

International School of London

139 Gunnersbury Avenue, London W3 8LG

Inspection dates

12–14 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Sixth form provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have a clear vision for the school and high expectations for pupils and staff. They evaluate their school accurately and take effective actions to secure improvement.
- Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' needs. This helps them to plan activities that engage pupils' interests.
- In the primary phase, leaders and teachers frequently assess pupils' progress and tailor their teaching to meet individual emerging needs. As a result, primary pupils make substantial progress.
- Use of assessment information in the secondary phase, however, is not as sharp in challenging pupils to achieve their best. Secondary pupils, therefore, do not reach the highest standards of which they are capable.
- The curriculum gives pupils a wide academic education and prepares them exceptionally well to make a highly positive contribution to the community.
- There is a clear focus on developing pupils' English literacy skills as well as those in their mother tongues. This is a major strength of the curriculum.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and attitudes are excellent. They feel safe and have a solid understanding of risk and how to keep themselves safe in different situations.
- Children in the early years benefit from a good curriculum, teaching and care. They make good progress and behave well. The organisation and quality of resources, however, limit children from making outstanding progress in their learning.
- Excellent leadership, teaching and pastoral care in the post-16 provision ensures that students make substantial progress. The school prepares them extremely well for the next stages of their lives.
- The school is compliant with all the independent school standards.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the leadership of teaching, learning and assessment in the secondary phase by:
 - refining assessment processes and using the information to plan learning that helps pupils to reach the highest standards of which they are capable
 - training teachers, especially those new to the school or the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum, to develop their expertise in setting pupils appropriately challenging work.
- Improve the early years provision by ensuring that resources are rich and highly stimulating to encourage children’s inquisitiveness and help them make substantial gains in their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The proprietor and the new and longer-serving leaders communicate high aspirations for pupils and staff. They make sure that pupils benefit from a broad curriculum and plentiful enriching experiences that promote academic excellence and personal development. They aspire for pupils to actively volunteer and contribute to the community. They prepare pupils extremely well, by the time they complete their post-16 education, for their future lives anywhere in the world.
- Leaders regularly visit lessons and help teachers to improve their practice through developmental feedback, modelling, mentoring and coaching. Leaders support teachers with their planning and arrange training from external agencies. They encourage teachers to share best practice. Leaders also give teachers opportunities to attend IB training conferences in Europe with subject counterparts from global international schools. As a result, teaching is routinely good and increasingly outstanding.
- Leaders base the curriculum on the IB and take account of the English national curriculum. Pupils have access to a very broad range of subjects. Leaders plan the curriculum so that pupils develop a strong understanding and the skills to apply learning in one area to solve complex problems in others. The curriculum effectively promotes collaboration and teamwork. Pupils learn to research and are given many opportunities to find the answers and solutions to their independently generated questions. Most-able pupils are currently undertaking a research project supported by researchers from the University of Edinburgh. They recently presented some of their findings at a conference of the European committee of the Council of International Schools.
- Most pupils who join the school speak English as an additional language. There is a rigorous programme that helps pupils quickly to gain proficiency in English language and literacy. In addition, leaders employ teachers of many languages so that pupils continue to learn and develop literacy in their mother tongues.
- The many enrichment activities on offer and the requirement for all pupils to contribute to the community have an excellent influence on pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy learning about the richness of each other's countries, cultures and faiths. They positively celebrate diversity. They have a deep understanding and respect for all people, including those with protected characteristics. They benefit from many visitors to school and visits to places of culture, national institutions and trips to other countries. This means that the school prepares them exceptionally well for life in this country and around the world.

Governance

- The director of the proprietorial body has responsibility for governance. Although based overseas, he has weekly teleconferencing calls with the headteacher. He spends a week every half term at the school and regularly scrutinises leaders' reports and data about the school's work. In these ways, he keeps himself informed on all aspects of the school's work.

- The director and headteacher agree strategic goals for improving the school. The director regularly reviews progress towards meeting these goals with the headteacher and holds him to account.
- The director and proprietors pay close attention to the school's finances and to developing the school's resources and facilities. They have recently contributed to the local council's project of building a multi-sports centre in the park next to the school. It is due for completion later this year. The proprietor has a 25-year agreement for the school to have use of these facilities to enhance teaching and to broaden sports provision at the school.
- The proprietors and senior leaders make sure that the school is compliant with the independent school standards and other requirements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders make sure that all members of staff keep up to date with the latest safeguarding guidance.
- Leaders arrange for external experts to provide workshops for staff, pupils and parents. These include workshops on internet safety, cyber bullying, sexting and how to identify the risks to children of sexual exploitation. Recently all staff attended a session on understanding the impact on children of domestic violence and how they can support pupils who witness this.
- Leaders work closely with parents and external agencies across the boroughs in which pupils live to keep children safe and support their welfare.
- The curriculum helps pupils to understand risks and how to avoid danger. It covers, for example, how to use bicycles on the road, and dangers of substance abuse.
- The school publishes its safeguarding policy on its website. The policy has due regard to current government requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is characterised by strong working relationships between teachers and pupils. Teachers create a conducive learning atmosphere. They encourage pupils to try things for themselves and to find answers to their own questions. As a result, pupils work diligently, and use learning time productively.
- Typically, teachers plan learning that is well sequenced and structured. Pupils therefore gain a wide range of knowledge and skills and deepen their understanding. Teaching is effective in helping pupils to solve complex problems by applying their learning to different situations, supported by their research. Furthermore, teachers make sure that pupils have access to a range of quality resources that support their learning. Questioning is open and challenging, helping pupils to think deeply.
- Teachers create many opportunities to promote pupils' English language acquisition. Teachers and other adults model good standard spoken English and help pupils who speak English as an additional language catch up with their peers.

- Leaders make sure that teachers and other adults give well-targeted support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, they make similar progress to their peers.
- Teaching makes a highly positive contribution to pupils' personal development. In one class, for instance, pupils were learning about the major faiths found in Great Britain; in choosing a topic for comparison, one pupil decided to explore and write a comparison between meditation in Buddhism and prayer in Judaism.
- Leaders and teachers assess pupils' progress over time across the school. In the primary phase, they do this very frequently and quickly adapt teaching activities to support and challenge each pupil to reach their potential. As a result of this highly personalised approach, pupils in the primary phase make outstanding progress across the curriculum.
- Assessment in the secondary phase, although good, is not used as effectively by teachers. They therefore do not routinely set activities that challenge pupils to reach the highest standards of which they are capable.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- As pupils progress through the school they become progressively more confident. They become highly proficient in English in addition to their home languages. Staff actively encourage pupils to express their views. This includes encouraging them to voice their opinions about all aspects of the school's work, as well as global current affairs, for instance. As a result, they become very self-aware and highly successful learners. As one primary pupil said, echoing the view of others, 'I like learning as we consider questions like how we can change the world.'
- Leaders pay considerable attention to promoting pupils' physical health. In addition to formal physical education lessons, pupils have access to many sports clubs, such as rowing and boxing. Sports teams, including for football and basketball, participate in local and international school tournaments. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about healthy diet and lifestyle.
- Staff actively support pupils' mental health and emotional well-being. Staff teach pupils formally about topics such as resilience and how to cope with stress. In addition, some staff offer pupils workshops on 'mindfulness' as well as meditation classes. Further, the school has a full-time counsellor who offers one-to-one support for those who need it.
- As part of the curriculum, every pupil must do community service. Pupils engage in a wide range of activities, including supporting local, national and international charities. Their support regularly extends well beyond just fundraising for good causes. For example, pupils accompany blind tourists overseas, guiding them and describing the scenes and settings of the sites that they visit.
- Leaders help pupils make informed decisions about their future career choices. Pupils have access to a variety of information and impartial advice about course options and qualifications, and work experience.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They are highly inquisitive and keen to broaden their knowledge and skills. They collaborate extremely well with their peers and teachers, using their time productively during lessons and when working independently.
- Pupils worked with staff last year to devise a new behaviour policy. They agreed that all pupils must take responsibility for their own behaviour. On the odd occasion of misbehaviour, staff use a restorative justice approach; they help pupils to understand where they went wrong and how to avoid repeating the same mistake. As a result, pupils behave in a sensible and mature way, both in class and at social times. Poor behaviour is rare.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and enjoy their learning and many enrichment activities. They therefore attend regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In the secondary phase, pupils make good progress overall. It is particularly strong in science, language acquisition and art, but weaker in some other subjects. This is because of variability in the use of assessment to plan activities that routinely challenge pupils to reach their potential.
- Pupils in primary phase make substantial and sustained progress in all subjects. This is as a result of teachers frequently adapting their teaching to meet pupils' changing needs.
- Most pupils join the school at various times during the year and with differing skills in English. The school has excellent systems for determining pupils' standards on entry and providing them with an effective programme of study. Consequently, they rapidly gain proficiency in English, giving them full access to all subjects.
- The special educational needs coordinator and the inclusion team give pupils with SEND well-targeted support. As a result, they make similar progress to that of their classmates.
- With their excellent personal development and range of successful academic studies, pupils leave the school prepared well for post-16 education.

Early years provision

Good

- At the start of this academic year, new leaders made it a priority to improve the early years. They commissioned support from external consultants and the local authority. Their assessments of children's progress are now accurate, and they use the information well in planning to meet children's academic and social needs.
- Almost all children who join the early years speak English as an additional language. In other areas of learning, they join with skills that are typical for their age. Because of effective teaching, children make good progress across all areas of learning. Staff prepare children well for entry into Year 1.
- Teaching is good. There is a strong emphasis on developing children's proficiency in English. Teachers are very skilled in teaching phonics and to developing children's writing

skills. Throughout the day, adults model good spoken English and engage children in conversation so as to develop their speaking and listening skills. They plan many other engaging activities that ensure that children make good progress across all areas of learning. For example, they take children swimming every week to develop their gross motor skills and to teach them how to stay safe in the water.

- Children feel safe as they know that adults take good care of them. They grow in confidence and learn social skills such as sharing equipment and listening to each other. They behave well and learn to make independent choices. They work collaboratively with their peers and concentrate for increasing periods of time.
- Staff work closely with parents. Through the new online assessment systems, parents can see how their children are learning and progressing. Parents come into the early years to read to their children and to bake with them, for instance.
- The resources and organisation of the indoor and outdoor provision are good and support children to make good progress. The setting is not, however, organised and resourced richly enough to encourage children's inquisitiveness for exploration and learning to enable them to make outstanding progress.

Sixth form provision

Outstanding

- Leaders continue to make sure that post-16 provision is outstanding. Leaders focus sharply on catering for students' academic and pastoral needs and developing them as highly responsible contributors to society. They make sure that teachers have expertise in their subjects and very strong pedagogical skills.
- Leaders arrange a personalised programme of study within the IB Diploma for each student and set them ambitious targets. Leaders regularly meet with students and their teachers to review progress and to plan for further improvement. Leaders provide teachers and students with a range of high-quality resources to support students' learning needs.
- Students also benefit from very strong pastoral support and tutoring. They are keen to succeed and work extremely diligently. As a result, students make substantial and sustained progress across the subjects.
- Over time, students' outcomes at the end of Year 13 are high. In 2018, the proportion of students who graduated with a bilingual IB diploma was 60 percentage points above the global average.
- Students make a considerable contribution to society. Examples include a student-run group that created a programme to teach English to local refugees, and making collections for a food bank. Students teach English to underprivileged children in a school when they visit India. They also raise funds and take resources to a special school in India for pupils with cerebral palsy.
- Students benefit from excellent impartial careers guidance. They have one-to-one careers guidance conversations and mock interviews with staff of national companies. Representatives from universities from this country and abroad visit the school and students visit universities to help them make informed decisions.

- Typically, students go on to good universities in this country and overseas. From work experience and the array of enrichment and cultural activities, students develop many skills that hold them in good stead for the future. They are highly ambitious and well on track to meet their goals when they leave the school.

School details

Unique reference number	102550
DfE registration number	313/6063
Inspection number	10067119

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	All-through international day school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	476
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	72
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	International Community College Limited
Chair	Nadim Makarem
Headteacher	Richard Parker
Annual fees (day pupils)	£19,000 to £26,300
Telephone number	020 8992 5823
Website	www.islschools.org/london/home/
Email address	mail@isllondon.org
Date of previous inspection	8–10 March 2016

Information about this school

- The International School of London is an independent co-educational day school for pupils between the ages of three and 18 years. The school serves the international community in London. It aims to maximise pupils' achievement and promote their personal and social development. The school draws on a rich variety of cultures and aims to 'develop in each

pupil a global outlook which seeks to understand and appreciate the attitudes and values of others’.

- Since the previous inspection there has been a high turnover of leaders, especially senior leaders. The headteacher and principals of the primary and secondary phases took up their posts at the start of the current academic year. Some of the phase coordinators are newly appointed. A new early years leader has been appointed and will be taking up her post in the summer term.
- Most pupils are at various stages of learning English as an additional language. Pupils’ movement in and out of the school is high. The school teaches its entire curriculum in English, but provides additional teaching in pupils’ home languages.
- There are 28 children in the early years provision. None of them are in receipt of public funding under the nursery voucher scheme. The school follows the early years foundation stage framework.
- There are no pupils with an education, health and care plan. There are 64 pupils who receive SEND support.
- The school is fully accredited by the Council of International Schools and is an IB World School. The school offers an international programme of education: the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme, the International Baccalaureate Middle Years programme and the International Baccalaureate Diploma.
- The school is on two sites. One site houses the early years, primary and secondary pupils. The other site houses the sixth form. It is approximately one mile away from the main school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school’s previous standard inspection was in March 2016.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Inspectors observed learning in a range of classrooms, most of which were visited with senior leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised samples of pupils' work. They checked the school's information about pupils' progress.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, phase principals, other leaders, teachers and other members of staff. The lead inspector had a teleconference conversation with the director, representing the proprietorial body. Inspectors had formal discussions with three group of pupils and various informal discussions with pupils during social times and lessons.
- Inspectors took account of the 83 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents and parents' additional written comments. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors checked documentation, policies and all aspects of the school's work for compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

David Radomsky, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Moore	Ofsted Inspector
David Lloyd	Ofsted Inspector

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