible, however, if this is not possible for any reason, we will contact you with an explanation and a revised deadline.

8. Record Keeping

A log of all formal complaints will be maintained by Penta head office, including details of investigations, outcomes, and actions taken. Regular summaries will be reviewed by senior management for quality assurance and service improvement.

9. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaints will be handled in line with data protection legislation. Information will be shared only with those who need it to investigate or respond to the complaint. Records are retained securely for six years from closure and then permanently deleted.

10. Learning and Continuous Improvement

Penta International views complaints as opportunities to learn and improve. Findings from complaints will be analysed periodically to identify trends and inform training, guidance or procedural updates.

11. Vexatious or Persistent Complaints

While every complaint will be considered seriously, Penta International reserves the right to cease correspondence in cases of unreasonable, repetitive, or abusive complaints. Decisions to apply this provision will be made by the senior director and recorded formally.

12. Equality and Accessibility

Penta International will ensure that no complainant is disadvantaged because of age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic. Alternative formats and/or reasonable adjustments will be provided upon request.

13. Monitoring and Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by senior management or sooner if legislation or operational needs change.

14. Contact Information

Email: **Sue@penta.co.uk**

Website: www.pentainternational.co.uk