



**British School  
Overseas**  
Inspected by Penta International

## Inspection report

# British International School

**Ho Chi Minh City  
Vietnam**

Date  
Inspection number

**4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> November 2025  
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## 1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education (DfE) has put in place a voluntary scheme for the inspection of British schools overseas (BSO), whereby schools are inspected against a common set of standards that BSO can choose to adopt.

The inspection and this report follow the DfE schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas.

The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's management on the overall effectiveness of the school, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent schools in the United Kingdom.

The inspection and report will cover the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation; the school's complaints procedures; and leadership and management. If appropriate, there is a separate section on the quality of boarding provision. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for pupils and pupils' achievements.

This inspection was completed by Penta International. Penta International is approved by the British government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the DfE on the extent to which schools meet the standards for BSO.

During the inspection visit, 69 lesson observations took place. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were seen in lessons, and discussions were held with the staff, parents and informally with students. The inspection took place over three days.

The lead inspector was Simon Sharron. The team members were Lesley Birtwell, Felice Kelly, Glyn Kilsby, John Maguire, Simon Nixon, Brian Oppenheim, Phil Stewart, and Alun Yorath.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection, the school has shown that it meets the standards for British Schools Overseas.

The school actively promotes tolerance and a respect for all human differences, within the confines of the law. This is embedded in the culture and ethos of the school. This judgement is endorsed by the British government and is valid for three years. The inspection process is quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

### 3. Overall effectiveness of the school

The school is a well-led, vibrant international community where a true sense of belonging, trust and excellent relationships provide the environment where students' have the optimum conditions to thrive academically and develop the personal social and cultural skills to succeed in the next stages of their lives.

#### 3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including the:

- inspirational leadership and management teams grounded in a deep moral purpose;
- corporate leadership, support and challenge from Nord Anglia Education;
- pervasive culture of safeguarding, which ensures the welfare, health and safety of students;
- collaboration and shared ambition of the staff;
- academic curriculum, delivered through strong, teaching and assessment, securing excellent academic outcomes;
- enrichment provision and the wellbeing curriculum, particularly the many opportunities for wider community partnerships and student leadership, ensuring an exceptionally rounded education for students;
- exceptionally strong and respectful relationships throughout the school creating a cohesive, diverse, multicultural learning community;
- students' attitudes to learning and their behaviour for learning are exceptional;
- strong British nature of the school which successfully blends the academic together with spiritual, moral, cultural, and social development of students;
- provision of overall very high-quality premises and accommodation across three sites;
- excellent communication between stakeholders in support of the school's mission and purpose;
- the financial, administrative and site management of the school.

## 3.2 Points for improvement

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following development points:

- i. ensure that the new Teaching and Learning Framework is implemented with greater planned cohesion and rigour across the key stages, and the curriculum design, sequencing and progression are constantly reviewed to support even greater academic progress and attainment;
- ii. systematically monitor and review the quality, consistency and impact of feedback so that it empowers students to understand and improve their individual performance;
- iii. consider updates to the Junior Campus to improve inclusive accessibility, aligning to the same high standards found on the Early Years and Infants (EY&I) and Secondary Campuses.

## 4. The context of the school

Full name of school	British International School, Ho Chi Minh City				
Address	246 Nguyen Van Huong, District 2, HCMC, Vietnam				
Telephone number/s	+84 (0) 28 3744 2335				
Website address	<a href="http://www.bisvietnam.com">www.bisvietnam.com</a>				
Key email address	principal.office@bisvietnam.com				
Headteacher/principal	Simon Higham				
Chair of board/proprietor	Nord Anglia Education				
Age range	2-18 years				
<b>Total number of pupils</b>	<b>2449</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>1241</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>1208</b>
Numbers by age	0-2 years		12-16 years		884
	3-5 years		17-18 years		240
	6-11 years		18+ years		0
Total number of part-time children	25				

British International School, Ho Chi Minh City (BIS HCMC) is a selective, independent, co-educational day school and part of the Nord Anglia Education (NAE) group. It provides a British-style education for international students aged between 2 and 18 years old from more than 50 countries. Children with minor specific learning difficulties are admitted and provided with appropriate support. BIS HCMC opened in August 1997 as a pre-school called 'Tiny Tots' and has expanded since then to reach its current size educating over 2400 students on three campuses. The school is externally evaluated by the International Baccalaureate (IB), Nord Anglia Education and the Vietnamese government Department of Education and Training (DOET) inspectorate. Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are denoted by the school as having 'Additional Educational Needs' (AEN).

## 4.1 British nature of the school

- BIS HCMC is member of—the Federation of British International Schools in Asia (FOBISIA) and has strong links with the British Council.
- Nord Anglia Education, the school's owner, is a UK based company;
- Lessons are delivered in English except for lessons in Vietnamese language and culture and other modern languages;
- The curriculum for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is based on the UK's 'Development Matters', mapping children's progress according to the Early Learning Goals;
- In Key Stages (KS)1, 2, 3 and 4 the school implements a broad and balanced curriculum where the programmes of study are closely aligned to the National Curriculum for England;
- In Years 10 and 11, students study iGCSEs, while, in the sixth form, years 12 and 13 follow the UK accredited International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) giving access to universities in Britain and across the world;
- The school operates UK style assessments and tracking of assessment to inform stakeholders about students' progress and attainment;
- Assemblies, tutor time activities and wellbeing lessons engage students with key citizenship themes such as democracy, tolerance, and individual liberty, reinforcing these values in a reflective and inclusive setting;
- The wellbeing/personal social and health education (PSHE) curriculum aims to embed British values within subject content, encouraging critical thinking, ethical reasoning, global citizenship and international mindedness;
- The 50+ nations represented in the school community echo the diverse multicultural society of Britain;
- The school's 'Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging' (EDIB) programme fosters inter-community cohesion across the school and reflects the school's commitment to the UK 2010 Equality Act;
- The school's academic and pastoral organisation replicates structures commonly found in UK independent schools;
- Young people wear a school uniform and the British traditions of youth leadership and student voice are strong;
- Britishness is enshrined in the school's 'BIS Aide Memoire', constantly visible and advertising the values of integrity, respect, care, enquiry, reflection, and perseverance;
- The school's safeguarding policies, procedures and staff training are compliant with the UK standards embodied in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE);
- Student wellbeing is a constant priority for the school, promoted through a plethora of age-appropriate programmes and wellbeing diagnostic tools used throughout the school, aimed at developing self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- Many teaching resources emanate from the UK;
- Many continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities are organised by UK providers.

## 5. Standard 1

### The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education meets all the criteria for BSO accreditation and is judged outstanding. This is demonstrated by the exemplary standards achieved by students academically and holistically in terms of their personal development.

#### 5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum fully meets the standards for BSO and is judged overall to be outstanding.

This is because the curriculum is designed to give all students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and emerging fluency in English as an additional language (EAL), the knowledge and skills they need for the next stage of their education. Students study the full curriculum (as defined in para 2(2)(a) of the BSO standards). It is not narrowed at any stage and is especially broad, covering design and technology, music, art, and performing arts from EYFS to KS5.

In general, the formal curriculum is very well planned and implemented. It is coherent and nearly always sequenced carefully to make sure that students have the foundational knowledge and that this is built on progressively over time. As a result, students are well prepared for the next stage of their education whether moving from year 6 to year 7 or from year 11 to post-16 learning and beyond.

The EYFS curriculum as a whole is coherently planned and delivered. There is a balance of child chosen and adult directed tasks with a strong focus on language development, social skills, independence and developing curiosity. As a result, children quickly acquire strong age-related knowledge and skills across the requisite seven areas of learning. They are enthusiastic and enjoy learning. Overall, children are ready for year 1.

In the early years and primary, young learners have specialist teaching in art, ICT, languages, library, music, performing arts and physical education (PE). Students are able to access a wide range of co-curricular activities (CCAs) ensuring a wide range of experiences. In KS1, the curriculum promotes enthusiasm and enjoyment-through *Playful Learning*. It takes a holistic approach through continuous provision and *Busy Learning*. It is rich, broad, and balanced, with strong links between subject areas and overarching *International Primary Curriculum* (IPC) themes. It is designed to meet the needs of all learners, including those young learners identified with Additional Educational Needs (AEN) and those whose initial progress in English as an Additional Language (EAL) is slower than others.

Strong and robust planning is in place and shared across year groups, ensuring consistency. Focus and intervention groups are well planned, taking account of students' starting points. Specific, well-chosen UK best-practice schemes of work have been adopted successfully, including *Read Write Inc.*, *Complete Maths*, and *Talk for Writing*.

In KS3, for the most part, the curriculum is very well planned and implemented to make sure that students have the foundational knowledge and that this is built on progressively over time. In science, for example, the department has considered how to balance learning of substantive and disciplinary knowledge.

In KS4, the curriculum is broad, balanced and nearly always suitably ambitious. The two-year IGCSE programme, as well as the core of English, mathematics and science, offers 16 IGCSE option choices including separate sciences and an accelerated pathway in mathematics. There is also good provision for modern languages, arts, humanities, and technology. Option blocks are created around student preferences and strong careers guidance supports students making informed choices around subject combinations and progression to the IB Diploma.

In KS5, the IB Diploma Programme offers an extensive range of subjects across all six groups, including the arts and interdisciplinary options such as environmental systems and societies. The core, theory of knowledge, extended essay, together with the compulsory component of 'creativity, activity and service' (CAS), promotes independent research, critical thinking and personal growth. The innovative sixth-form wellbeing and study skills programme, including awareness teaching around the acceptable use of artificial intelligence, further strengthens the overall curricula provision. The KS4 and KS5 sports curriculum is adapted to students' preferences, spanning sport for enjoyment and a healthy lifestyle and sport for performance and sports leadership qualifications. There are also adapted pathways tailored to students not undertaking the full IB diploma. The school has a college and university guidance (CUG) team to support students and their families to make informed decisions about pathways into higher education.

The recent implementation of a Teaching and Learning Framework is a rigorous, research informed initiative to review and improve curriculum design and delivery across all key stages.

Throughout the school from EYFS to KS5, the formal curriculum is enriched by a vast array of co-curricular opportunities that foster personal growth and self-confidence, witnessed by the inspection team when they interacted with students at the school.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment meets the BSO standard and is judged to be outstanding.

One of the strengths of the school is the way teachers make learning interesting and fun through its *Playful Learning* curriculum. For example, a year 4 mathematics lesson on problem solving was linked to their topic work on Antarctic explorers. The students, working in pairs, were tasked with finding the cost of items explorers might need for their expedition. This approach motivates students extremely well. As a result, they work hard in lessons and are very keen to do well. Tasks are presented very effectively so that students are clear about what is expected and what they are aiming for. They take their learning seriously and take full advantage of the wide learning opportunities the school provides.

There is an absolute focus on students to ensure they have the best possible experience from lessons. Teachers establish very positive environments in their rooms and this is a significant factor in students' similarly positive attitudes to school and to learning.

In EYFS, excellent, well-resourced learning areas promote active and independent learning both indoors and outside. Teachers and teaching assistants effectively interact with children whilst playing to develop language skills. This is supported by language-rich classrooms. Teacher-directed tasks are well planned to promote learning and progress. For example, in a story telling and writing lesson, children reinforced vocabulary acquisition with pictures and physical actions. The use of 'how' questions encouraged children to think and explain. Learning is less effective when adults do not make best use of opportunities for developing language during child-initiated learning.

In KS1, the majority of lessons observed were of a consistently high standard across all subject areas. Student engagement, curiosity, and a genuine love of learning created many memorable learning experiences. Phonics teaching and communication and language development were notable strengths and of a high standard across the Key Stage. In a year 1 phonics lesson, teaching was highly effective with excellent pace, structure, and clear routines following the *Read Write Inc* approach. The lesson was engaging and well-scaffolded, demonstrating strong subject knowledge, high student participation, and continuous feedback that ensured all learners were supported and successful.

In the best lessons in KS2, teachers made effective use of prior learning to build connections and deepen understanding. For example, in year 6 science, a paired quiz starter activity enabled students to recall and extend their knowledge about the circulation system. Students were actively engaged in their learning and gave

responses that reflected secure and thoughtful comprehension. Collaborative and paired activities were used effectively to sustain engagement and encourage a broad range of contributions. During these lessons, teachers deployed additional adults flexibly and purposefully to support and extend learning, for example when managing transitions between carpet and table activities during an IPC lesson involving both individual and paired tasks.

In secondary, nearly all lessons were of a very high quality. Student behaviour, interest in learning and students' support and respect for each other were observed to be exemplary. When given the opportunity, students collaborated in a mature and positive manner. The best lessons allowed students to take responsibility for their own learning, to explore ideas and discuss concepts in depth. Teaching was frequently imaginative, for example in a year 12 biology lesson students worked in pairs to analyse data from experiments in a way that promoted deep understanding and meaningful collaboration. In less successful lessons, there tended to be a predominance of teacher talk and there were fewer opportunities for student discussion that promoted consolidation or deeper learning.

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong and they have secure pedagogical knowledge. They use a wide variety of approaches to grab students' interest. Foundational knowledge and skills are taught carefully so that students can tackle increasingly complex work as they move through the school. In mathematics, for example, teachers ensure that students know the basics of algebra before moving onto more complex equations. Similarly, in ICT, students are introduced early on to simple coding so that as they move through the school, they can tackle more complex ideas.

There are some excellent examples of peer- and self-assessment, and students are accurate and fair in their judgements. Mini-whiteboards were used effectively in many lessons to provide quick and effective feedback to the teacher.

Typically, assessment is used well to check understanding and identify where there are gaps in learning. Age related expectations (ARE) are tracked from year 1 to year 9 which are superseded by IGCSE and IBDP frameworks in KS4 and KS5. *PowerBI* dashboards have become a key strength of the school's ability to analyse assessment data over time. The *Ruth Miskin* portal is used to track primary school children's interaction with *Read Write Inc*. The school operates GL progress tests and a number of other UK assessment tools to assess key skills in reading and maths throughout the year.

Teachers' strong subject content knowledge means that misconceptions are picked up quickly and additional support provided. In English, for example, there is a deliberate move away from differentiation to adaptive teaching. There is a clear understanding of how 'in the moment' assessment can drive students' achievements. Formative assessment is used well to identify gaps in learning and misconceptions -

particularly, for students with SEND who may fall behind. Teachers have a detailed knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses and use this to provide work matched to their needs. Assessment is used routinely by teachers to inform their plans for the next lesson. They check whether students have understood and tailor the next lesson to address any gaps in learning or misconceptions.

Formative assessment is generally strong and clearly impacts positively on learning. A hallmark of less successful lessons was when questions were directed towards the whole class which did little to check how many students understood a topic.

Students' very positive achievements in most lessons are reflected in the school's examination results, which are well above the average internationally and for the UK.

## 5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

The standards achieved by students meet the standards for BSO and are judged to be outstanding.

On entry to EYFS, children are typically below their UK peers, especially in language development and speaking. By the end of reception, children are in line with their UK peers in reading, above in mathematics and well below in writing. While the percentage of students with a good level of development (GLD) was understandably below the UK average, internal data demonstrates that children make rapid progress over time. This was, for example, particularly evident in the EYFS writing assessment books.

Progress test results in English and mathematics demonstrate that students make consistently good or better progress across KS1 and 2. Attainment in both core subjects shows clear improvement, with outcomes indicating that most students are working at or above age-related expectations by the end of the KS2. Analysis of cohort data highlights particularly strong performance in mathematics, with boys outperforming girls, though attainment for both groups are above UK norms. *Read Write Inc* assessment data further confirms year-on-year improvement in literacy outcomes, reflecting the consistent impact of effective teaching, rigorous tracking, and well-targeted support.

In KS3, 82% of year 9 students meet or exceed UK age-related expectations in English, mathematics and science. IGCSE results are impressive with 69% of grades A\*/A, and 97% of grades A\*-C.

In the sixth form the large majority (95%+) of students follow the full International Baccalaureate diploma programme. Results are significantly above the global average. In 2025 the average passing diploma point score was 36.4 against a global average of 30.5 and 29% of students attained 40 or more points.

A BIS student is confident, articulate, works hard, enjoys learning and sharing their learning with others. They are caring and have good social skills. They are self-starters who enjoy organising events and activities. They take pride in their work and are proud of their school. Throughout the school students demonstrate respect, empathy, understanding, an ability to co-operate and collaborate and a strong sense of community.

Attendance is well above UK average. Attendance in 2024/25 was 96.40% compared to the UK average of 92.8%. Student behaviour is exemplary.

## 6. Standard 2

### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of students meets the BSO standard and is judged to be outstanding. Evidence shows that positive societal values are deeply embedded in policy, practice and culture. Students demonstrate self-awareness, empathy and leadership, and are well prepared to contribute positively to local and global communities.

The school provides a holistic, inclusive education that actively promotes SMSC through curricular and co-curricular experiences. These principles underpin the school's values of integrity, respect, care, enquiry, reflection and perseverance, and are evident across the curriculum, pastoral systems, assemblies, community engagement and leadership structures. SMSC is coordinated through the equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB) framework. The overarching positive education approach using the PERMAH framework which is delivered in secondary through the wellbeing programme includes the positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, accomplishment and health (PERMAH) curriculum and the 'youHQ' diagnostic platform (used in Year 3 to Year 13), facilitates the promotion of resilience, compassion and positive behaviour. Primary's wellbeing curriculum is similarly positively focused and applies aspects of the PERMAH framework through its Kapow based curriculum. The school's wellbeing curriculum covers the UK statutory requirements in relation to PSHE.

Students are given structured opportunities to reflect on their beliefs, values and sense of purpose. Spiritual development is fostered through the wellbeing curriculum, creative expression and community partnerships. In primary, this is evident through observational art, mindfulness and engagement with the United Nations Development Goals (SDGs) within the IPC. Assemblies focus upon a different school value each half term, reinforcing moral and spiritual understanding.

In secondary, students explore meaning and purpose through career guidance, the year 12 'Passion Project' and reflective tasks within the 'youHQ' programme. Community expeditions incorporate service and environmental action, while quiet spaces and reflective routines support personal wellbeing. Students articulate their identity with confidence and insight.

The school promotes ethical decision-making and personal responsibility through the curriculum, assemblies and behaviour expectations. The moral code in EYFS and Primary, "Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Caring", provides a consistent reference. In EYFS and KS1, moral reasoning is developed through the 'Care Kit'. Older students engage in structured ethical discussions through the implementation of the Wellbeing Curriculum exploring environmental responsibility, identity and social justice. In secondary, 'Being an Upstander' encourages proactive, shared responsibility for positive behaviour.

A restorative approach to behaviour prioritises learning and reconciliation. The use of *CPOMS* in Primary and *iSAMS* in Secondary supports robust monitoring of wellbeing and behaviour. The school has addressed discriminatory language through protected-characteristic workshops for students from year 3 to year 13. Staff receive training in unconscious bias and restorative practice, and parents are involved in follow-up workshops to reinforce learning.

Students show integrity and empathy, with clear evidence of their understanding of the impact of their actions. Parents report that students are proactive in reporting inappropriate behaviour, reflecting strong moral awareness linked to 'Being an Upstander'.

Leadership, teamwork and responsibility are developed through roles such as House Captains, Ambassadors, Prefects, Sports Leaders and CCA organisers. Students engage in community partnerships from a very young age. At a later stage, this might be work with *Helping Hands Foster Home*. These initiatives include preparation, reflection and practical service, enabling students to connect learning with real-world impact.

Social development is strengthened through democratic processes. Anonymous student council elections teach fairness and inclusion. Prefects contribute to the sixth form development plan, while younger students vote in initiatives such as the Family Fun Evening. Cross-phase collaboration is embedded, with senior students mentoring younger students and supporting community campaigns.

Wellbeing learning walks and observations show students collaborating effectively, expressing empathy and demonstrating resilience. For example, year 7 students exploring conflict resolution displayed maturity and teamwork, while year 8 students involved in SEND partnership projects articulated strong social responsibility.

Students understand how to contribute positively to school and wider society, supported by a consistent emphasis on reflection, collaboration and civic engagement.

Cultural awareness and respect for diversity are embedded across the curriculum and school life. International Week, the Cultural Show, the International Café and Tet (Lunar New Year) provide opportunities for students and parents to share traditions, languages and heritage. Translation into Vietnamese and Korean ensures accessibility, and nannies and extended family members are included in workshops and activities, strengthening community partnership.

British values are actively promoted. Students understand democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, reinforced through student council elections, debates, Model United Nations (MUN) and classroom discussion. The EDIB framework gives equality and inclusion equal priority to safeguarding.

The school maintains political neutrality and ensures balanced discussion of sensitive issues. For example, assemblies for International Women's Day present both UK and host-country perspectives, supported by Vietnamese staff to ensure cultural sensitivity.

Pupils appreciate their own and others' cultures. Relationships are characterised by mutual respect and curiosity, and the school's anti-bullying and inclusion policies are effective, as reflected in consistently positive behaviour.

The school's SEF identifies SMSC as a key strength. Leadership of SMSC is strategic and effective, with senior leaders, the EDIB lead and wellbeing coordinators working collaboratively to ensure coherence across phases. SMSC outcomes are evaluated through lesson observations, learning walks and stakeholder feedback. Initiatives such as the TEDx 'Belonging' event (April 2025) demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement. The subsequent inclusion of 'Being an Upstander' in the student journal shows responsiveness to evaluation. Staff share a strong understanding of SMSC priorities, and documentation confirms regular review of policies and their impact.

## 7. Standard 3

### The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for welfare, health and safety at BIS HCMC fully meets the BSO standard and is judged to be outstanding.

The school has an exceptionally strong culture relating to the welfare, health, and safety of students, with effective policies implemented throughout. The emphasis on student wellbeing is exemplary. Policies and resultant procedures adhere to all local statutory requirements and BSO standards. The safeguarding of students remains the highest priority, with CPOMS and iSAMS used consistently across all sections of the school for recording monitoring and action. Safer recruitment procedures are thorough, supported by comprehensive policies and an excellent tracking system monitored by senior leadership. Responsibilities related to safeguarding and student welfare are clearly understood and effectively carried out by all staff. Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) throughout the school are highly trained and proactive in promoting best safeguarding practices. Clear procedures are in place to ensure staff recruitment complies with best-practice safer recruitment standards, including training for local and contract staff in their native language.

Students are very happy at school, feel safe, and speak about the school with pride. The school actively promotes good behaviour among all students, which is evident throughout. The school has a thorough anti-bullying policy that is effective across the entire school, resulting in bullying incidents being rare. Students feel they have someone to turn to and can identify trusted adults they would approach when they have concerns. They are confident that the school will address issues promptly. The secondary school's 'Upstander not Bystander' programme is regularly reinforced and empowers students to address issues they are uncomfortable with.

Across all three campuses, behaviour is exemplary. Students are confident, polite, courteous, and well-mannered. They are proud of their school, and the school encourages students to respect themselves, others, and the environment through their well-published 'Aide Memoir', which is reinforced in year group assemblies and lessons to good effect.

The school recognises positive behaviour and uses praise and systems, such as commendations, to reinforce it. These systems are connected to the school's values, which are visible throughout the school and referred to by all staff. All instances of negative behaviour, including bullying, are logged, and patterns are identified. A record of sanctions is maintained and proactively monitored. The school adopts a restorative approach to poor behaviour, which has been praised by both students and staff as effective. When recurring issues are identified, the school responds appropriately. Behaviour issues are addressed immediately. Incidents of negative behaviour are communicated directly to parents, and a collaborative approach to improving behaviour is undertaken.

Students demonstrate strong relationships with their teachers and peers, creating a learning environment that is safe, trusting, calm, purposeful, and ambitious. This is evidenced by the

excellent student attendance, which is carefully monitored to ensure it remains high. Positive attendance is encouraged to support participation in diverse and enriching co-curricular activities, which help develop transferable skills. The students spoke very highly of the CCAs, most of which are student-led in the secondary school.

Digital safety workshops, strict protocols for student devices and use of AI and proactive monitoring enable students to develop age-appropriate skills to use technology safely. For example, students were asked to use AI to research mountain walruses as a starting point to discuss whether everything they read is true.

The host country's relevant health and safety laws are complied with, and a written health and safety policy is established and effectively implemented. Fire standards are maintained throughout the school. The school's fire evacuation policy is correctly displayed, with evacuation plans in dual languages posted around the school. The school has successfully conducted fire evacuation and lockdown drills this academic year, and an effective fire evacuation was observed during the inspection. The school's fire alarm system and evacuation signage are well-maintained and checked annually. Fire extinguishers are regularly maintained to ensure they remain in good condition.

The school employs trained medical staff, available throughout the school day in dedicated medical facilities. The medical facilities at the Secondary, Junior and Early Years and Infant campuses fully meet expected standards, and the medical staff provide excellent support for all students. These trained medical staff are well supported in the secondary school by student first aid ambassadors, who assist the medical team during the school day and offer additional pitch-side first aid at sporting events.

Catering facilities on all three sites are well managed. Systems and processes are in place to ensure health, safety and hygiene standards are robust. These include measures to support students with food allergies. Healthy eating is encouraged through varied menu choices.

Admission procedures within the school are excellent and fully comply with BSO regulations. The school has a well-structured policy for monitoring students' daily attendance, and overall attendance is excellent. Parents are fully informed of the systems in place and follow them as required.

The school has an effective security team that ensures the safe arrival and departure of students. The school's perimeter is secure. All staff, secondary students, parents and approved visitors are issued electronic key cards for secure access through turnstiles at the perimeter wall. Visitor access procedures are comprehensive, requiring personal identification for entry, and all visitors wear a lanyard. Students are well supervised from the moment they arrive on site and throughout the day. The school is equipped with full CCTV coverage of all communal areas and perimeters. School bus transportation is monitored to a high standard, with additional staff on buses to ensure safe travel to and from the school sites.

A written risk assessment policy is in place, embedded within other relevant policies, and the school ensures that students' welfare is safeguarded and promoted through the development and effective implementation of risk assessments. When the school takes students off campus for expeditions or activities, registers and contact details for parents are collected. Expeditions and trips are organised through a thorough planning process that includes risk assessments.

## 8. Standard 4

### The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The suitability of the proprietor and staff meets the standard for BSO.

BIS HCMC is part of Nord Anglia Education with over more than 80 schools worldwide. The school benefits therefore from extensive corporate human resources (HR) oversight and support.

Academic and administrative staff are well qualified; the vast majority of teachers are UK-trained.

The single central register (SCR) and its maintenance by the school's own HR team are exemplary. The SCR contains all the requisite fields of verification demanded by the UK DfE's lead safeguarding document *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. Safer recruitment procedures are rigorous, supported by comprehensive policies and an excellent tracking system *SCAN* which is monitored easily by the executive leadership team. This system alerts the school to gaps and imminent expiry of key documents. The SCR is further monitored and checked at regional level by NAE. Job interview notes are kept separately by HR. On inspection, there was excellent correlation between the digital SCR and hard copy personnel files. The latter are stored securely, while access to the digital SCR is limited to the HR department and executive leadership staff.

17 staff at BIS HCMC have been trained in safer recruitment, a prerequisite for senior staff involved in the recruitment process. Applications are rejected if they fail to address key safeguarding points. Shortlisted applicants undergo values-based interviews. New teachers undergo induction training and are allocated both academic and personal buddies. Teachers' and classroom assistants' knowledge and skills are continuously updated through a rolling programme of in-school continuous, collaborative professional learning. This is backed up by wider CPD opportunities delivered by visiting or online experts. There are also training and conference opportunities provided by FOBISIA, National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) for school leaders and special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), Charter Teacher Status and internal leadership opportunities through the extensive NAE leadership programmes. Importantly, for an international British school overseas, staff undergo training focused on equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging to support the school's obligations under the UK 2010 Equality Act and its own very diverse multicultural school community.

Third party providers and the school carry out safeguarding checks on all personnel not directly employed by the school. All bus drivers must undergo regular drug and alcohol testing.

## 9. Standard 5

### The premises and accommodation

The school meets the BSO standards for premises and accommodation and these are judged as outstanding.

The premises at BIS are of a high standard and offer a stimulating environment that supports and encourages high quality learning. Facilities are particularly impressive in the Early Years and Infant campus and the Secondary campus. The facilities team ensures that the premises are safe, well-maintained and meets all regulatory requirements. Leadership oversight is proactive and strategic, with regular audits and forward planning for improvement. Strong systems are in place for ensuring effective and appropriate upkeep of the school premises.

The large area used by the pre-school 'Fundinotots' is an exceptional facility that is spacious, light and welcoming. The addition of a small outside area to this has enhanced this facility. Art rooms, computing and music rooms in the junior and senior schools are well resourced and provide for high quality learning in these specialist subjects. The junior library is well stocked and shows creativity overall in its displays. The secondary library, 'The Curve', is an attractive area that includes imaginative learning spaces.

The recently expanded sixth form centre is a vibrant centre that offers a flexible and well-resourced facility. In secondary, science laboratories and design technology rooms are high quality and support high level achievement. The standard of furniture and learning resources is high, and students take great care of it, with almost no signs of wear or damage. Some areas that were redecorated three years ago look brand new.

The site is largely accessible for students and staff with disabilities, with appropriate ramps. There are lifts in early years and infants and in the secondary buildings. There are, however, no lifts on the junior campus which limits accessibility and upper-floor balustrades are lower than in buildings on the other two campuses. Signage is clear and well placed throughout the school with key notices, such as illuminated exit signs, in both English and Vietnamese.

Health and safety procedures are detailed and systematically implemented, including detailed risk assessments and fire safety systems. Cleaning and maintenance schedules are rigorous and well documented, ensuring hygiene and safety at all times. Maintenance repairs are addressed effectively by a dedicated team and tracked through the school's *Sphera* online system.

The school's first aid provision is supported by an impressive first aid club where year 12 and 13 students train younger students and provide additional safety support at school sports fixtures.

Since the previous BSO inspection, there have been many significant improvements to the premises, and there is a culture of continuous improvement of the school's infrastructure. Improvements in the early years and infant campus include a climbing wall and renovation of the library and roof garden. In the junior campus there is a new DREAMS lab and sensory room, and in secondary there have been extensive improvements to the auditorium, theatre and sixth form areas. In all areas of the school there have been upgrades to electrical and security systems.

## 10. Standard 6

### The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents, carers and all other stakeholders BIS HCMC, meets the BSO standard. Communication across the school community is transparent, inclusive, and consistent, ensuring that all families remain informed, valued, and actively engaged in their children's education.

The school's details, along with the names of key staff, are available online. While the website includes a wide range of important documents, some key policies and specific information relevant to existing and prospective parents can be difficult to navigate and locate in the website's structure. However, all statutory policies, including safeguarding, behaviour, and complaints, are accessible on the website, with printed copies available at reception. The parent handbooks and latest BSO reports provide comprehensive guidance for families. Orientation events, along with QR-coded guides, ensure that new parents receive clear information about school procedures, policies, and routines. Collectively, these systems reflect the school's strong commitment to transparency, effective communication, and the inclusion of its parent community.

Parents speak highly of the school's open-door approach and the visibility of senior leaders. The presence of the leadership team at arrival and departure times helps foster strong relationships, while regular opportunities such as coffee mornings, curriculum workshops, and open days create a genuine sense of community. Many families, some of whom have been part of the school for over five years, express feeling closely connected to the school and appreciate being encouraged to take an active role in its life.

The school employs a range of communication tools, including *iSAMS*, *SeeSaw*, *Schools Buddy*, and direct email updates, ensuring parents receive timely and relevant information. Weekly newsletters and campus bulletins highlight student achievements, upcoming events, and curriculum developments. Termly progress reports, shared through *iSAMS*, provide clear insights into attainment, attitudes to learning, and well-being, while parent-teacher conferences, held both online and in person, offer valuable opportunities for dialogue, with requests noted for slightly longer sessions in the future.

Parent workshops are particularly well received and help families understand how teaching and learning are delivered across subjects, including newer areas such as computer science and coding. Parents describe these as: "a window into the classroom" and note that such opportunities are rare in international settings. Open mornings and specialist sessions, including swimming and music, further strengthen trust by allowing parents to see the curriculum in action.

Information is made accessible to the school's diverse international community. Translation and interpretation are provided for Vietnamese and South Korean families, with key communications and trip updates translated. Digital newsletters are easily translated via

built-in functionality, and interpreters are offered for parent-teacher consultations. These measures ensure that families of all backgrounds can participate fully in school life and decision-making.

The school actively seeks parent feedback through annual surveys, post-event forms and regular dialogue at workshops. Parents describe the school as “very open” and commend its responsiveness. The Parent Teacher Group (PTG) plays an important role in facilitating collaboration and encouraging engagement from the wider parent body.

## 11. Standard 7

### The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school's procedure for handling complaints meets the standard for BSO.

The British International School, HCMC, together with Nord Anglia Education, its proprietary body, has clear, effective, and transparent procedures for handling complaints that fully meet the BSO standard.

The complaints policy is published on the school website, available in accessible formats, and sets out a clear three-stage process designed to ensure fairness, consistency, and timely resolution. The emphasis is on addressing concerns informally at an early stage, usually through direct communication with the class teacher or head of year. Parents consistently report that staff are approachable, proactive, and committed to resolving issues swiftly and constructively.

Formal complaints, when necessary, are submitted to the principal, acknowledged promptly, and responded to within defined timeframes. Should further escalation be required, cases are referred to the school board for review and resolution. All complaints are logged, recorded securely, and monitored regularly to identify patterns or areas for improvement.

The parent teacher association (PTA) and PTG also provide structured channels for feedback, enabling parents to share concerns collectively and constructively.

Workshops and coffee mornings early in the academic year proactively encourage parents to raise any issues and clarify how to contact the relevant staff member. Parents have described the school as: "proactive," "responsive," and "willing to listen," with clear evidence of timely communication and effective follow-up.

Overall, the complaints procedure is robust, fair, and consistently implemented. It reflects the school's culture of transparency, respect, and collaboration with parents, ensuring that all concerns are addressed promptly and in the best interests of students

## 12. Standard 8

### Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school meet the BSO Standard and are outstanding.

The school's leadership is inspirational at all levels, grounded in a deep moral purpose that guides the school's values and a steadfast commitment to providing a holistic and enriching education for every child.

The aims of the school are clear, coherent, and aligned with British educational values. They promote a culture of excellence, equity, and wellbeing, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. The school promotes emotional, social and economic wellbeing through an ambitious curriculum in its widest sense. Extensive student leadership schemes and community partnerships combine entrepreneurship with social responsibility. The school has a clear mission to prepare and equip students to become net contributors to their global communities of the future.

Self-evaluation within the school is rigorous, evidence-based, and outward-looking. Leaders utilise a comprehensive range of assessment tools and processes, drawing on both internal and external evidence to inform their judgements. This reflective approach promotes continuous improvement across all areas of provision. The development and implementation of a robust teaching and learning framework provides a structure on which to build greater consistency of outstanding practice throughout the school, which will lead to greater value added in examination results.

Strategic planning caters to the changing needs of students. The school improvement plan is a continually evolving document that guides campus priorities and informs phase and departmental development plans. Leaders demonstrate a keen awareness of the importance of embedding and further developing successful initiatives to ensure that progress is maintained.

Governance through Nord Anglia Education and the regional management team is excellent, holding the school's leadership team accountable and supporting continuous development. Regional teams, including IT, Finance, HR, and Admissions, closely oversee their respective departments within the school to ensure best practices.

Leaders lay heavy emphasis on safeguarding, safer recruitment, and health and safety. Policies, procedures, and monitoring systems are robust, underpinned by a culture in which every member of staff recognises their responsibility to keep children safe.

Staff morale is high, reflecting the collaborative culture fostered by leaders who are seen by staff to value their wellbeing. Staff feel valued, cared for, and supported in their work and professional development. Staff wellbeing is closely connected to the wellbeing and success

of students. Communication is open and effective, building trust and accountability among all stakeholders.

Professional development is ambitious, research-informed, and directly aligned with the school's strategic priorities. Leaders invest in the ongoing development of staff, ensuring that opportunities for professional learning are relevant.

Leadership succession is carefully planned, with a clear focus on developing future leaders and maintaining high standards. Distributed leadership is a key feature of the school's approach, empowering middle leaders and ensuring leadership capacity is built at every level. This strategy enhances consistency, encourages innovation, and prepares the school to effectively address future challenges.

The influence of leadership is clear in student outcomes, ongoing compliance, and a culture of innovation and excellence. Students feel safe, well cared for, and proud of their learning and school. The school's commitment to continuous improvement, high standards, and holistic development ensures students are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and values needed to succeed in a constantly changing world.