



Inspection report

**Doha English Speaking
School**

Qatar

Date 7th to 9th May 2017

Inspection number 20170507

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1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

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

The inspection and this report follow the Department for Education (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 (including boarding); and the school's complaints procedures. 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 English Department for Education (DFE) on the extent to which schools meet the standards for British Schools Overseas.

During the inspection visit, 33 full- or part- lessons were observed by inspectors. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, governors, the management teams, a range of teachers, parents and groups of pupils. Three school days were monitored.

The lead inspector was Colin Dyson. The team members were Nick Sheehan and Nicki Singleton.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

Doha English Speaking School (DESS) meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

DESS provides an outstanding education for all its pupils.

Children/pupils are well supported through highly effective pastoral care and the implementation of excellent welfare, health and safety policies and procedures. The school has a fully embedded ethos of care and guidance and strives to meet the needs of all its pupils.

The quality of teaching is outstanding. From each different starting point, the proportion of pupils making and exceeding expected progress are high compared to UK national figures. Nearly all children make progress at least in line with their ability, many do better.

The national curriculum provides the framework for teaching and learning supplemented with host country requirements. The curriculum is enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities.

The school's thoughtful and wide-ranging promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical well-being enables pupils to thrive.

Parents interviewed are happy with their choice of school and value the family atmosphere of this primary school. Parents and staff value the British nature of the curriculum and are highly committed to the school

Pupils feel valued and display highly positive attitudes towards their learning and relationships with each other.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths, which include:

- A desire by the school leadership to ensure DESS continues to develop as a high quality and inclusive school.
- Pupils are respectful, tolerant and happy.
- Teachers and support staff provide an outstanding level of care and guidance to all pupils.
- An appropriate range of policies and procedures regarding the well-being of pupils are in place.
- Parents value the uniqueness of the school and identify the ‘family’ atmosphere as a key reason for choosing the school.
- The building is well maintained and provides a high level of security.
- Teaching is outstanding and all staff display a high level of subject knowledge.
- The inclusive nature of the school benefits a wide range of individual pupils’ needs.
- Pupils’ attitudes, behaviour, personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are a strength. They are outstanding ambassadors for their school.
- Positive relationships between all school members are clearly recognised as laying the foundations for highly effective learning.
- The strategic planning, monitoring and critical support provided by the Headteacher and Board of Governors are further strengths of the school: they work very effectively together and are highly committed to the future of the school.
- Since the appointment of the new Headteacher, the school has made significant further progress and the school now has a clear understanding of its many strengths and areas for future development.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

- Ensure that excellent practice in the teaching of English, mathematics and science is replicated across the curriculum and, as already planned, replicated into Foundation subjects.
- Imbed an understanding of the capacity of the new data management system and its potential to inform curriculum and teacher planning.
- Address health and safety recommendations identified during the inspection.

4. The context of the school

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|------|-------------|-------|-----|
| Full name of school/college | Doha English Speaking School. (DESS) | | | | |
| Address | Al Fajr Street Doha Qatar | | | | |
| Telephone number | +974 4459 2750 | | | | |
| Fax number | +974 4459 2761 | | | | |
| Website | www.dess.org | | | | |
| Email address | dess@dess.org | | | | |
| Head | Sean Sibley | | | | |
| Chairman of Board of Governors | Laura Warren | | | | |
| Age range | 3 – 11 years old | | | | |
| Total number of pupils | 647 | Boys | 334 | Girls | 313 |
| Numbers by age | 0-2 years | 0 | 11-16 years | 0 | |
| | 3-5 years | 60 | 16-18 years | 0 | |
| | 5-11 years | 587 | 18+ years | 0 | |
| Total number of part-time children | 0 | | | | |

Doha English Speaking School (DESS) is an international primary school for pupils aged 3+ to 11. The school was opened in its present form in 1971, but has a history dating back to 1959. DESS is a not-for-profit school situated in the city of Doha in Qatar and is sponsored by the British Embassy.

There are currently 647 pupils on roll; 140 in Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS), 190 in Key Stage 1 (KS1) and 317 in Key Stage 2 (KS2). Many pupils are British passport holders and a small number are Qatari nationals.

The school's vision is to be a 'Beacon of Excellence in International Education'. The mission statement is 'Learning together – High Expectations – Celebrating Success'.

The clear majority of teachers are from the UK and all hold recognised teaching qualifications. The school also employs a team of Learning Support teachers and Teaching Assistants who support the needs of children within the class. The school has faced some turbulence in staffing due to changes to the economic climate in Doha.

The school Board of Governors is made up of 11 parent governors with a variety of backgrounds, Dess staff and British embassy representatives. The Board of Governors are highly committed to the success of the school and oversee the management and development of the school in accordance with the practice of British and international schools and Qatar's laws and regulations.

Currently the school has several building projects taking place within the school grounds. These include extending the resources to ensure fire safety measures are updated and enhanced.

The headteacher has been in post for just over one year and is supported by a senior leadership team (SLT) and a middle management team (SMT)

4.1 British nature of the school

Doha English Speaking School provides a strong British educational experience.

Children are encouraged to develop effective social skills and a willingness to be part of a caring community. They display a good understanding for rules and responsibilities appropriate to their age. The school is a harmonious community that displays positive levels of empathy and tolerance.

Parents are highly supportive of the British nature of the curriculum. Interviews with parents clearly highlighted that they appreciate and value the British style of education and its focus on high expectations.

The National Curriculum of England has been adopted throughout the school from Early Years to Year 6.

The school is organized according to the structures used in English schools. Classroom management, displays of work, three term year and age-related year groups contribute to a British feel of the school.

The school seeks to adopt UK practices and keeps up-to-date by monitoring developments from the Department for Education. British practice is evident in approaches to performance management, staff target setting and annual review meetings.

The importance of extra-curricular provision including clubs and school trips are in line with British best practice.

Texts, materials, educational equipment and software are UK sourced. There is a school uniform that varies depending on the age and activity of the pupils.

The school is an active member of the British Schools in the Middle East (BSME).

5. *Standard 1*

The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided by Doha English Speaking School is outstanding. It meets the requirements of the BSO Framework fully.

5.1 Curriculum

The Early Years curriculum is outstanding, it encourages children to appropriately initiate their own learning and provides effective challenge. The curriculum delivered ensures children experience high quality activities that encourage exploration and experiences of their world in a creative and personalised learning environment.

Children follow the EYFS curriculum working towards the Early Years goals and the teaching of phonics is highly effective in enabling them to make excellent progress in early reading skills. The curriculum ensures that all children have access to a wide range of opportunities in all the prime and specific areas of learning. High quality 1:1 support and generous staffing in Early Years ensures that children with a range of needs can access the whole curriculum. Children are offered a variety of subjects which include linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative learning opportunities. These subjects are supported by specialist teachers, as appropriate. Across EYFS the school curriculum documentation is well planned, clear, coherent, systematic and detailed.

The quality learning environment encourages children to appropriately initiate their own learning and provides effective challenge. The curriculum delivered ensures children experience activities that encourage exploration and experiences of their world in a creative and personalised learning environment. The shared central areas inside, and the well-resourced outside areas, enable the children to explore, experiment and investigate as well as use their imagination. The children enjoy a variety of learning activities as they work happily alongside their friends

The outstanding curriculum at Key Stage 1 follows the framework provided by the National Curriculum for England and provides pupils with a range of opportunities to make excellent progress, particularly in reading, writing and mathematical skills. Teachers are highly effective at adapting the core curriculum to meet the needs of all learners. There is a strong focus on identifying opportunities for developing writing in the foundation subjects.

The Key Stage 1 phase and group leaders work closely together to plan curriculum coverage and to ensure consistency in delivery between the year teams. The use of data to inform planning in and English is a strength. The school is now using a similar approach in science and recognises that it needs to continue to roll this out to the foundation subjects.

The curriculum in KS2 is outstanding. It is comprehensive in covering the core subject areas as a result of the well-placed emphasis given to English, mathematics and science this year. The school has identified that foundation subjects are an area for further development; numerous examples of good and outstanding practice were observed in the teaching of geography, history, PE and music. Mathematics and English have been incorporated into foundation subjects.

The combined depth and breadth of the curriculum is a notable success. Leadership arrangements facilitate the desired balance between teacher autonomy and consistency across years and phases. Curriculum coverage and quality is monitored by highly competent phase leaders who oversee the group leaders of each year and report regularly to the headteacher.

Collaboration ensures consistency of content and approach, as well as careful and deliberate sequencing between years and phases.

Themed learning days, such as Green Day serve to stimulate further excitement and interest in the learning journey. Creative approaches to curriculum coverage are a strength of the school and speak to the commitment made by all teachers to ensure that learning is enjoyable, inspiring and relevant.

All pupils are asked to bring an ipad to school. Ipads were observed as most effective in supporting learning by aiding pupil engagement.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage the children work towards achieving the outcomes of the early learning goals. They are given the opportunity to work collaboratively, independently or as part of a focus group identified within teachers' planning. Integrated learning is achieved through matching appropriate activities and tasks, to learning objectives. The children are well motivated and very eager to join in all activities. Whether engaging with Jack the Parrot, creating glitter monsters or investigating lemonade all the children were happy to share ideas and most use language effectively and are confident talkers.

Teaching in Early Years is engaging and child-centred with children seen to be developing positive learning behaviour and attitudes. Teachers are highly effective and sensitive in helping all children develop independence and exploration through their learning. Teachers demonstrate a high level of skill in identifying children's interests and providing effective intervention to support the learning. They are also skilled practitioners at creating a balance between adult and child led activities. This inspirational curriculum is further enhanced by the highly effective 'Stay and Play Days' which are highly valued by parents.

Teachers make full use of the plentiful resources in school, providing opportunities for children to build their experiences and skills. Resources are fully inclusive of the needs of different cultures and gender and different interests. Children are purposefully engaged thereby enabling teachers to focus on dedicated learning outcomes with groups of children. The highly effective use of Teaching Assistance to support the learning is a strength. Teaching Assistants work hard to ensure high quality interactions with all children that extend the enjoyment and challenge of learning.

Though lessons are planned together, each teacher is effective and confident in the use of their own professional skills, creative ideas and individual personality to enliven teaching. They use a range of appropriate learning strategies that motivate, encourage and develop children's self-belief that enable them to successfully attempt new learning.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Key Stage 1 is outstanding.

Lesson planning is highly effective and teachers make excellent use of the available data to ensure they meet the needs of all learners. The teachers have excellent subject knowledge which, coupled with strong phase leadership, ensures there is consistency in experience within and between groups in the phase. Teachers use learning objectives, success criteria, starters and plenaries in all lessons to effectively assess the progress of the pupils. Target setting sheets in pupil friendly language are supported by frequent diagnostic marking as well as self and peer assessment. Pupils are strongly involved in their own learning and are able to talk clearly about what they can do and how to improve.

All groups of learners are supported and challenged appropriately through highly effective differentiation. Lessons are fast paced and utilise a wide range of teaching and learning activities which results in very enthusiastic learners. The classroom environments across the Key Stage are very dynamic, with high quality displays and often innovative approaches taken to supporting and challenging the pupils. These contribute to the excellent progress made by the pupils. The rapid progress is further supported by the clear use of learning objectives and success criteria in all lessons. These allow teachers to make accurate and productive assessment of pupil progress which is then used to influence the planning.

Assessment data is tracked systematically in the core subjects using Classroom Monitor, which allows for effective tracking, targeted intervention and more effective differentiation within lessons. Additional adults are deployed effectively and contribute to the compelling learning experiences seen throughout the key stage.

The quality of teaching across both phases of KS2 is outstanding.

The differentiation of learning activities to maximize pupil engagement and progress is a strength; Teaching Assistants are integral to this success. The classroom learning environment in all KS2 classrooms is inspiring.

Planning is thorough and well-considered. Year teams plan together; planning is stored centrally and monitored by school leaders. Consistency in planning is complimented by team moderation exercises which include consultation with a UK advisory.

All teachers, teaching assistants and pupils refer to 'challenge' within all lessons. Teacher-led discussion prompts pupils to think about ways to challenge themselves and each other.

Various strategies are used to evaluate learning during the lesson. A marking code is displayed in all classrooms and is consistently adhered to by teachers as evidenced in a wide selection of books. New data management software has been introduced this year: teachers, group leaders and phase leaders are beginning to realise the potential of this data to informing planning. Data is collected and used to identify pupils requiring extension and support. Next steps are identified from ongoing, effective formative assessment. There is effective liaison between KS2 phase and group leaders, and the learning support team. Teaching assistants deliver programmes of intervention under the guidance of learning support.

The teaching of mathematics and English in KS2 is consistently outstanding. Scrutiny of schemes of work in the core subjects, approaches to delivery, assessment and feedback is suitably uniform throughout each year group, within a phase and between phases. This is attributed to high quality collaboration between teachers coupled with clearly articulated, high expectations lead by key responsibility holders. Phase leaders were keen to highlight

that the evident consistencies in practice were a conscious development this year derived from teacher's enthusiasm to embrace effective practice. Recent changes to the line-management structure have empowered phase leaders to quality assure their two-year groups, facilitating the raising of standards and consistency of practice.

Foundation subjects observed were of good quality, but the extent of differentiation was limited in comparison to core subjects. Scrutiny of planning of foundation subjects (also referred to as topic, history and geography), and conversation with teachers, pupils and phase leaders revealed this area of the curriculum as a priority for development next academic year. This has already been identified by the school.

5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

Children in EYFS achieve standards that are well above age-related expectations in all areas of learning. Throughout EYFS children's progress is carefully monitored, formally, through noting achievement in focused detailed assessments and informally, throughout each term when the teacher or classroom assistant observes significant achievement. The summative assessments are triangulated with teacher assessments, so that this good progress is maintained to enable the children to achieve well. These assessments inform curriculum plans.

Children who need extra support or challenge are identified during their first term in school. This helps ensure the planning meets the learning needs of all the children and enables them to make good or very good progress. Learning is consistently purposeful, carefully matched to ability and personalized for each child. The curriculum resources both inside and outside are of the highest quality.

The standards achieved by the pupils at the end of key stage 1 are outstanding. Headlines are reported in terms of those children who are meeting expectations. Very few pupils fail to achieve the expected level at the end of Key Stage 1 and the school significantly outperforms UK national averages. The school is in the first year of implementation of assessment without levels and is using the new assessment system effectively to raise standards and increase the proportion of pupils that exceed the expected level. The school leadership team can use the data effectively to identify appropriate interventions through termly pupil progress meetings with individual class teachers, which results in excellent pupil progress.

Across KS2 pupil engagement in their learning was consistently high in all lessons observed. Strategies to maintain focus were used well by teachers: appropriate pace, variation in activity and carefully considered differentiation were key factors to pupils investing in their learning experience and taking pride in making progress. Entry ticket/Exit ticket, Success Criteria, regular feedback was evident in all lessons – pupils could articulate 'next steps' for further improvement. The common theme of 'challenge' was noted in all lessons. Teachers, Teaching Assistants and pupils used the term frequently; significant moments in lessons were dedicated to dialogue about what could be done to improve further.

Teachers and school leaders are confident that pupils in KS2 make outstanding progress. There is a range of tracking evidence to support this. The recent introduction of Classroom Monitor reveals exciting potential for accurately profiling learners, but is currently in its initial stages of implementation. The Assistant Headteacher disaggregates data and supports teachers in using it to determine matters of significance to impact teaching and learning. Data (including CAT4), PIRA and PUMA, SAT data is collected and archived.

6. *Standard 2*

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The quality of the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is outstanding.

The school successfully encourages high moral standards, self-discipline and mutual respect for the cultures, opinions and values of all others. Spirituality is developed in lessons and assemblies.

Awe and wonder is evident, for example in the EYFS where moments of discovery provide frequent opportunities for children to reflect on the world around them. Children are expected to listen attentively to the adults and each other. They are polite, cheerful and well mannered. Mostly they are able to take turns, share resources and work as part of a group. Teachers plan opportunities for children to work in pairs in order to reinforce the necessary social skills that underpin effective pair and small group work.

The relationship between the adults and children is outstanding. Children's views are valued and praise is used effectively to motivate and acknowledge achievements. Teachers or classroom assistants quickly address any rare instances of unacceptable behaviour to safeguard the well-being of the other children.

The school provides all pupils with a broad general knowledge of the responsibilities of citizenship in Qatar, in the UK and internationally. It helps pupils acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures, in a manner that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions.

The very good supervision of children in the outside areas encourages all children to engage in the many opportunities for physical and active learning and encourages them to take good care of the equipment and resources alongside opportunities to display tolerance, empathy for others and co-operation.

A wide range of extra-curricular activities enhance the development opportunities for all pupils. These activities are well attended and provide a broad range of learning experiences that also provide a foundation for personal development and community involvement. Pupils' felt that after school activities gave them an extensive range of opportunities.

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

The quality of the welfare, health and safety of the pupils is good with many outstanding features.

The school has comprehensive measures in place for guarding against bullying and dealing with any unacceptable behaviour. The emotional needs of the children are well supported by staff at the school including the newly appointed learning mentor who is available to support both children and parents with the emotional challenges of transition, friendships and confidence. The children feel that these are effective and they know who to go to if problems ever did arise.

There are excellent written policies that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. The safeguarding arrangements are outstanding. There are written policies relating to bullying, child protection, indoor safety and the health and safety of pupils on activities outside the school. Procedures for off site visits are rigorous, with appropriate processes for risk assessments, supervision and approval by appropriate levels of the management team. All policies and procedures are accessible online.

High levels of staff supervision at the start of the day, throughout the day, and at the end of the day, ensure pupils are safe and secure. Entry to the school site is strictly controlled by onsite security and the perimeter of the school is highly secure to prevent unwanted access. Identification should be worn by all visitors on site, as well as parents and staff, although there were some inconsistencies in the application of this policy.

School staff are deployed effectively to ensure the proper supervision of pupils. Written records of sanctions imposed upon pupils are maintained for serious disciplinary offences, which are very rare.

The first aid provision at the school is highly effective. A nurse supports the children, parents and teachers with information, care and advice. Teachers are given a list of children who have medical conditions within the school. The nurse keeps a record of incidents, which are logged on the school management system as well as backed up with paper copies. Children and staff at risk of severe allergic reaction or with ongoing medical conditions such as diabetes are identified clearly to staff. Emergency medipacks with photos and information are available in the nurse's office. A first aid kit is carried by staff on duty in the main play area each day.

There is due regard for health and safety issues which conform to local regulatory requirements, including those of fire procedures, and maintenance. The school has a health and safety officer who has a hands-on role in ensuring the school policy and practice are up to date. The school site was undergoing major remedial works to install new fire protection equipment during the visit which caused significant disruption to the outdoor spaces. Ensuring that full attention is given to the current dynamic nature of the school site in terms of health and safety and ongoing

maintenance is an area for development. The school needs to ensure that any health and safety issues identified during the visit are fully addressed.

An admission register and an attendance register are kept up-to-date, both of which conform to local regulatory requirements.

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

The school's governing body is highly effective in its role as 'critical friend' and have made a valuable contribution to ensuring DESS is a school with many outstanding aspects.

Under the guidance of the recently appointed headteacher the governing body has strengthened its oversight of the school's strategic development. Regular briefings by the school's leadership team aim to ensure all governors have a clear insight into the working of the school throughout all key stages. By creating working parties, members are encouraged to focus on key aspects of the school's work, this has enabled a good level of 'expertise' from board members to be utilized in moving the school forward.

Responsibilities with regard to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils are clearly understood and effectively discharged. Clear procedures have been implemented to ensure staff appointed meet best practices regarding safe recruitment procedures. Staff are well trained and qualified for their roles. All teaching staff hold appropriate qualifications. The school has highly effective recruitment procedures and these are overseen by the governing body.

Governors have a clear understanding of their individual and collective responsibilities. The effective collective contribution of the governing body adds significantly to the continual process of improvement at DESS.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation at DESS are good with many outstanding features.

Classroom resources and environments are of the highest quality and directly impact on the quality of provision for the pupils at the school. Displays of pupils' work in the classrooms and throughout the school are of a very high quality. They illustrate that the school is an exciting learning environment of which the children are rightly proud.

There are interactive whiteboards/touch screen TVs in every classroom which are utilised effectively. Specialist teaching areas for music, computing and physical education are well equipped. There is a purpose-built swimming pool. The library is well-stocked and spacious: it is used effectively to support learning as well as a community resource for parents and young children. Teaching resources throughout the school are excellent and are used to great effect to enhance all aspects of learning.

The outside environment consists of a playground (which was unavailable for use at the time of the inspection), a central shaded courtyard and a sports pitch which is used for morning break and lunchtimes. The school uses staggered playtimes to enable all pupils to have their break in a spacious environment. Each classroom has a small outdoor courtyard which were being used as a play area in the foundation stage.

The school has excellent provision for ICT and digital technology. All pupils from year 3 to year 6 bring an ipad to school which are used to enhance learning where appropriate. These are enabled by high speed wireless internet access throughout the school. There are several computing suites which are used for specific computing lessons and across the curriculum.

The school more than exceeds local regulatory requirements for the quality of water supply, drainage of wastewater and occasional surface water. The buildings provide resistance to penetration by wind, sand and dust, and have regard to temperature control (cooling). All load bearing structures are built with due regard to UK standards and more than meet local regulatory requirements. There is sufficient access for safe emergency evacuation, including for those pupils with special needs. However, the school needs to ensure that all plans remain dynamic and flexible to account for the high level of disruption on site whilst building work takes place. There is an excellent system for practicing both fire and 'lockdown' emergencies. Fire extinguishers are checked regularly and there are extinguishers in each classroom. Fire alarms and emergency lighting are checked weekly. Fire evacuation notices are displayed around the school.

The school is maintained in a clean, tidy and hygienic state by the onsite team of cleaners. Sound insulation, air conditioning units and acoustics allow for effective teaching and communication. Lighting, heating and ventilation in the classrooms and other parts of the school are excellent. The school is well decorated and maintained, particularly in the classrooms. The furniture and

fittings are appropriately designed for the needs of all pupils at the school, including those with special needs.

The ongoing maintenance of the premises is well planned for and ensures the extended life of the older buildings. There has been and continues to be significant building work taking place on site. Works to upgrade emergency equipment, as directed by the Qatar Civil Defence Force, have caused significant disruption to the school site and in particular several of the exit points. This has presented short term challenges from a health and safety perspective. Ensuring that full attention is given to the maintenance requirements caused by the ongoing disruptive work is an area for development. The school needs to ensure that any health and safety issues identified during the visit are fully addressed.

10. *Standard 6*

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The quality of information provided by the school for parents, prospective parents, carers and others is outstanding.

The school website is comprehensive. It includes detailed information about school policies, procedures and routines and clearly articulates the schools vision, mission and values. Policies are readily accessible, including: enrolment, child protection, health and safety (including e-safety), fees, curriculum and complaints. Front office staff are helpful and obliging in their response to enquiries.

Parents feel confident in the provision of education for their children, noting dramatic improvements in the past 12 months. They referenced better communication between school and parents thanks to the creation of the Parents Council, newsletters, the development of policies and procedures which are now accessible on the website and the accessibility of the Headteacher and other Senior Leaders. There is a high level of satisfaction amongst parents new to the school this year.

Parents were surveyed in the Autumn Term of 2016 with 89% of respondents stating that they agree with the statement that they are satisfied with the quality of education their child(ren) receives. 95% of respondents felt welcome at DESS. 70% of parents felt comfortable in approaching the school with a new idea, question, issue or complaint. Since that survey, a comprehensive complaints procedure has been written, the Parent Council has been formed and parents have noticed improvements in school communication to further enhance the school-parent relationship. One parent noted that the Parent Council served the needs of the expatriate community well, but she did not feel Qatari parents felt as much part of that network.

The school has changed its assessment and reporting procedures to align with UK developments. Parents were presented with a handbook on how to interpret their son's/daughter's attainment and progress, however parents sampled felt that more information was needed. They feel that there is confusion amongst parents over what children need to do to improve, and how parents can best support them.

The school actively encourages parents to come to school and get involved in its work. There are a wide range of workshops and activities; initiatives such as the 'Stay and Play' opportunities in EYFS are very well attended. Many parents commented on the value of these and the fun they had when attending. The quality of reports on pupils' progress/attainment is appropriate. Written reports to parents are provided at least twice a year for each pupil, irrespective of their age. In addition, parent-teacher meetings provide a regular forum for discussion on each child's development.

A booklet to help parents with the transition onto secondary schools both in Doha and in the UK has been produced with the Parent Council and has been distributed to parents. The parents would like to see more communication between DESS and the schools their children will go to for secondary. They are anxious about provision beyond Year 6 in light of delays to the development of the Year 7 and Year 8 provision at DESS.

Parents feel very reassured by the developments that have been observed in the leadership of the school since April 2016. They have confidence in the headteacher's vision and commitment to progress. They feel that the quality of teaching is very good and appreciate the steps being taken to raise standards further.

11. *Standard 7*

The school's procedure for handling complaints

A new complaints policy reveals clear procedures for managing concerns and meets the criteria of the standard fully. Formal complaints are rare, there is a high level of satisfaction amongst all stakeholder groups that they know who to direct concerns to, depending on severity. There is widespread confidence that concerns are listened to and dealt with appropriately.

Details of the complaints policy can be found on the school's website in an easily accessible and logical location – the 'Policies' folder under the 'About DESS' tab. It details how complaints are managed and by whom, and articulates a timeline for response. A flow chart has been produced to support further clarity of correct procedure.

The policy and established practices in the school seek to ensure that complaints are dealt with informally. The procedure for formal complaints is clear, give due clarity regarding confidentiality and reflects expected practices according to the standard.

12. *Standard 8*

The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable.

13. *Standard 9* Leadership and management of the school

Leadership and management is outstanding.

The headteacher provides high quality expert leadership. Leaders and governors have created a culture that enables pupils and staff to excel. They are committed to setting high expectations.

The headteacher has, in a short space of time, set a culture of high expectations for pupils and staff. The senior leadership team have effectively used self-evaluation to develop a clear picture of the school's strength and areas for development. The headteacher has led by example and has created a culture of respect and tolerance.

Despite the senior leadership team only having been in place a short time, a number of key initiatives have been implemented to facilitate the provision of a clear educational direction, which contributes greatly to the quality of pupil's academic and other achievements. It is also instrumental in optimising the personal development of pupils. Collectively the senior leadership team has a strong commitment to raising standards achieved across the whole school. The self-evaluation process undertaken prior to this inspection and the resultant depiction of strengths and areas for development were excellent.

The Senior Leadership and Senior Management Teams display a strong working partnership, which helps to ensure strategic development of teaching, learning and assessment across the whole school and curriculum. Delegation of responsibility is clear and has had positive impact.

The school has implemented a more rigorous approach to monitoring, tracking and assessment. Teachers have implemented a more consistent approach to planning and are developing a greater awareness of the potential of tools such as the new data management system to increase their effectiveness. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning is enabling a rigorous system of quality assurance to be implemented that uses several effective strategies. Monitoring regularly includes the scrutiny of pupils' completed work and structured lesson observations. This approach has encouraged all staff to feel they can contribute to the clear priority of the development of the whole child.

Effective whole school involvement has been further encouraged by the implementation of performance management that is leading to improving outcomes for all pupils.

Staff have clear job descriptions and the leadership structure is well understood. Staff reflect and debate the way they teach. They feel involved in their own professional development. Leaders have created a climate in which teachers are motivated and trusted to take risks and innovate in ways that are right for their pupils.

Delegated leadership is beginning to have a positive impact on securing the schools capacity for

continued development through the focus on teaching and learning to further raise attainment in all areas for all pupils.

The school leadership team is central in ensuring that the school ethos is shared across the school community and that everyone is valued. The clear shared vision as well as the successful monitoring of systems that are being embedded is bringing a high level of consistency across the school in teaching, planning, assessment and high expectations.