



British Schools Overseas
School inspection report

The International School of Morocco
16 and 17 November 2015



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Overall effectiveness

- The International School of Morocco provides its pupils with a good education because it is able to translate its mission and vision into everyday practice. All staff in this small school share these principles so that there is a very positive climate.
- Pupils achieve well in a warm and caring environment where the emphasis is on the individual and expectations are high. As a result, all pupils make good progress especially with languages. This is confirmed by pupils' work and the school's assessment information. All are at least bi-lingual and most speak three languages: English, French and Arabic. English language fluency is good.
- The school is led well and managed very effectively. There are extremely good systems and procedures to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for. Safeguarding is very effective with robust policies that are implemented very successfully. As a result, pupils feel safe at school and confident that they are looked after well.
- Typically, pupils' behaviour is good. They are respectful of others and show tolerance to the wide range of cultural heritages represented in the school. Teachers set high expectations and act as positive role models and this results in strong relationships. Staff know their pupils well and use this knowledge to meet their needs effectively.
- There is an appropriate range of opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. For example, enrichment activities such as drama productions and the celebration of festivals from different religious traditions all help to promote pupils' personal development well.
- The school promotes the British values of democracy, tolerance and respect for diversity effectively. It currently teaches the National Curriculum for England and Wales up to the age of 13 (Year 8) and is developing its curriculum to cater for the year after next when Year 10 will start their IGCSE courses. Local culture and traditions are promoted well through the teaching of French and Arabic.
- Teaching and assessment are consistently good. Teaching builds effectively on pupils' positive attitudes and work is suitably challenging including for those with special educational needs. Pupils that are more able achieve well from their starting points as do lower-achievers. Sometimes, too much use is made of worksheets and this limits progress a little, especially the more able.
- The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils effectively and provides a broad range of subjects that covers English, mathematics, science, languages and humanities as well as art, music and design and technology. The links teachers make between these subjects promotes pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain appropriately.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The International School of Morocco meets the requirements for British schools overseas, as laid down by the UK Department for Education, in full. Within the local context, the school promotes the values of democracy, freedom of expression, tolerance and respect effectively.

What the school could do to improve further

- While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development.
 - Improve teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring greater consistency between teachers in the way they use questions to assess pupils' learning and extend their knowledge and understanding
 - ensuring that lessons are not dominated by worksheets
 - using marking consistently to help pupils improve their work.

The quality of education provided by the school

The curriculum

- The school's good curriculum means that pupils experience a broad and balanced education. Teachers use the National Curriculum for England and Wales and lessons are taught entirely in English except for French and Arabic language lessons. The National Curriculum is adapted to follow some of the principles of the PYP curriculum but the expectations are those of the English curriculum. As a result, pupils gain knowledge of modern British society while also being taught about the traditions in the host country. This has a broadly effective impact on pupils' understanding but it is not as strong as it could be. Pupils understand fully the values of democracy, tolerance and respect.
- The curriculum in the nursery and reception classes provides a suitable environment for children to develop their skills and make effective progress with their learning. The school gives particular emphasis to supporting pupils speaking their home language as an essential element in building English fluency. This approach is successful and those children who start in the nursery speaking little or no English make good progress so that they move into Year 1 with sufficient knowledge to access the curriculum.
- The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 provides a broad and balanced range of subjects and experiences that meets pupils' needs effectively. Teachers link the work in different subjects and this motivates and interests pupils and promotes their progress well. For example, the Victorians is the school's current theme. Pupils start school at different ages and have often changed schools mid-way through a key stage. However, those that have little English when they start make rapid progress and

become fluent speakers and writers within two or three months. This is further evidence that the school's approach to building English fluency is effective.

- Pupils in Years 7 and 8 receive a broad curriculum that builds on their learning in previous years. This has a positive impact on pupils' progress because it enables them to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding effectively. There is a common approach to teaching the languages of English, French and Arabic and this is effective in developing their literacy skills well. In mathematics, there are some good opportunities for pupils to investigate and think for themselves. These experiences have a strong impact on pupils' learning and the school's assessment information, work in books, and lessons show that they are making good progress.
- After-school and lunchtime activities enrich pupils' learning effectively. Activities enable pupils to develop their interests in subjects other than those included in the formal curriculum. This contributes effectively to pupils' enjoyment of learning and school.

The quality of teaching and assessment

- Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and manage lessons well so that they run without interruptions. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to school and to learning and are keen to do well. They are well motivated, interested and engaged in learning. These attitudes have a significant impact on the progress pupils make with their learning.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are very good. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well and provide work that meets their needs effectively. Lessons are well planned so that pupils know what is expected of them and what they need to do to achieve well. As a result, progress is nearly always good. A characteristic of teaching is the way teachers promote collaborative working. Pupils respond particularly well to this approach and enjoy working with others. This contributes well to the good progress they make. Sometimes, an over-use of worksheets means that some pupils are not stretched enough and make less good progress.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes practical and interesting activities move children's learning and development forward successfully. Children enjoy the different things they do and learn well as a result.
- Literacy is taught well as a result of the school's emphasis on language. Class teachers work with those teaching French and Arabic to coordinate their approach to language acquisition so that there is consistency in the way pupils are taught. This is having a clear impact on pupils' learning and those with little or no English, French or Arabic make good progress while those with more advanced language skills consolidate and deepen their knowledge and understanding effectively. All pupils are at least bi-lingual and some speak three or more languages.

- Assessment is accurate and secure and the school has rigorous methods to check pupils' achievement and the progress they make. They use this information effectively to identify pupils who need extra help and to provide additional support during lessons. This shows the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- In some lessons questions are used very effectively to check pupils' understanding and draw out ideas. This challenges pupils effectively. However, sometimes the teacher talks too much or questions require pupils to give only a simple answer. Where this happens pupils' do not deepen their knowledge and understanding as much as they should.
- Marking and the feedback given to pupils are generally good and there is some excellent practice in literacy. However, sometimes teachers' comments do not give clear enough guidance to pupils about how they can improve their work.
- Extra-curricular activities include football, swimming, science or history clubs, sculpting, puppetry, chess and cooking. These add considerably to pupils' experiences and enable them to develop a range of personal and creative skills.
- Opportunities for professional development are good and linked well to the school's and teachers' priorities. Recently, teachers have had training to develop their expertise in teaching programming and control to pupils in Years 1-8.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and learning and these have a pronounced impact on their achievements. Pupils enjoy being at school and their lessons. The group of pupils that met the inspector agreed that they "love school".
- The school is welcoming and this, together with its professional and friendly atmosphere, promotes pupils' social skills very well and gives them a clear moral code. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong, and show tolerance and respect towards others. Pupils are polite, well-mannered and conduct themselves well around the building. Teachers provide positive role models.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is reinforced effectively by the school's culture and curriculum. There is a range of opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of other cultures and beliefs for example by raising money for charity, celebrating different religious festivals and visiting experts. Recently, pupils in Years 1 and 2 visited the Museum of Moroccan Judaism as part of their work on family histories. These opportunities help pupils to develop their personal skills well and their knowledge of the responsibilities of citizenship in an international context.
- British values are promoted effectively through the school's curriculum. For example, this year's Christmas production is based on Dickens's "Christmas Carol" which links to the work pupils are doing in class on the Victorians. Last year the theme was the Elizabethans and the production a Mid-summer Night's Dream. The

values of tolerance, the rule of law and respect for others who are different are promoted well.

The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

- The school's systems and procedures to promote pupils' welfare, health and safety are very robust and implemented very effectively. They meet the British schools overseas standards well. The school provides a very safe and nurturing environment that ensures that the care and welfare of pupils is of the highest importance. This is one of the reasons why pupils make good progress and develop their personal skills effectively.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about to prevent bullying.. Although bullying is unusual, pupils report that it does happen occasionally. They say that the school generally deals with any incidents effectively. Pupils say that they feel safe at school and know who to go to if they have a problem. The school provide a safe and secure environment.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. The small classes and nurturing atmosphere make it possible to provide all pupils with individual support. As a result, pupils make the same progress as others.
- The school maintains good written records and logs of behaviour incidents and the action taken. It has a clear written policy on first aid and a number of staff are trained first aiders. These records allow the school to identify patterns of behaviour and take well planned steps to support pupils. The records show that the rare incidents of challenging behaviour are being tackled effectively.
- Pupils' health, including eating properly, dealing with cuts and bruises, and providing opportunities for physical activity is provided for well. Pupils have access to a range of play equipment in the playground and have regular PE lessons.

The suitability of the proprietor and staff

- The school meets the British schools overseas standards for the recruitment and management of staff very effectively. It has robust systems to ensure that all the necessary checks of staff are made, including police checks, identity, right to work in Morocco, employment history and medical fitness. References are always taken up and records are very thorough and up to date. Those responsible for recruitment, both teachers and directors, have completed the safer recruitment training.
- The school's records show that the systems and policies for ensuring the suitability of staff are implemented very effectively. Record keeping is exemplary and shows that where necessary, unsuitable staff have not been appointed.

The premises and accommodation

- Despite the limited space, much has been done to ensure that the building provides appropriately for teaching the English National Curriculum. It is very well maintained, clean and bright and provides a safe and secure environment for all pupils. For example, there are good security arrangements including a “safe” room in case of terrorist attack and regular fire, earthquake and crisis drills. Records show that these drills are regular and frequent.
- There are sufficient washrooms and appropriate facilities for pupils who become ill. The small canteen allows food to be prepared and served hygienically. Resources to support learning are sufficient and there is a good range of reading books to support pupils’ literacy development. Digital tablets are available in classrooms from which pupils access textbooks, although these are also available in hard copy. This is especially so for reading books. This dual access to textbooks serves the pupils well because it enables them to quickly find the information they need.
- Classrooms are well decorated and maintained. Each is suitably air-conditioned and heated. The display in classrooms is especially strong and uses pupils’ work to celebrate learning. The display is also related to the work pupils are doing. These features support learning effectively.

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

- The school provides a good range of information for parents and carers and meets the requirements for British schools overseas in full. The limited information on the school’s website is supplemented well by a password protected site for parents. This provides information about the curriculum, what is being taught and many of the school’s policies and procedures. These are also available in hard copy from the school.
- Links with parents are strong. Parents are very supportive of the school and it is common for them to give their time freely to support teaching. They are able to meet with teachers to discuss their children’s progress regularly and receive termly reports. News about school activities is available each month via the school’s blog.

The school's procedures for handling complaints

- The school has clear procedures for handling complaints including timescales and appeals. In practice, there are few complaints and when they do occur they are dealt with quickly and without the need for formal procedures. The school meets the BSO standards for handling complaints.

Leadership and management of the school

- Leadership and management of the school are effective. The headteacher and directors have a clear vision for the school and high expectations for staff, pupils

and parents. All members of staff share these high expectations, and the commitment to the children in their care, and work together effectively to provide pupils with a good education. This has a significant impact on pupils' learning and ensures that there is a positive climate for learning and a vibrant atmosphere throughout the school.

- Financial management is effective, ensuring that there are suitable resources for learning. There is a very full range of policies and procedures that are reviewed regularly and used effectively to ensure that all the standards for British schools overseas are met.
- There are well-defined expectations about teaching standards and a well-developed appraisal process based on support and development. This is implemented effectively and has a positive impact on teaching quality and pupils' outcomes. Areas for development are identified well and professional development opportunities reflect these well, for example the recent training on programming.
- Development planning is realistic and accurate, and based on an effective self-review process. The school knows itself well and has a realistic set of priorities for further development. It has, for example, identified that the current building will become too small as the school expands and there are well-developed plans for a new building on a new site.
- Data and assessment information are used well to monitor and evaluate the school's provision and performance. The school has established effective procedures to check pupils' progress and identify those who need extra support. A number of commercial schemes are used including computerised tests that measure academic progress. In addition, the school uses optional National Curriculum tests, commercial reading schemes and a system to check progress in reading. These enable the school to identify those pupils who need additional help and to provide evidence of the good progress made by pupils. Pupils who fall behind in their learning receive good support to catch up.

Glossary of terms

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		√		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs		√		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range		√		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		√		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural		√		
The behaviour of pupils		√		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils including safeguarding	√			
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Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management		√		
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School details

School status	Independent, day		
Type of school	All-through		
Date school opened	2011		
Age range of pupils	3 – 13		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys:	Girls:	Total:
Annual fees (day pupils)			60
Address of school	#3 Impasse Jules Gros Quartier Oasis Casablanca 20150 Morocco		
Telephone number	+212 (0) 522-993-987		
Fax number	N/A		
Email address	info@ism-casablanca.com		
Headteacher	Mrs Meredith Achlim		
Chair of the Board of Governors	N/A		