



## **Inspection report**

# **English International School**

**Baghdad  
Iraq**

Date  
Inspection number

**25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026  
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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 may 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, more than 30 lesson observations were conducted. School documentation and policies were analysed, and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were seen during lessons, and discussions were held with staff and parents, and informally with students. The inspection took place over three days.

The lead inspector was Nicola Walsh. The team members were Sam Cuthbert, Jon McArthur and Jack Meadows.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection, the school has shown that it meets the standards for British Schools Overseas, except for those that cannot be achieved legally in the host country. These pertain to aspects of the UK Equality Act 2010. The relevant standards are:

Part 1 – ‘2(2)(d)(ii)- encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation as set out in the Equality Act 2010;’

and

Part 2 – ‘5(b)(vi)- encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

The school actively promotes tolerance and 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 rapidly improving school operating in a challenging context. Pupils thrive due to the close attention that is paid to their care, guidance and support by the school’s leaders. Outcomes for pupils in key stage 4 have increased significantly in the past three years. Pupils are now achieving well and aligned to standards in British international schools. The school provides a well-rounded and holistic education that supports pupils’ personal development and the formation of their own values. This builds on the strong British ethos embedded across the school. Parents and pupils are fully supportive of the school and the opportunities it provides.

### 3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including the:

- positive relationships across the school;
- confident and articulate pupils who value the opportunities that the school provides;
- the rapid rise in pupils' external examination results over the past three years;
- the clear vision of the school's leaders and board;
- supportive and impactful professional development systems for staff;
- leaders' commitment to overcoming contextual barriers to learning;
- relevant and purposeful communication;
- high levels of staff morale;
- the strong quality of the care, guidance and support for pupils;
- leaders' close attention given to ensuring pupils are prepared for life beyond the school.

### 3.2 Points for improvement

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

- i. to further develop early years provision so that it aligns with best practice in British international schools;
- ii. to promote and embed a culture of reading across the school;
- iii. to ensure teaching is adapted to meet the needs of all learners, including SEND and the more able.

#### 4. The context of the school

Full name of school	English International School-Baghdad				
Address	Qatar Al Nada Street (End of Jadriya Bridge) Saidiya, Baghdad, Iraq				
Main telephone #	+9647711119887				
Website	eis.edu.iq				
Email	info@eis.edu.iq				
Principal	Timothy Paul Shanahan				
Chair of board/ proprietor	Rim Alhakim				
Age range	3-18 years				
Number of pupils	<b>668</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>307</b>
Pupil numbers by age on date of entry	(0-2 years)	8	12-16 years		222
	(3-5 years)	96	17-18 years		28
	(6-11 years)	313	18+ years		1
Total number of part-time children	0				

The school is situated in central Baghdad, a city that has undergone significant development in recent years following a prolonged period of conflict. The school was established in 2018 and is the first British international school in the city, and the first to offer co-educational provision.

The local context presents logistical challenges. Infrastructure can be inconsistent, including regular power interruptions. Climatic conditions are demanding, with high temperatures and dust storms occurring during the summer months.

A small minority of teaching staff are UK-trained or qualified. Most teachers are locally recruited, and as a result, professional development and training are a high priority for the school. Leaders place strong emphasis on developing staff practice to support the effective delivery of the British curriculum.

The pupil population is predominantly Iraqi. A small number of British pupils and a minority of pupils are from other English-speaking countries, including Canada, Australia and the United States of America. School leaders report that pupil numbers have increased as families return to Iraq.

## 1.1 British nature of the school

British values are embedded in the school's ethos and visible throughout the school community. They are modelled consistently by staff and reflected in pupils' behaviour. Parents report that they chose English International School Baghdad (EISB) because it reflects the culture, expectations and structures of schools in the United Kingdom. This supports continuity for families and enables smoother transitions for pupils moving from UK schools.

The school integrates British and Iraqi culture to create a distinctive international school identity. This is reflected visually through a prominent mural in the main foyer depicting cultural features of both Britain and Iraq. The school's house system follows a British model but uses the names of four significant Iraqi features: the Tigris, the Euphrates, Babylon and Ashur. Pupils wear a school uniform, which is adapted appropriately to meet local religious requirements. Staffing structures, timetables and the organisation of year groups follow established UK practice.

The curriculum is based on the English National Curriculum and includes a programme of activities for pupils aged under five. Post-16 provision reflects that offered in British schools. Assessments and external examinations are sourced from the United Kingdom, and pupils' achievements are benchmarked against UK standards. The school libraries include a range of high-quality British literature alongside books in Arabic.

Policies relating to safeguarding, care and guidance are firmly rooted in British expectations. The school is inclusive, and this is reflected in its admissions procedures. Extra-curricular activities and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) are woven throughout the curriculum. Pupil leadership roles, assemblies and whole-school events promote democracy, equality and British cultural traditions.

Pupils visit partner schools in the United Kingdom annually. Links with organisations such as British Schools in the Middle East (BSME) and the Council of British International Schools (COBIS) help the school remain aligned with current British policy and practice.

## 5. *Standard 1* The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided meets the standard for BSO and is good.

### 5.1 Curriculum

The curriculum for all pupils is broad, balanced, and appropriately sequenced across year groups. This is detailed in the curriculum policy, which is clear in its intent and rationale. Curriculum content is adapted to reflect the local cultural context of the region. Curriculum plans are in place and ensure progression in long-term plans. Medium-term plans are created for 6 weeks. Lesson planning is in place and sufficiently detailed.

A programme of activities is provided for pupils under the age of five. The curriculum is theme-based and includes a strong focus on developing children's writing and mathematics skills. Leaders have incorporated the early learning goals into planning, but there was limited evidence of this in observations or the environment. Plans do not yet demonstrate how the curriculum provides for children at different stages of their development. Phonics has been introduced following a validated DfE scheme, but it is not yet consistently delivered across classes.

The English national curriculum is delivered in primary and up to the end of year 9. This follows the published scheme of work set out in the textbook. Pupils follow a broad, balanced timetable with a daily focus on English and mathematics. Other subjects are delivered through the international primary curriculum (IPC) and include science, ICT and humanities. PE, French, Arabic, music, art and religious studies are also offered. At key stages 4 and 5, pupils follow a balanced programme leading to IGCSEs and A-Levels. Subject choices across core academic disciplines and optional subjects reflect both pupil interests and future aspirations. The curriculum is embedded with pupils at home through an online platform.

Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) is delivered through a combination of the timetabled curriculum and events. Citizenship and global perspectives are timetabled weekly, and extra-curricular events such as the Duke of Edinburgh International Award and Model United Nations (MUN) provide further opportunities. The school's bespoke 'future ready programme' ensures that secondary pupils are equipped with life skills to be well prepared for life beyond school. Offsite trips enhance pupils' education and are a regular feature of the school's offer.

Careers education is delivered through the Future Ready programme. This ensures that pupils and their parents are well-informed about options at the end of key stages 3, 4 and 5. A wealth of activities is offered, supporting students with university applications and fostering close working partnerships with local universities that host summer camps and

visiting speakers. The school also offers residential trips to the UK, where students can visit a Cambridge college and experience a campus tour.

Relationships education is strong across the school. Relationships between staff and students are positive and purposeful. A primary relationships policy is in place. Key stage 5 pupils are provided with the education they need to ensure they are well-equipped with relevant and useful information. Parents are fully informed and, where required, may choose for their child to opt out. The school respects the host country's culture and expectations. Therefore, they choose not to publish their secondary relationships policy on the school's website. It is available for parents of pupils in key stage 5 on request.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

Teaching is structured and purposeful, with the strongest practice in upper primary, secondary and KS5. Teachers' use of assessment rubrics and clear lesson plans aligned to curriculum objectives ensures most pupils make good progress.

In the early years, teachers plan activities that develop basic skills. Assessment rubrics are focused on writing and mathematics. Learning journeys are an accurate record of children's work in the areas of handwriting, mathematics, understanding of the world, art and craft.

Reading at a lower Key Stage 1 level was taught to the whole class using a class anthology book. The development of reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary is limited and is not yet influencing teachers' planning.

In primary, teaching is highly didactic, closely following the textbook content. Teachers rarely adapt their teaching to ensure the needs of all learners are met, with little deviation from this. The linked materials displayed on the interactive whiteboard (IWB) engage pupils. An image of dinosaurs prompted Year 4 pupils to ask the teacher questions. In a few lessons, collaborative learning is encouraged, and the pupils respond very positively to this. This was observed in a science lesson with a group of year 6 English language learners. They were given opportunities to discuss and provide feedback on their research regarding irreversible and reversible changes. When tasked with researching, talking with their group, and providing feedback on their learning, the progress and pace of learning were strong.

The specialist teachers in secondary demonstrate strong subject knowledge, and this gives confidence to their teaching. Pupils have good attitudes to learning, and a few ask questions when they do not understand. Teachers work through examples. Demonstration and modelling are used effectively, and teachers often utilise both the IWB and the adjacent whiteboard. This approach was most evident across key stage 3

mathematics lessons. However, there was limited check on individuals' understanding, and the pace of the lesson often suited the majority of learners, but not all.

The school has identified pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and is working towards improving teachers' understanding of what is required. In most lessons, pupils with SEND were not provided with work that was sufficiently matched to their needs.

Formative assessment relies on teachers working with pupils in the lesson. Feedback in pupils' notebooks was limited. There were too few examples of teachers helping pupils to improve in books scrutinised across primary and secondary. Consequently, regular errors were repeated over time, and a few pupils did not make the expected progress.

Summative assessments in primary and secondary follow the scheme of work and are completed every 6 weeks. This ensures that pupils and students know where they are in their learning and what they need to learn next. Most recently, following a set of weak outcomes in year 12, the school created an action plan to raise standards. The action plan focused on addressing teachers' understanding of the exam syllabus, pupils' work ethics and liaising with parents. This close attention to outcomes using summative assessments ensured that standards improved rapidly in one year.

Teachers in key stage 5 are highly focused on the exam syllabus. As class groups are small, there is a greater opportunity for the teacher to check on each pupil's progress and discuss their learning. Demonstration is a key feature of the teaching style. This was observed with a Year 13 mathematics lesson. The teacher used live marking during class and interacted with each student to ensure understanding of the binomial distribution. In key stage 5, teachers have an excellent understanding of the demands of the examination syllabus. They ensure students are very well prepared. This was evident in the work scrutinised and in talking to pupils.

### 5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

Standards of attainment across the school are difficult to benchmark due to age at admission. The school has an admissions policy that allows children to enter using a grade system aligned to the academic year used by ministry schools in Baghdad. This is from January to December. Therefore, pupils across the school are in year groups which are slightly below the age expected in the same year groups in UK schools. This has recently been reviewed. In the future, children will be admitted into year groups related to the academic year, matched to the national curriculum for England, from the beginning of September to the end of August.

Children in the early years are working towards age-related expectations in handwriting and mathematics. They learn to speak English quickly due to interaction with their peers, the teacher, and the effective implementation of the school's only English policy.

Primarily, pupils are working slightly below expectations in English, and this is visible in the display of work and in pupils' workbooks. Year 6 pupils were not yet writing at length, and errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar were evident across all work scrutinised. A display of pupils' work related to the story 'Fantastic Mr Fox' indicated standards were slightly below age-related expectations. However, pupils were writing independently about the story and had illustrated their writing with pictures. Primary pupils demonstrate stronger attainment in mathematics than in English. This is evident in the school's internal data and in observing lessons where pupils are working towards the lesson objectives aligned with their year group.

In secondary, pupils are performing well. As a result, by the time pupils are entered for the IGCSE exam, they are attaining in line with other British international schools. In the IGCSE and A-level results at the end of 2025, one pupil was awarded by the examination board 'the highest mark in the world' for business. Additionally, three students attained the highest mark in the Middle East for global citizenship. Overall, IGCSE and A-Level exam results have improved significantly since the first cohort in 2023.

## 6. Standard 2

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils meets the BSO standard and is good.

The provision for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is embedded throughout the school. This is visible in the school's ethos and has a direct impact on pupils' wellbeing, holistic development and behaviour. This can be seen as pupils interact in lessons and move around the school. The school has a strong family feel, rooted in values such as tolerance and respect. "All are accepted here", stated one pupil. This ethos is shared by all stakeholders who articulated how caring and supportive the school is.

The school's vision is to create open-minded individuals who can thrive in a diverse world. Pupils learn the values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and respect for themselves and for others through the curriculum, school events and systems. Staff model respect, kindness and responsibility. One pupil commented on how the school had broadened his horizons, "Before learning from the school, most of my time went into playing sports, but through the staff here, they opened my mind that there are other paths too".

Pupils learn the difference between right and wrong, reinforced through the school's recently revised behaviour policy. The revision was in response to a rapid increase in the number of pupils on roll. The school's leaders responded quickly and implemented a restorative behaviour system. They also enforced the anti-bullying policy and led whole school events. A visual system of behaviour warnings has been implemented to ensure that all pupils are clear about the agreed boundaries. This system has had a significant impact on positive behaviour choices within the school.

Weekly assemblies support spiritual and moral development. The primary assembly is a celebration and includes a drama presentation modelling good choices. Student of the week certificates and the house point trophy are awarded weekly. The four houses, Euphrates, Tigris, Ashur and Babylon are displayed in the school's entrance hall. In-house teams promote competition, loyalty, and a sense of belonging in Iraq. This is a key feature of the school's aim: to embed a sense of pride in Iraq. The school's academic director explained: "We are a British international school, but proud of our Iraqi heritage and culture". This is clearly visible in a large central display in the school's main foyer, which creatively combines aspects of the two cultures.

Global Citizenship, religious education and the international primary curriculum are taught across the school. They include a range of topics, including diversity, social identity, equality and awareness of the wider world. Personal learning goals are used with pupils to help them develop and become resilient learners. The school's libraries in the early years, primary, and secondary contain a range of books that support pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development. The secondary library is particularly wide-ranging. This enables pupils to broaden their views and opinions of life beyond school.

The school council, prefects and heads of school are democratically elected. They contribute ideas to the senior leadership team, which are responsive and acted on where relevant. The school council meets weekly and shares the contents of the school's suggestion boxes. These are placed at strategic points around the school. They also seek the views of class representatives. Actions taken because of their involvement are communicated in weekly assemblies.

Pupils lead events regarding charitable donations. Most recently, pupils supported a local orphanage by organising a regular collection of donated goods, which were later delivered. Pupils also lead on awareness raising for events such as Breast Cancer Awareness and Women's Rights.

The school celebrates a range of cultural events, related to local and global cultures, so that pupils have a greater understanding of cultures other than their own. International Day, Iraqi National Day, Flag Raising, Chinese New Year and Christmas are all celebrated. Older pupils can participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award and the MUN. Trips off-site and residential trips are regular features and include destinations such as

London, Cambridge University and France. These activities promote social awareness and global responsibility.

## 7. *Standard 3* The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils meets the standard for BSO and is good.

The provision for pupils' welfare creates a secure and supportive learning environment. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of their responsibilities, and pupils report feeling safe and well cared for.

The school has a safeguarding policy in place. This is linked to other policies and is effectively implemented by the school's safeguarding team. This comprises the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and five deputies (DDSL). They are all senior staff members in the school and are trained to level 3. All staff receive safeguarding training annually and at regular times throughout the school year. New staff are trained during induction. Interviews with staff indicate that they are confident in identifying concerns and understand the importance of timely reporting. Safeguarding records show that concerns are logged and followed up appropriately, with leadership oversight evident in more serious cases.

Pastoral provision is a significant strength of the school. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and respectful, contributing to a calm and orderly atmosphere. Pupils describe the school as supportive and are confident that concerns will be taken seriously. Behaviour expectations are clear, consistently applied and continually reviewed. Anti-bullying procedures are well understood by pupils and staff, so that incidents are rare and addressed promptly when they occur. Recently, the school shared activities across the school site during anti-bullying week. SEND pupils with behavioural needs are well supported by the school counsellor. However, the tracking of the provision and individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs is not yet in place. Records for individual pupils' welfare needs are recorded and documented.

Opportunities for pupils to develop resilience, confidence and social awareness are embedded within the curriculum and wider school experience. The recent implementation of conflict resolution approaches and restorative justice has been successful. Consequently, incidents of poor behaviour have reduced significantly. The school's pastoral systems enable effective monitoring of pupils' well-being and engagement. Communication between staff, pupils and parents is constructive, supporting early identification of concerns and appropriate intervention by the school counsellor. Online safety is embedded in the future-ready programme in secondary and

in ICT lessons in primary. Pupils discussed staying safe online, although the school counsellor noted that this was an area of increasing concern.

The school has a health and safety policy supported by regular, routine procedures. The head of logistics and operations is responsible for the effective implementation of the policy. Risk assessments are undertaken for educational visits, extracurricular activities, and higher-risk areas of the site, with leadership oversight to ensure that visits are appropriately planned and supervised. Staff demonstrate a proactive approach to risk management in daily practice. However, the quality and detail of written risk assessments vary across departments and activities.

The provision for first aid and medical care meets the requirements. A designated medical facility is available on-site and managed by a qualified nurse from the local hospital. The nurse oversees the administration of medication and the recording of accidents and incidents. Medication is stored appropriately, and communication with parents is timely and appropriate. The school demonstrates awareness of pupils with specific medical needs, and individual healthcare plans are in place where required. Staff are informed of relevant medical information on the school's management system. The school's approach reflects a balanced emphasis on care, inclusion and safeguarding. First aid boxes are located strategically around the school site, and a selection of staff are first-aid trained.

Policies related to fire safety meet local standards and legislation. Fire equipment is checked annually, and evidence of this is recorded on the appliances and in documentation. Evacuation routes are clearly signed. Drills are carried out regularly, and details are recorded. Each classroom has an evacuation map so that the route is clear in the event of an evacuation.

Arrangements for supervision are appropriate to pupils' age and needs. Staff presence during breaks, transitions and activities is well managed. Attendance is monitored systematically, and procedures for following up on unexplained absences are clear. Entry and exit arrangements are closely controlled and monitored during busy times. Visitor management systems contribute to a secure campus environment.

Parents are positive about the school and report that their children feel safe and well cared for. Pupils also confirm that the quality of care and guidance is strong.

Overall, EISB provides a safe, caring and well-organised environment in which pupils' welfare, health and safety are prioritised. Safeguarding awareness among staff is secure, pastoral provision is strong, and pupils feel safe and supported.

## 8. *Standard 4* The suitability of the proprietor and staff

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

The board of directors ensure that all staff employed or contracted are suitable to work at the school. The administration director understands the requirements around safeguarding and safer recruitment. She is on site daily and works closely with senior leaders to oversee the effective implementation of related policies and the suitability of staff.

A single central record (SCR) is maintained by the human resources manager and overseen by the administration director and academic director. This is comprehensive and includes checks on all staff and the board of directors. The checks include passports, medical certification, visa requirements, national identity documents and certification confirming suitability to work with children. All checks are dated, and the certificate's date is listed. Because ministry checks are limited, the school is vigilant. All local staff and those recruited regionally have a police certificate on file. This is recorded on the SCR. A small number of staff were recruited from the United Kingdom before 2023. Relevant documentation, including suitability checks required at the time of appointment, is retained on file and recorded on the single central record.

Safer recruitment procedures are thorough. The school uses a BSO-approved recruitment agency. Advertisements for vacant positions include a tag line that details the school's commitment to keeping children safe. References are obtained from previous employers and include specific commentary on the candidate's suitability to work with children. When two professional references are unavailable, the school seeks an additional personal reference as a supplementary safeguard. All references request a comment on the person's suitability to work with children. Interviews are conducted by the academic director and head of primary, who are safer recruitment-trained. They understand the need to be vigilant. Questions around safeguarding are included in interviews, and gaps in working are scrutinised.

An induction period follows all appointments, which includes safeguarding training and school policies. A three-month probationary period is in place for staff new to the school, during which they are monitored.

## 9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The school's premises and accommodation meet the BSO standard.

The school's premises and accommodation provide a secure, well-organised and effective environment that supports the school's ethos and aims. Although the buildings were not purpose-built, they have been creatively adapted to meet the school's needs.

Classrooms are of a suitable size and layout. They are adequately equipped with age-appropriate furniture, appropriate lighting, ventilation and an interactive whiteboard. Classrooms and communal areas are orderly, clean, and well-maintained, despite the building's age and wear and tear. Communal areas, including the canteen, are spacious and centrally located. These are well-used during break times and enhance the limited outdoor space at the front of the school. The separate administration block is easily accessible to parents and prospective parents without entering the school's main buildings. The perimeter of the whole site is secure and can be accessed through a main entrance or side gate. Security arrangements are clear.

Specialist facilities, including a science laboratory, ICT classrooms, libraries, an outdoor games pitch and outdoor areas, meet the requirements of the national curriculum. An indoor swimming pool is located on site, but was not in use during the inspection.

Washrooms are available on each floor, with clear signage indicating which are for staff and which are for pupils. For the youngest children, a toilet is provided in each classroom, accessible directly from the classroom and at an appropriate height. The school has suitable changing facilities and showers on site for pupils who require them. Fresh drinking water is situated at locations around the school.

Classrooms for children in the early years are secure and welcoming and equipped with basic equipment for academic learning. However, resources to support all areas of children's development and to fully deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage are currently limited.

A well-equipped medical room is centrally located and equipped with appropriate facilities for first aid and medical care. While access to this room is via steps, ground-floor facilities across the site support access for individuals with limited mobility.

## 10. Standard 6

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

The information provided by the school to parents, carers and others meets the BSO standard.

Parents report that communication is a strength of the school. The school uses a range of communication methods, including social media apps for daily communication, the school website, and a parents' portal linked to the school website.

The school website provides a comprehensive overview of the school's provision. It is easy to navigate and contains the requirements to meet the standards. This includes the school's vision and values, external reports, key policies, admissions information, headline examination results and curriculum details. However, information relating to the school's board of directors is limited.

Parents value the open relationship between home and school. Staff are available at the end of the school day and are approachable. In the primary school, rewards and messages are shared during the school day via a social media application. Pupils enjoy earning reward points, and parents enjoy receiving updates on their children's learning.

The school portal is a secure information system through which parents can access information on attendance, well-being, behaviour records, achievement reports, and medical information.

Regular parent consultation meetings, written reports, and informal conversations ensure that parents are kept well-informed about their child's performance in school. Reports are issued every six weeks at mid-term and at the end of term. These include details of academic progress, attendance and social development.

A parent community group meets monthly with the academic and administrative directors to share their views and raise any concerns. Parents report that staff listen to their views and respond promptly and effectively. Parental views are also regularly canvassed through surveys, with feedback and resulting actions shared with stakeholders.

## 11. Standard 7 The school's procedure for handling complaints

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

The school has a clear complaints policy and well-defined procedures for handling and escalating complaints, including those made against senior members of staff. A parent engagement officer manages complaints and implements the policy. The policy meets BSO requirements. This includes ensuring arrangements are in place for complaints to be considered at an appeal stage by the school's governing body.

Complaints are submitted through an online form and are logged and tracked by the administration team. Records demonstrate that complaints are managed through each stage of the process in line with the school's policy, which outlines clear timescales for

response. Information is reviewed to identify patterns and trends, and the school demonstrates that all members of the school community can raise concerns appropriately.

The school responds proactively to complaints and uses feedback to inform its improvement efforts. For example, during the 2024–2025 academic year, pupils raised concerns about limited opportunities to play football. In response, the school developed a purpose-built football pitch, which is now used for physical education and break-time activities.

## 12. *Standard 8* Leadership and management of the school

The school's leadership and management meet the BSO standard and are good.

Leadership at all levels is driven by the desire to ensure that all pupils receive a safe, high-quality international education that enables them to reach their aspirations. The constitution of the school's board of directors includes the investor, the ministry liaison officer, the administrative director and the academic director. They meet three times per year and oversee the whole school provision and lead on strategy and direction.

Strategic planning is responsive to pupils' needs and ambitious. The directors fully understand the BSO standards and ensure full compliance, particularly in safeguarding, staff recruitment, and health and safety. They seek the views of all stakeholders through regular surveys and are responsive to the results. They take a close look at academic outcomes and ask for action plans from the school. The school's self-evaluation is in place, and the school is beginning to use development planning more strategically. The academic director has a clear, ambitious vision for the school.

Staff speak highly of the school and the support that it offers. The school provides training through online providers, in addition to regular updates relevant to both their individual needs and those of the school. Staff are assessed annually against a rubric based on the UK teachers' standards. Where staff are identified as requiring support, this is provided, and performance is closely monitored. Staff are observed twice per term to improve follow-up actions and performance. As a result, the school's staff, who represent diverse international backgrounds, have quickly understood the school's high expectations for teaching and learning and for safeguarding. Links with external partners support the school, such as the recent staff training provided by the American University of Iraq, Baghdad (AUIB), on problem-solving. Senior leaders attend BSME, COBIS, and Association of British Schools Overseas conferences to stay up to date and cascade training once they return to the school.

The school provides a strong structure of senior leaders who meet regularly. They are the academic director, the head of primary, the head of secondary pastoral and the head of secondary academic. The senior leaders know their school very well and manage staff development to meet the needs of pupils. Middle leadership teams are developing, and recruitment is challenging. As a result, in-house training is often employed, utilising online training suppliers where possible and leveraging the team's strengths.

Staff meetings are purposeful and relevant. Whole-school staff meetings are held as required, such as a recent meeting on the implementation of the school's revised behaviour policy. Department and section meetings are held weekly to deal with the day-to-day running of events and departmental issues. Communication across the school is timely and relevant. Staff commented that everyone is willing to help one another. There is a strong culture of support.