



British Schools Overseas School inspection report

Queen's College

Inspection dates
Lead inspector

14 and 15 November 2012
Brian Oppenheim

Issue and revision record

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by three inspectors. The lead inspector was from Cambridge Education's British Schools Overseas Inspectorate and is Ofsted accredited. The team inspectors were from the National Association of British Schools in Spain (NABSS).

The inspectors visited 33 lessons and held meetings with staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at data on pupils' attainment over the past three years, at schemes of work, policies, the school improvement plan and the school's self-review.

The inspection team:

Brian Oppenheim	Lead inspector, Cambridge Education
James Shallcross	Team inspector, NABSS
Julie Harris	Team inspector, NABSS

Inspectors use the Department for Education standards for the inspection of British schools overseas aligned with the NABSS accreditation criteria. The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's owners on the overall effectiveness of the school and the standard of education it provides. Cambridge Education reports to the Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the relevant standards for British schools overseas as follows:

- the quality of education provided by the school (curriculum, teaching and assessment)
- the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- the welfare, health and safety of the pupils
- the suitability of the proprietor and staff
- the premises and accommodation
- the provision of information for parents, carers and others
- the school's procedures for handling complaints
- leadership and management of the school.

Information about the school

Queen's College was founded in 1977. It is an independent, co-educational school with 390 children between the ages of three and 18 years. The school has a range of purpose-built classrooms, two science laboratories, library, computer room, art room and sixth form study area as well as a multi-purpose hall, sports and dining facilities.

The school is authorised by the Spanish Ministry of Education to offer a British education to children of all nationalities and is an inspected and approved member of the National Association of British Schools in Spain.

Programmes of study are based on the British National curriculum with complementary studies from the Spanish curriculum for Spanish pupils and those of other nationalities who have the required level of Spanish language. At the ages of 16 and 18 respectively pupils take GCSE and GCE "A" level examinations and those pupils who have also taken the Spanish programme obtain the equivalent Spanish qualifications, ESO and Bachillerato.

Overall effectiveness

Queen's College provides its students with a good quality of education and some aspects, such as pupils' personal development, are outstanding. The school is particularly successful in meeting its aim to provide an education "in its broadest sense, encouraging and enabling pupils to lead full, happy lives with positive contributions to make to any society in which they may find themselves". Pupils leave school as very confident, well-adjusted young people.

The school meets the requirements of the Spanish Ministry of Education but the emphasis on teaching the National Curriculum for England, and preparing pupils for IGCSE, AS and A level examinations means that they experience an education that is British in character. Many pupils leave to study at UK universities.

Overall, pupils achieve well by the time they leave school. Many pupils start school with a limited grasp of the English language and progress in the Nursery is very good. They make significant progress as they move through the primary years so that standards are broadly similar to schools in England by the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6). In the IGCSE and A Level examinations pupils make good progress to achieve standards that are well above the average overall. Some subjects do less well and senior leaders recognise examination results should be even better. However, the IGCSE and A Level data show that over time the school has maintained or improved on these high standards.

Teaching is generally good and, despite some that is only satisfactory, all pupils make good progress overall during their time at the school. There are some variations between the achievements of boys and girls especially in reading at the end of Year 6 where girls appear to be much better than boys. But the small classes mean that these differences are not significant and, by the time they leave school, boys do as well as girls. Pupils with special education needs make generally good progress because they get effective support. Outstanding behaviour and attitudes adds a great deal to pupils' learning. The curriculum is good in Early Years, primary and secondary and there is a wide range of enrichment activities. Pupils' attitudes to school and to others are excellent and good opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness means that they have extremely good personal skills. Leadership and management are good and have a strong impact on improvement. Over the past two years the school has

established a strong basis for moving to outstanding. Self-review is well established although the number of priorities means that its impact is not as great as it could be. The relationship between the school's owners and the senior team is positive and promotes a strong sense of teamwork.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

Queen's College meets the requirements for British schools overseas, as laid down by the UK Department for Education, in full. The school promotes a British education for its pupils well through, for example, its teaching and ethos and many pupils move successfully to British universities and colleges when they leave.

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 further so that it has a consistently positive impact on pupils' learning, and raises achievement, by:

- ensuring that activities stretch all pupils, particularly the most able, and involves them actively in their learning
- using a range of different teaching methods that are right for the pupils and the subject
- using more open-ended questions to push pupils' learning forward more rapidly and help them to think for themselves
- developing approaches to assessment particularly giving feedback to pupils about how well they are doing and what steps they need to take to improve their work.

Continue to develop the self-review and improvement process by:

- prioritising those issues that will have the most impact in classrooms, such as teaching, learning and achievement
- identifying the processes to tackle the priorities.

The quality of education provided by the school

The curriculum

The curriculum in Early Years and Key Stages 1 and 2 is creative and reflects the English National Curriculum well. The provision of creative activities each Friday morning ensures that the curriculum is broad and balanced. Basic skills are taught effectively although the correlation between the school's tests and National Curriculum level judgements is not always consistent suggesting that moderation is not as accurate as it

could be. However, the development of pupils' English language skills is good so that they make brisk progress, reaching at least average levels by the end of Year 6. The "Relax Kids" scheme and a programme to teach pupils about resolving conflict, as well as the school's positive ethos, all have a strong impact on creating a calm and supportive learning environment. An effective health education programme is having a positive impact on pupils' healthy eating habits.

The curriculum in Key Stages 3 and 4, and in the sixth form, is good. It covers all areas of the National Curriculum including creative and aesthetic aspects. The personal, social, and health education programme provides good opportunities for pupils to debate important, real life issues and develop their understanding of the wider world. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Spanish Government and promotes a British experience very effectively. Despite being a small school, pupils in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form have a realistic range of courses to choose from. As a result pupils are able to study the subjects they need for the next stage of their careers.

The school has a wide range of enrichment activities including drama, football, judo, gymnastics, art and information and communication technology (ICT). Together with the broad curriculum, these activities ensure pupils are very well prepared for the future.

The quality of teaching and assessment

Teaching is good overall so that pupils make brisk progress with their learning, achieving results that are well above average. Some of the teaching is outstanding and much is good but there are times when it is only satisfactory.

The best teaching is in the Early Years and secondary. In the Early Years an extremely enthusiastic team of staff make excellent use of the space available. The stimulating learning environment provides good opportunities for child initiated learning as well as directed activities. Together with a consistent approach and high expectations, this ensures that pupils' behaviour is very good and that they are focused on their work. As a result pupils make very good progress.

There is also some good practice in Key Stages 1 and 2. In one lesson, for example, very clear explanations about the task and the good level of challenge meant that all pupils were enthusiastic about their work and made swift progress. However, not all lessons stretch pupils enough and, as a result, progress is only satisfactory. Sometimes, lessons are dominated by the teaching and this gives little opportunity for pupils to develop as active learners. There are excellent relationships in all classes and pupils are extremely keen to do well and are often very knowledgeable about the topic they are studying. This has a strong impact on learning and pupils make generally good progress from the start of Year 1 to the end of Year 6. Nevertheless, with pupils so keen and eager to learn, progress should be better.

In Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the sixth form, teaching is good overall. Pupils say that teaching is good because teachers make lessons interesting. Some lessons are either outstanding or satisfactory. Where teaching is very strong teachers have excellent subject knowledge that they use effectively to make work challenging and interesting. In a Year 8 performing arts lesson, for example, the teaching encouraged high-level thinking and analysis skills and pupils made very good progress with their understanding because of skilful questioning that challenged them. In other very effective lessons, teachers' interventions are purposeful and targeted well and have a notable impact on the quality of pupils' outcomes.

Where teaching in secondary is satisfactory lessons are dominated by the teaching and leave little time for pupils to learn. Often, too much time is spent recapping previous learning and not enough on new learning or deepening understanding. Questioning does little to extend pupils' thinking or requires little response. As a result, the level of challenge in these lessons can be limited and means that pupils make only satisfactory progress with their learning. Again however, pupils' excellent attitudes mean that over time pupils make at least good progress. Behaviour in lessons is outstanding because teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and the school has established an excellent climate for learning.

There are examples of some very good assessment practice. All pupils are given targets for their work and understand how well they are doing. When asked pupils were very positive about how their work was marked and that it was helpful and "done quickly". In some subjects, for example Spanish, pupils say they are given improvement targets. The primary teachers have worked hard to improve feedback to pupils. Inspectors found that there were some helpful comments to help pupils improve their work but that sometimes these comments lacked specific targets for improvement. The quality of feedback in secondary English is particularly good and provides clear advice about the next steps pupils need to take to improve their work. However, this good practice is not consistent across the school.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. It is one of the key factors in supporting pupils to become confident, courteous and well-adjusted young people, ready for life after school. The school is very successful in giving pupils lots of opportunities to develop their personal skills through debating clubs, trips, guest speakers and by supporting numerous charities throughout the year. Sixth form students help with the marathon in Palma each year, greeting the winners, while the head boy and girl organise school-wide events. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Art, PSHE, drama and music in primary and Spanish studies all contribute but the strongest influence comes from the way the school values everyone regardless of background or ability.

Parents and pupils comment on the school's "family" ethos. Pupils said that the school was "like one big family. It seems like a cliché but it is true". These comments are borne out by the evidence. All adults at the school foster extremely positive relationships with pupils and value everyone as an individual. This has an extremely positive impact: pupils are highly respectful of their teachers and of each other and their attitudes to school are excellent.

The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Pupils' welfare, health and safety are promoted effectively. The school supports pupils well in both their academic progress and personal development. The school psychologist, who works with individual pupils who may have learning, behavioural, social or emotional problems, provides effective help that is valued by pupils and staff. Careers advice is provided to pupils from Year 7 to 11 in tutorial sessions and in the sixth form there is a structured programme and support for applying to higher education. Sixth formers noted that the support they get for their personal statements for university is very helpful.

The school's very strong family ethos, its commitment to all and the small tutor groups all contribute successfully to pupils' personal and academic achievement. Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils report that bullying is infrequent but that where it does happen it is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils say that the school "doesn't stand for racism" and will expel pupils who use racist comments. They also say that the support they receive from their teachers is very good. Teachers are "very approachable" and help pupils outside of lessons giving what one pupil described as an "extra bit of help".

All regulatory systems and processes are well established and the school has established a comprehensive range of policies all of which are available to parents if they ask. Some are posted on the school website and consideration should be given to extending the information available. Health and safety procedures meet local requirements including fire safety.

The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school and proprietor ensure that all the required checks are made on staff. All staff, from the headteacher and proprietor to administrative and maintenance staff are subject to local or UK checks to confirm their identity and suitability to work with children. Where possible, these checks include the UK's CRB enhanced disclosure. These are recorded appropriately in a central file that is locked in the headteacher's office.

The premises and accommodation

Despite the constraints of the site, the accommodation is generally fit for purpose. All classrooms are equipped with up to date equipment and, for example, many classrooms have multi-media projectors and interactive whiteboards. These contribute well to teaching and learning and help to engage and motivate pupils. Specialist facilities such

as science laboratories, ICT and art support teaching and learning and the accommodation meets local requirements.

The school and its owners are committed to improving the quality and scope of the facilities and there is an on-going programme of refurbishment and renewal. Over the past eight years much has been accomplished. Most recently, a new physics and chemistry laboratory has been installed. While space remains tight, teachers use the accommodation effectively so that pupils' achievements are not adversely effected by the limits imposed by the accommodation. The school's building improvement programme has had a positive impact.

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The quality of information provided by the school for parents is good. There is an appropriate range of policies and guidance available at the school and the website includes the school's mission statement together with a wide variety of information about the curriculum, homework, examination results, extra-curricular activities, the summer school and admission arrangements.

Parents receive regular newsletters and information about events. Reports on pupils' academic progress are informative and the follow up meetings with teachers helpful. Overall, the provision of information meets the requirements for British Schools Overseas.

The school's procedures for handling complaints

The school meets the requirements for handling complaints.

Leadership and management of the school

The school is led and managed well. The headteacher is passionate about her school and is supported effectively by senior and middle leaders. Leadership and management are good and have a strong impact on improvement. Self-review is well established although the number of priorities means that its impact is not as great as it could be. The relationship between the school's owners and the senior team is positive and promotes a strong sense of teamwork.

The school uses data well to understand trends in achievement and the impact of its work.

There is a strong sense of teamwork and of continuity both of which contribute well to ensuring that the school runs effectively. There is an increasing and developing focus on teaching and learning and lesson observations carried out jointly with senior leaders and inspectors show that the school has a secure understanding of the characteristics of good and outstanding teaching. There is a programme of lesson observations but until

recently, not enough time was spent by leaders and managers on getting into the detail of teaching and learning across the school. This explains why the overall quality of teaching is not yet consistently good and outstanding. However, the newly established teaching and learning teams, and the proposed monitoring and support programme for teaching, have the potential to make a strong impact on quality. In addition CPD provides good opportunities for teachers to improve their practice.

The school collects and records a large amount of data about pupils' attainment particularly key stage tests, a range of diagnostic tests and IGCSE and AS/A Level results. The data is used *to track pupils' progress and support those who are underachieving* but it is still too early to evaluate the full impact of this. At present, it is difficult for leaders and managers to know whether all pupils are achieving as well as they should but the initiatives to measure progress over time will enable the school to be better informed.

Self-evaluation and review is generally effective and the school uses a good range of evidence including teacher, pupil and parent questionnaires, and classroom observations. It has identified five priorities in its improvement plan, including the need to "raise standards and attainment by ensuring consistently good teaching and learning is happening in all subject areas." Other priorities include Spanish as a foreign language for beginners, assessment and tracking, and continued staff development. These show that the school has identified the right priorities for improvement and that it has the capacity to improve still further.

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 and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
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 development	✓			
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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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, 3 – 18 years		
Date school opened	1977		
Age range of pupils	3 - 18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys:189	Girls:201	Total: 390
Annual fees (day pupils)	€643 per month		
Address of school	Calle Joan de Saridakis, 64 07015 Palma de Mallorca		
Telephone number	+34 971 401 011		
Fax number	34 971 400 153		
Email address	headteacher@qcmallorca.com		
Headteacher	Heather Muntaner		
Proprietor	Bonanova English School S.L.		