



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

ACS EGHAM INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

ACS Egham International School

Full Name of School	ACS Egham International School
DfE Number	936/6577
EYFS Number	EY308349
Address	ACS Egham International School Woodlee London Road Egham Surrey TW20 0HS
Telephone Number	01784 430800
Fax Number	01784 430153
Email Address	spoole@acs-england.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr Jeremy Lewis
Chair of Governors	Mr David Thomas
Age Range	2 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	607
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (318 boys; 289 girls;)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 6 5-11: 259 3-5 (EYFS): 61 11-18: 281
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	04 Oct 2011 to 05 Oct 2011 02 Nov 2011 to 04 Nov 2011

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. The inspection consists of two parts: an INITIAL two-day inspection of regulatory requirements followed by a three-day FINAL (team) inspection of the school's broader educational provision. The previous ISI inspection was in October 2005.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010*. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) Quality of education provided (curriculum)
- (b) Quality of education provided (teaching)
- (c) Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) Premises and accommodation
- (g) Provision of information
- (h) Manner in which complaints are to be handled

*These Standards Regulations replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, is as follows.

- (i) The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SEND)A.
- (ii) Race, gender and sexual discrimination legislation.
- (iii) Corporal punishment.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31st August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The ACS Egham International School is a co-educational day school. It was opened in 1995 to educate a multinational pupil body in accordance with North American and internationally recognised educational principles and practices. The school is administered by a board of directors which also has oversight of three other ACS International Schools. The ACS core purpose emphasises that 'Through learning, inspire all to make a difference', and its core values are to engage in community, be a catalyst for positive change, promote excellence and enrich the international experience. The school offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) programme for all pupils from Scramblers (three years olds in EYFS) to Grade 12 (Year 13).
- 1.2 The school is set in extensive grounds adjacent to Windsor Great Park, eighteen miles from Central London. The current headmaster was appointed in August 2010. Since the previous inspection took place in October 2005 there has been a programme of new build and refurbishment to provide new science laboratories, improved dining facilities, a Visual Arts Technology Centre, a new IB Diploma Centre and an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) playground. The construction of a new gymnasium is currently underway.
- 1.3 The school caters for 607 pupils aged two and a half to eighteen. The school has a registered EYFS with 67 pupils aged between two and a half and five years. There are 259 pupils aged five to eleven years in the Lower School. The Middle School has 154 pupils aged eleven to fourteen years and the Upper School has 185 pupils aged fifteen to eighteen years. The school community is culturally diverse, being composed of 45 nationalities with the largest groups represented being those from the USA and the UK. English is an additional language (EAL) for almost half of the pupils.
- 1.4 The school does not select pupils based on academic ability, but inspection evidence suggests that their ability at entry is broadly average. The school has identified 88 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of whom 50 receive learning support from the school.
- 1.5 The year group nomenclature used in this report and by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Pre Scramblers	Foundation Stage
Scramblers	Foundation Stage
Pre kindergarten	Foundation Stage
Pre Scramblers	Foundation Stage

Lower School

School	NC name
Kindergarten	Year 1
Grade 1	Year 2
Grade 2	Year 3
Grade 3	Year 4
Grade 4	Year 5
Grade 5	Year 6

Upper School

School	NC name
Grade 6	Year 7
Grade 7	Year 8
Grade 8	Year 9
Grade 9	Year 10
Grade 10	Year 11
Grade 11	Year 12
Grade 12	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The overall achievements of the pupils throughout the school are good. The school meets its aim of inspiring pupils to achieve more than they think they can and to become successful global citizens. The work in lessons and the results achieved in the IB show that all pupils make good progress. For some pupils with EAL progress is excellent. The curriculum is broad and contains many outstanding features. Combined with a good extra-curricular programme the curriculum contributes considerably to the high level of achievement and the development of good and often excellent skills. Pupils have excellent and highly positive attitudes to learning, encouraged by teaching that is generally good and sometimes outstanding. However, some teaching has weaknesses, for example in terms of reporting, marking, challenge and the effective use of resources.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils is excellent. The cultural diversity within the school and the emphasis on community service develops strong social and cultural awareness. Combined with excellent pastoral care and supportive relationships they become respectful young people with a strong set of moral values. Suitable procedures and policies are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and health and safety measures are carefully adhered to. The programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) needs to be applied more consistently across all pupils in a year group.
- 2.3 The board of directors provide good oversight of the education and they discharge their responsibilities well for financial planning and investment in the future. They take child protection matters and the welfare, health and safety of pupils seriously. They have been successful in fulfilling the recommendations of the previous inspection report. The senior leadership team provide good and often excellent leadership and management. Heads of department and subject leaders as yet do not take a sufficiently pro-active part in appraisal and in promoting the sharing of good teaching. The school maintains excellent links with parents. The majority of parents are extremely positive about the academic and pastoral provision provided for their children. In the pre-inspection questionnaire a small number of parents expressed concern regarding whether worthwhile help is given for pupils with SEND. The inspection team found that the provision for these pupils is good. The range of extra-curricular activities was also raised and the inspection team found there is good provision overall, but there are few opportunities to be involved in academic clubs and societies in the Lower School. Concern was raised regarding the information provided about their child's progress. The inspection team found that reports with written comments are not always consistent in quality and detail across the school.

2.(b) Action points**(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

- 2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school met all the requirements of the independent School Standard Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendation(s) for further improvement

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement(s).

1. Ensure that the delivery of the PSHE programme is consistent across all age groups.
2. Ensure that the good practice seen in teaching and learning becomes the norm in all lessons.
3. In the EYFS development plan, provide more detail about how it is to be implemented.
4. Within the EYFS, plan for better use of the outdoor learning area in Pre-Kinder, and a more flexible approach to going outdoors in Pre-Scramblers and Scramblers.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievement and their learning, attitudes and skills is good throughout the whole school including the EYFS. For some pupils who are new to the country, and have experienced many changes of schools, their achievement is excellent. Pupils are well educated and the school is successful in meeting its aim of inspiring pupils to achieve more than they believe they can, and in preparing them to become responsible global citizens with a life-long love of learning.
- 3.2 Pupils demonstrate good levels of knowledge and understanding in their subjects. Levels of numeracy and scientific knowledge are high and pupils of all ages have excellent speaking and listening skills. They are exceptionally articulate and engage in lively exchange and discussion amongst themselves and with their teachers. However, literacy skills and the presentation of their work do not always attain such high standards, and was seen to be more variable throughout the school. Pupils from a young age are competent in working independently or in groups and are able to think for themselves. For example, Grade 4 pupils enjoyed working on an integrated science and language task in groups independent of their teachers. Excellent information and communication technology (ICT) skills are used by pupils to aid independent work. Upper school pupils worked efficiently on the specification, design and construction of web sites with little or no intervention by the teacher. The ability to reason and to think logically is strong in the upper school and skilful self-evaluation is evident in the analysis of their work and how to improve their grades. Achievements in creative skills are good and often excellent as seen in the high standards of art displays. Notable achievements in music include the choir and orchestra performing in national concerts. Pupils achieve considerable success in sports in the international school competitions, especially in basketball, volleyball, soccer and golf. Notable achievement is seen each year in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and the Community Action and Service (CAS) programmes. The majority of pupils achieve places at their first choice of university either in the USA or in the UK.
- 3.3 The following analysis uses national and international data for the years 2008 to 2010, the most recent years for which comparative data is available. Results in the IB are above the worldwide average and similar to the UK average. In the last 3 years, 99% of all pupils have successfully achieved their diploma. A small number of pupils each year demonstrate exceptional achievement with a score of 40 points or more. In the lower school pupils demonstrated a good level of attainment across all ages in the lessons observed, and when sharing their work during interviews with the inspection team. The school does not use standardised forms of ability testing to make a judgement on pupils' progress through the school, but the good results achieved in the IB Diploma, the clear progress evident in the lessons observed and in the work scrutinised during the inspection, indicate that pupils are making good progress. Pupils with SEND and EAL make similar progress to all other pupils in the school because of the high level of support given by the student support centre and the teachers. For some EAL pupils who start at the school with little knowledge of the English language progress is excellent. Pupils who are gifted and talented are challenged by the independent work assignments that are a feature of the IB curriculum at all ages.

3.4 Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. A highly positive attitude and an enthusiasm for learning motivate them to do their best at all times. Younger pupils are inquisitive and imaginative. Older pupils are very ambitious and are focused on obtaining good examination results but also enjoy learning for its own sake. Pupils are supportive and helpful to each other in class and all enjoy seeing each other succeed.

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

3.5 The curriculum is good throughout the school and it contains many outstanding features. The IB programme supports the pupils' progress and achievement well and, combined with a good extra-curricular programme, makes a strong contribution to their personal development. The IB learner profile, which forms the core of the programme, fully supports the school's aim in helping pupils become successful and contributing global citizens.

3.6 The curriculum is effective in covering all the different areas of learning and is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. Pupils benefit from the consistency of approach, beginning with the Primary Years Programme and continuing through the Middle Years Programme to the IB Diploma in Grades 11 and 12. This provides a good continuation of learning. There is regular review of the curriculum through all levels of management to ensure that pupils have access to a suitably broad and balanced curriculum. The curriculum is also reviewed by the leadership team to ensure it is maintained to meet the needs of international pupils. A recent review has strengthened links between subject areas and has successfully increased the effectiveness of the student support department which caters to pupils with particular needs. The school is currently building a new gymnasium which will fulfil the recommendation of the previous report to improve accommodation for physical education (PE) to increase curriculum options. A review of the school day is also being undertaken to establish whether a school day of four lessons of 80 minutes each better serves the Upper School, for example in terms of the opportunity to extend technology provision.

3.7 Pupils with SEND and EAL receive effective support and guidance to ensure that they make good progress. Members of staff and those from the student support centre work collaboratively in child studies teams to provide suitable teaching methods and resources. More able pupils also benefit from challenging extension opportunities which are integrated into lessons and into their individual assignments. A suitable PSHE programme is delivered through cross-curricular teaching, the advisory programme, and in assemblies, but it is not closely monitored to ensure consistency of access across all age groups. Pupils reported varying quality of coverage given to such topics as the importance of good nutrition, drugs awareness, smoking and the use of alcohol. The team judged that sufficient attention had not been given to ensure all pupils satisfactorily received coverage of the full programme. Careers education is thorough, especially for older pupils preparing for universities around the world, and for the global workplace.

3.8 The provision for extra-curricular involvement is good overall. There are many exciting opportunities outside school. Pupils take part in Model United Nations (MUN) debates and have opportunities to work abroad in Kenya, India and Poland. Mother tongue tuition is provided in many languages. There are many good sports and music activities, but few academic clubs and societies are offered in the Lower School. Valuable work is completed through the community service programme

which enables pupils to combine extra-curricular activities with service to the school or the larger community. A wide range of trips and visits both within the UK and abroad enhances the pupils' experiences and enriches the curriculum. A recommendation in the previous report was to aim for a wider range of activities in Lower School and this has been partially achieved, although activities are mostly limited to sport and music.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.9 The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and in a number of lessons it is outstanding, especially in the Upper School. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the acquisition of knowledge and understanding and in the development of new skills. It supports the school's aims to inspire, encourage and support the development of each pupil as an independent life-long learner.
- 3.10 For the most part, a variety of teaching methods is used, enhanced by the imaginative and effective use of a good range of resources. Pupils are challenged to produce work of a high standard and to extend themselves by applying their knowledge in unfamiliar or more demanding contexts. For example, an English lesson encouraged pupils to reflect on and to improve their responses to the task of writing their own poems incorporating some of the language and imagery of war poetry. The pupils' interest is captured in lessons with a brisk pace and where tasks are varied to stimulate their imagination and enjoyment. This was demonstrated in a challenging numeracy lesson in the Lower School when pupils worked in groups on a number of activities to estimate time. A feature of most lessons is the clarity of the teacher's explanations and their excellent subject knowledge. This enables teachers to respond clearly and authoritatively to their pupils when asked questions and allows pupils to have full confidence in their teachers. Where teaching is less successful, the pace is often too slow or the teacher talks too much, and the pupils lose concentration and interest. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to work independently but they are also given many opportunities to work in pairs and groups and to help each other in their learning. Grade 12 pupils effectively evaluated each others' plans for an assignment in an IB Theory of Knowledge lesson. Planning is thorough at all stages and promotes good progress. Teachers creatively use a range of resources. In some lessons, there is too much reliance on worksheets and not enough opportunity for free writing to improve written English skills. Some teachers make good use of ICT to promote learning, but overall, these resources are not yet used well enough.
- 3.11 The work of pupils is effectively assessed by a variety of methods. Traditional marking of written work by teachers is variable in quality. On the whole, marking is thorough and contains helpful comments on how to improve. The most valuable assessment of work is marked against the IB standards and involves self evaluation by the pupils. Throughout the school, the quality of oral feedback to pupils is excellent. This feedback is a key factor in enabling pupils to understand what they need to do to improve their grades. Departments use data effectively to track and monitor pupils' achievements within the subject, and a system to help them compare their own data with other departments is being developed. This is intended to ensure that all pupils are making sufficient progress.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' personal development is excellent throughout the school. The school is successful in its aims of enabling pupils to value cultural diversity and grow in an understanding and acceptance of themselves and their place in the community.
- 4.2 The pupils' spiritual development is good. A high degree of self-esteem and self-confidence develops because of excellent supportive relationships within the school. Pupils are allowed time to reflect and think deeply about issues helping them to build a clear set of values and principles which inform their very positive perspective on life. They appreciate the beauty in what they see and hear in the school environment, and this is especially apparent in their response to creative subjects. There is a natural acceptance and tolerance for all faiths.
- 4.3 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. The respectful relationships they enjoy and their good behaviour both in the classroom and around the school demonstrates a strong set of moral values. They have a good sense of right and wrong and can reason and justify their opinions and decisions. Pupils initiate their own code of conduct based on the IB learner profile each year. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire some pupils felt that teachers were not fair in either the application of sanctions or their dealing with pupils. Inspection evidence did not support these concerns. At interview the pupils felt their teachers treated them fairly. Positions of responsibility are few in the school, as pupils successfully regulate their many activities in a collaborative manner, but when responsibility is undertaken, as in the school council representatives, they are excellent role models for leadership. Pupils are courteous and extremely helpful to adults and to each other.
- 4.4 Social awareness is excellent. The emphasis on community service is a strength that permeates the school programme and helps the pupils to develop excellent social skills. Pupils show their understanding of the needs of others by their willingness to be involved in many national and international charities. They enjoy their involvement in the Young Leaders Conference and long-term projects such as in Kenya where they support a poorly equipped school. A generous amount of time is given to the local community, as in the targets they set for their recycling. A small number of pupils reported on the questionnaire that the school does not always listen to their views but the pupils at interview did not agree. Inspectors judged that the school's student councils have enabled pupils to have a voice in the running of the school which they value and has benefited many, for example in the acquisition of new playground equipment. They understand what it means to be a responsible citizen through their work in the curriculum on citizenship.
- 4.5 Cultural development in the school is excellent. Pupils come from a variety of different cultures and backgrounds and happily play and work together. Understanding and respect for the cultures of each other's countries creates a harmonious atmosphere and engenders a strong community spirit. The focus this year for the school community is 'Actively Building Community' and ties into many of the school projects. International Week each year celebrates international and cultural diversity. An extensive range of trips and visits to museums and theatres provides further opportunities for pupils to widen their understanding of British culture.

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

- 4.6 The welfare, health and safety and the quality of pastoral care for pupils throughout the school is excellent and results in a caring and friendly community where pupils feel highly valued. Pastoral arrangements are clearly understood by the pupils. The combination of support provided through the advisory teachers, subject teachers and the principals and assistant principals of the three sections of the school works well, and results in concerns being identified and handled quickly. Pupils feel comfortable to talk to any member of staff of their choice if they have a concern or problem to be resolved. The school has a student services team which consists of special educational needs teachers, counsellors and a school nurse who also offer another level of support. Teachers know their pupils well and communication amongst staff is very effective and fully co-ordinated. Senior leadership team members discuss any pastoral issues on a weekly basis and there are regular meetings to ensure continuity of care. Parents are kept well-informed of any concerns regarding their children.
- 4.7 There are clear and effective policies and procedures for child protection and promoting the welfare of the pupils, and due care is given to the implementation of these policies. All staff and governors have participated in recent safeguarding training, and safe recruitment procedures are strictly adhered to. Arrangements to ensure health and safety are excellent and well managed by a dedicated health and safety team with representatives from all areas of the school. A critical incident team meets twice a year to review emergency procedures and to discuss any incidents. Detailed risk assessments are reviewed regularly. All necessary measures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards have been taken and staff are trained in the required fire prevention procedures. Fire drills are carried out regularly. Pupils benefit from a suitable medical centre run by a health care professional. Good health records are maintained and medicines are stored and distributed safely. A number of staff are trained in first aid. The school has a three year disability plan in operation, and access to buildings and toilets for the disabled is good.
- 4.8 Pupils enjoy a good range of healthy food although improvements to the dining facilities are needed to relieve congestion in the dining room. A healthy living programme is promoted through the PSHE scheme of work and pupils participate in a good programme of weekly exercise. Admission and attendance registers are maintained properly and correctly stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good. The board of directors successfully promotes the vision for the future of the school and provide effective guidance and support to help the school meet its aims.
- 5.2 The board, composed of both executive and non-executive members, provides strong business skills and experience for the oversight of the school and three other ACS schools. Its members have considered and implemented most of the findings of a detailed independent review of their governance structures and operation. A culture of frequent self-evaluation provides insight into the needs of the school to provide clear strategic planning. The board successfully devolves responsibility to a number of leadership teams and committees which operate centrally across the four schools, covering financial management, investment in buildings and resources, policies and legal procedures, employment matters, and health and safety. The centralised collaborative work of these teams and committees is well organised and provides essential information to the board to govern effectively. The governors provide good support for the head and he is encouraged to develop his independence in the daily running of the school to promote growth and improvement.
- 5.3 Communication between the school and the governors is good. Board members are well informed about the working of the school although they do not have a high profile or involvement with staff, pupils and parents. Many do attend school events when possible. They are aware of their legal obligations and give appropriate attention to matters of child protection, welfare, and health and safety. They undergo frequent training in their responsibilities, including child protection and safeguarding, and ensure that training is maintained to a high standard for members of the leadership teams and their committees. They have been successful in fulfilling the recommendations of the previous inspection report in promoting the improvement of facilities for physical education. Extending extra-curricular provision in the lower school and promoting improvements in middle management and subject leadership has also been satisfactorily achieved.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 Through good and often excellent leadership and management throughout the whole school, the aims of maintaining high academic standards in an international community, and of promoting excellent personal development, are successfully achieved. The members of the senior leadership team are particularly successful in creating a warm and welcoming school where the atmosphere is purposeful, ambitious and exciting.
- 5.5 The head, supported by the principals and assistant principals of the three sections of the school, work closely together in a senior leadership team and effectively share the vision for the school across all departments. With the support of clearly defined working committees, many of the new initiatives recently introduced have had a significant impact on the educational provision for pupils. Improvements to the curriculum, and a focus on improving teaching and learning, have become high priority in school development planning and have resulted in a more personalised learning experience for pupils.

- 5.6 Thorough self evaluation and widespread consultation with parents, pupils and the international community, has resulted in a more reflective form of development planning that shows clear priorities with detailed timescales and a good understanding of the future needs of the school. Departmental plans by heads of departments show an understanding of the main issues to be resolved and the future needs of subjects to stimulate improvement. Action planning by subject co-ordinators in the lower school is thorough. Management have given due consideration to the use of academic data to track and monitor progress. Appraisal of teachers has raised the standard of teaching and learning but it is not sufficiently focused on the sharing of outstanding teaching practice to raise all teaching to that of the highest standards. The efficient use of e-mail allows for communication with staff on a daily basis and the school portal is beginning to be a valuable centre for sharing information.
- 5.7 Managers are successful in securing, retaining and supporting a high quality staff. The school has a rigorous recruitment process for checking the suitability of those who work in the school and who are involved in the education of the pupils. Policies are now monitored closely and applied appropriately, especially those for child protection and safeguarding. The administration and support staff of the school are highly efficient and helpful and make a valuable contribution to the management of the school.

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

- 5.8 The links between the school and parents are outstanding. The school works hard towards its aim of creating a strong partnership with parents, and it offers exceptional support to families new to the school and to the country. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire show that the majority of parents are extremely positive about the academic and pastoral provision on offer for their children and believe the school to be a warm and welcoming community.
- 5.9 The admissions department and a very active parent teacher organisation (PTO) take an active lead in helping parents to settle into the school and the local community, often providing help and advice well beyond that associated with the school and education. As an international school they offer families advice on how to alleviate the difficulties of frequent changes of school for their children. The PTO meets monthly with the head and also organises community events such as an international fair, workshops and speakers for both pupils and parents. They provide a buddy system for parents new to the country and lead philanthropic committees such as The Kenya Committee, where parents work together with teachers to deepen curriculum opportunities and international links. Parental views, gained through forums and an annual survey, contribute to the school development plan. The school has a good complaints policy available to parents and procedures are clear.
- 5.10 The school provides parents and prospective parents with the required information about the school. Communication with parents is maintained effectively through two official parent meetings each year and a number of other meetings or workshops initiated throughout the year by parents or staff. Day to day and emergency communication with parents is quickly achieved through email. Good quality and frequent informative newsletters update parents on events and news. A recently formed intranet forum is open to parents and has begun to provide access to relevant information, news and policy documents. Parents are kept fully informed about the progress of their children. The Upper School produces a full written report

twice a year and assessment grade sheets twice a year. The Lower school issues four full reports a year. In the pre-inspection questionnaire a small number of parents were not satisfied with the information provided about their children's progress. The inspection team found that reports with written comments are not consistent in quality and detail across the school but the reporting system is currently being reviewed to provide more detailed information.

- 5.11 A small number of parents raised a concern regarding whether worthwhile help is given for pupils with SEND. The inspection found that the provision for these pupils and EAL pupils by the student support centre is very effective and the support given within the classroom by teachers is excellent. The range of extra-curricular activities was also raised as an issue by a small number of parents and the inspection team found some evidence to support this view. There is good provision for sport and music, but few opportunities to be involved in academic clubs and societies in the Lower School.

What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

6.(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.1 The overall effectiveness of the EYFS is good. The staff have a deep knowledge of each child, which ensures their individual needs are met, and as a result, the children achieve highly. There are effective systems for self-evaluation and the dedicated staff team works hard to improve practice. They keep updated through strong links with the local authority. Since the previous inspection, improvements have been made to the organisation of the accommodation, resources and the literacy programme.

6.(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.2 Leadership and management are good overall, and inspire a strong, reflective staff team. The joint vision of fusing the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IBPYP) with the EYFS successfully provides a wide and challenging range of learning experiences. Efficient whole school monitoring systems ensure high quality teaching. The team identify appropriate areas for improvement, but there is no clear plan for implementation; a lack of detail of what, when and how changes will take place sometimes limits progress. The children's safety takes high priority, with appropriate checks, secure risk assessments and vigilant staff. Children are safeguarded through stringent and effective policies and procedures, which also ensure equality and freedom from discrimination. Inclusive practice is embedded in the fabric of the provision, with the school's diverse cultural ethos being firmly established from an early age. The partnership with parents is outstanding, and contributes significantly to children's overall development. Parents speak highly of the EYFS provision, and fully appreciate the outstanding communication between home and school. There are effective links with outside agencies to ensure additional needs are well met. Classroom spaces and ample resources are used well to stimulate children's imagination and motivate them to learn. However, the outstanding outdoor areas are underused by all classes for learning.

6.(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.3 The quality of the provision is good overall, and outstanding for children aged three and under (Pre-Scramblers and Scramblers). Staff expertly support learning. They have excellent rapport with children, and skilfully interact to promote number and language development. A rigorous approach to assessment ensures that staff track progress well, identify next steps and the need for additional support. Staff achieve a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning. However, they do not plan for regular learning outdoors for four-year-olds (Pre-Kinder). Staff carefully nurture children's well-being. Their enthusiastic yet calm and respectful approach, promotes safe and kind behaviour and a keenness to learn. Staff organise their rooms exceptionally well to inspire children's imagination and foster independence. Extensive outdoor areas are safely equipped to a high standard, with outstanding provision for physical development. Both Scrambler groups enjoy long periods of outdoor play and learning, although they have little choice of when to go outdoors.

6.(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 6.4 Outcomes for children are good overall, and outstanding for children aged three and under. Children with EAL make remarkable progress in communicating. Two-year-olds dance joyfully to music, count confidently to three and talk about half and full cups. Four year olds enjoy their learning as they begin to add on one more, count to 20 and competently use the whiteboard. Children become independent quickly, develop a keen sense of safety, good hygiene habits and learn about eating healthily. However, four year olds do not practise their investigative and problem solving skills enough, due to insufficient planning for outdoor learning. Children's knowledge of the wider world grows significantly through role-play, and sharing their varied cultural experiences. Children are polite, caring and friendly, as a result of excellent staff role models and the highly inclusive International school ethos.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

- 6.5 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Complaints since the last inspection

- 6.6 Since the previous inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required any action to meet national requirements.

Section 2 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mrs Maureen Bradley	Reporting Inspector
Mr Neil Hudson	Head of School, ISA School
Mrs Dee Hutley	Former Head, ISA School
Mrs Susan Rix	Former Head, SHMIS School
Mr Colin Haddon	Deputy Head, ISA School
Mr Stuart Higgins	Principal, SHMIS School
Ms Jo Blank	Early Years Lead Inspector