



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

**Doha English Speaking
School**

**Doha
Qatar**

Date
Inspection number

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Contents		Page
1	Purpose and scope on the inspection	2
2	Compliance with regulatory requirements	2
3	Overall effectiveness of the school	3
	3.1 What the school does well	3
	3.2 Points for improvement	4
4	The context of the school	5
	4.1 The British nature of the school	7
5	Standard 1 The quality of education provided by the school	8
	5.1 Curriculum	8
	5.2 Teaching and assessment	10
	5.3 Standards achieved by pupils	12
6	Standard 2 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	13
7	Standard 3 The welfare, health and safety of pupils	15
8	Standard 4 The suitability of the proprietor and staff	17
9	Standard 5 The premises and accommodation	18
10	Standard 6 The provision of information for parents, carers and others	19
11	Standard 7 The school's procedures for handling complaints	20
12	Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school	21

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, over 60 lesson observations took place. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were seen in lessons, and discussions were held with the staff, parents and informally with students. The inspection took place over three days.

The lead inspector was Karen Hanratty. The team members were Sharon Davis and Charis Dedousis.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection, the school has shown that it meets the standards for British Schools Overseas, except for those that cannot be achieved legally in the host country. These pertain to aspects of the UK Equality Act 2010. The school actively promotes tolerance and a respect for all human differences, within the confines of the law. This is embedded in the culture and ethos of the school. This judgement is endorsed by the British Government and is valid for three years. The inspection process is quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED).

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

Doha English Speaking School provides an excellent education. Students' well-being is at the heart of the school, and exemplary practices around safeguarding ensure that students are kept safe. Students attain well and make strong progress, as a result of a broad and balanced curriculum which is delivered to a consistently high standard. The personal development of students is excellent; they show mature attitudes to learning beyond their years. School leaders and governors provide a clear strategic direction and set high expectations for students and staff alike.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including the:

- students, who are polite, respectful, motivated, mature learners, and great ambassadors for the school;
- school leaders, at all levels, who are focused on continual improvement and development, with students at the centre of all decision making;
- board of governors, who provide appropriate support and challenge to senior leaders and are involved in issues across the full spectrum of school matters;
- teachers, who know their students well and are dedicated to ensuring they make excellent progress across all academic areas and develop as rounded, self-confident individuals;
- attention paid to the safeguarding of students, with robust policies, clear communication and high levels of awareness amongst all stakeholders;
- high levels of attainment and progress which are consistently sustained across the school;
- use of data to monitor and track students' progress and attainment, and ensure that timely interventions are provided where necessary;
- policies and procedures to ensure the health, safety and well-being of students and staff;
- opportunities for students to develop leadership skills and have a voice in matters which affect them in school;
- intimate, family ethos of the school, which gives all stakeholders a sense of belonging to the school community and enables students to thrive;
- communications with parents which ensure they are kept regularly updated regarding their child's education and all school developments;
- physical environment, which meets the demands of the curriculum and provides a green oasis of calm and tranquillity.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

1. Share best practice between year groups in long-, medium- and short term-term planning to ensure greater consistency across all subjects and year groups.
2. Provide further opportunities for students to initiate and direct their own independent learning, research and projects, in key stages 1 to 3;
3. Continue to refine target setting by the consistent application of the school's marking and feedback policy together with the use of attainment and progress data, and making next steps in learning explicit to students and their parents.

4. The context of the school

Full name of School	Doha English Speaking School				
Address	Al Maarri Street, Doha, Qatar				
Telephone Number/s	+974 44592747				
Website Address	www.dess.org				
Key Email Address	ssibley@dess.org				
Principal	Sean Sibley				
Chair of board	Catherine Martinez				
Age Range	3-13 years				
Total number of pupils	813	Boys	389	Girls	428
Numbers by age	<i>0-2 years</i>	0	<i>12-16 years</i>	87	
	<i>3-5 years</i>	160	<i>17-18 years</i>	0	
	<i>6-11 years</i>	566	<i>18+ years</i>	0	
Total number of part-time children	0				

Doha English Speaking School (DESS) is situated in a residential area of the city. The school was first established over 40 years ago, as a community, not-for-profit school which came under the auspices of the British Embassy in Qatar. The school on its present site was opened in 1979 by Queen Elizabeth II and Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al Thani, the present Amir's father.

DESS rapidly became the school of choice for parents and continued providing a high quality education for Early Years and primary age children. In 2021, Year 7 was introduced. This was followed in 2022 with Year 8, establishing the only not-for-profit British preparatory school in Qatar. The school is now a member of the UK's Independent Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS).

The school is licensed by the Qatari Ministry of Education (MoE) to offer a British education to children of all nationalities, including Qataris. The Qatari MoE curriculum for Arabic, Islamic Studies and Qatari history is delivered alongside the National Curriculum for England. There are currently 813 students on roll, with British students making up the largest single cohort. 72% of students are native English speakers.

The school is divided into EYFS, primary and secondary, supported by experienced leaders for each age group. The school has a selective admissions policy, with waiting lists for many of the younger year groups. Students are expected to have an adequate level of English to access the curriculum; however, some English as an Additional Language (EAL) support is provided for those students who require it. An active learning support department provides support and guidance for students, teachers and families where needed.

The school identifies the following challenges:

- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on students' learning
- 28% EAL students
- The impact of the requirements of the Arabic curriculum on native Arab speakers

4.1 British nature of the school

The British nature of the school is clear and is a strength of the school. The school enjoys a long history of visits from members of the British royal family, including the school being officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 1979.

The National Curriculum for England is delivered in all primary and secondary year groups, together with the Early Years Foundation Stage programme (EYFS) for the youngest learners. British resources such as the White Rose; Read, Write, Inc. and Literacy Tree are used to deliver specific aspects of the curriculum. The majority of classroom resources are sourced from the UK. The curriculum is enhanced with extra-curricular activities and educational visits, in line with British practice. British assessments including *progress through English* (PTE), *progress through maths* (PTM) and *cognitive abilities tests* (CAT4) are used to measure students' progress and attainment and guide any necessary interventions. These are benchmarked against UK data. All lessons, with the exception of Arabic and French, are taught in English.

The majority of teachers are from the UK, hold recognised British teaching qualifications and have relevant experience of teaching in the UK. Teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) receive regular training and updates from UK providers, including the National College. Performance management processes are in line with UK expectations. The majority of governors are from British backgrounds and have suitable qualifications and experience which enhances their contributions to the development of the school.

The school year is divided into three terms, and the weekly timetable resembles that of a school in the UK. Year groups are organised according to the British system. Classroom management, the house system, rewards and opportunities for student leadership and voice all follow best British practice. Students wear their DESS school uniform with pride.

The school is a member of British Schools of the Middle East (BSME) and of the Council of British International Schools.

5. Standard 1 The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided is excellent. A broad and balanced curriculum, delivered in well-paced, engaging lessons, ensures that students make strong progress in all subject areas. The in-depth analysis of attainment data, followed by appropriate and timely interventions meets the needs of the least and most able. Exemplary practices in safeguarding and strong procedures for health and safety result in high levels of protection for students. School leaders maintain high standards across all aspects of school life.

5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum meets the standard for BSO and is excellent.

The school delivers the National Curriculum for England, together with the required elements of the Qatari curriculum. In most areas this dovetails well; the reduced personal, social and health education (PSHE) for native Arabic speakers is the exception. The EYFS curriculum is enriched with 'in the moment planning'. The curriculum for Key Stages (KS) 1, 2 and 3 is further enhanced with additional schemes such as *Read, Write, Inc.* and *Literacy Tree*. These additions were introduced in response to data that highlighted specific gaps in some students' learning.

A clear curriculum policy is in place, also available on the school's website. The policy and associated schemes of work do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides experiences in all domains, as a result students acquire excellent levels of speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. The PSHE curriculum encourages respect for all people, regardless of individual differences. The impact of this well-developed aspect of the curriculum can be observed across the school in the strong relationships and mature behaviour of students.

A thematic approach is used where appropriate, particularly with the younger age groups; in FS (Foundation Stage) 2 children are living and breathing bees, there is a real buzz of excitement! The EYFS curriculum is informed by *Development Matters* to ensure best practises across the curriculum Children benefit from links made between the curriculum and real life, such as in a Year 1 Qatari history lesson on road safety, where students applied their knowledge of safe practices related to hidden driveways and zebra crossings as they moved around safe traffic areas in the school. Students are offered choices in their learning, as reported by the School Council and year 7 and 8 Student Management Group. In many lessons, students decide which

level of a task they will do and whether they wish to take the challenge which stretches their thinking and skills or a less demanding one that will reinforce learning.

Basic literacy and numeracy skills are embedded across the curriculum. In EYFS, base 5 and 10 frames are used for registration and 'Fred's special friends' from phonics lessons are highlighted when reading texts in topic. In a year 2 science lesson, maths was well integrated, whilst in a year 5 maths lesson, reasoning questions led to an in-depth discussion on vocabulary choices and how to work out meanings of words.

Extra-curricular offerings are varied, in the form of free and paid clubs, school squads and invitation only activities for the most able. Educational visits have been reintroduced and two overseas residential trips have already taken place. Further residential trips are planned for the year ahead.

Curriculum support for students with additional needs is delivered effectively. Students for whom English is an additional language (EAL) are surrounded by good role models and a rich diet of vocabulary, as a result they function effectively in English from an early age. Where a child is exceeding age-appropriate levels in core subjects, additional plans are made to extend them within the lesson, accessing aspects of an advanced curriculum. Where a child is in need of some reinforcement of concepts, scaffolds are used to make the curriculum more accessible and interventions by the teacher, TA or learning support staff planned to close the gaps.

The home learning policy has recently been reviewed after consultation with all stakeholders. Homework is optional, although the vast majority of students choose to complete it. In Years 7 and 8, Home Learning is compulsory. As the policy states, homework is used to "reinforce class-based learning; to extend the most able pupils; to promote independent working; to give parents an opportunity to be involved in their child's school work and to spend quality time with them".

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is excellent. Lessons are consistently good or better and many are outstanding.

Planning styles vary across year groups and subjects. A consistent road map for long term planning is in place, while medium term plans are varied in style and level of detail; however, all planning shows progression. Individual lessons are well-planned, delivered effectively and the learning environment in all classrooms inspires students to learn and develop new skills. Across the school, teachers demonstrate deep knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach.

Time management and pace in lessons is a strength. In the best lessons, teachers alternate teaching input, modelling learning and engaging students in related activities. For example, in a year 4 English lesson on 'The Iron Man', the teacher rapidly developed students' understanding and application of abstract nouns through well-paced questioning, group activity and whole class review of ideas. Teacher interventions are effective in clarifying understanding and building confidence.

Teachers use a range of teaching methods and resources effectively, including questioning and scaffolding, to enable students to make good or better progress relative to their starting points. For example, in a year 7 history lesson, students moved around the classroom to discover and discuss historical facts, which promoted the development of their evaluative and critical thinking skills. The teacher's skilful questioning allowed the students to make excellent progress and develop a good understanding of the topic.

Students are well-behaved, engaged and take ownership of their learning through self-reflection which is promoted by the majority of teachers using differentiated success criteria. For example, in a year 8 science lesson students worked collaboratively to investigate and explore the pH levels of metal and non-metal oxides. Tasks were carefully structured and students were asked to self-reflect on their learning based on the differentiated success criteria.

In the best lessons, students direct their own learning and benefit from the freedom of expression this gives them. For example, in a year 7 music lesson, students made rapid progress as a result of the effective use of technology, which allowed them to create instrument tracks for a horror movie, using a specific software programme, enabling them to meet all the success criteria. Greater promotion of independent research, exploratory learning and projects, including the use of learning technologies would enable students to make even more rapid progress.

Informal, on-going assessment is evident in most lessons. The use of mini-whiteboards is widespread across the school, engaging students and providing

immediate feedback to teachers. Students assess their own work against success criteria in almost all lessons. Students use peer assessment in a mature manner, giving each other sensitive but helpful feedback. In the best lessons, students independently review their work and improve it, as observed in a year 5 extended writing lesson, where students independently improved their use of language with a different coloured pen.

Students' books demonstrate that, when applied consistently, the revised marking and feedback policy supports learning and helps to build confidence. In the best examples, a balance of self, peer and teacher assessment provides students with constructive comments about what they have achieved and their next steps in learning, along with personalised praise and encouragement. Students respond to these, creating a dialogue of learning, and up-level their work. As a result, the majority of students have a clear understanding of the level they are working at and in many cases their next steps; however, this is not yet applied consistently across the school. In EYFS, teachers use Tapestry to record learning and report to parents, combining teacher observations and parental feedback, which parents value.

The effective tracking and monitoring of students' attainment and progress, using robust, triangulated data, allows for timely interventions to be put in place for any underachieving students as well as to extend the more able. Termly pupil progress meetings between the class teacher, relevant senior leader and special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) are conducted, where attainment and progress data is analysed to identify students who require additional support. In primary, students who are working below the expected level are supported in class by teachers, TAs and the learning support team, while in secondary, students have one-to-one meetings with the Head of Years 7 and 8, in which they identify areas for development and strategies that will support their learning. Interventions are monitored regularly and impact is measured to ensure the students are making good progress towards their targets.

The learning support team provides the necessary support for students with specific difficulties, through individual educational plans (IEPs) which include SMART targets – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. These are regularly monitored and discussed with students and their parents. The school also liaises with external agencies, as required, for assessments or one-to-one provision. A coordinator ensures that students with particular strengths are sufficiently challenged within the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities.

5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

The standards of behaviour, attainment and progress are all excellent. Attendance is good, averaging around 95%.

Students enjoy coming to school and learning. Robust systems are in place to discourage unnecessary absences, through an 'application for leave' form with a transparent point system highlighting and considering previous patterns of absence.

Behaviour observed during the visit was exemplary. Students are polite and courteous to teachers, visitors and each other; doors are held open, turn taking occurs, and 'please' and 'thank you' evident at every level. Students report very few incidents of poor behaviour and this is supported by the views of the parents.

Any rare instances of poor behaviour are addressed quickly and effectively. When needed, additional adult support is put in place, for example, learning support staff who were observed working with a group of four EYFS boys on turn taking. When dealing with friendship issues, the new 'Friendship Fire' language, has empowered students to identify and deal with problems amongst themselves in a timely manner, before they escalate and cause a negative impact to themselves or others. All staff have been trained in this system and its key vocabulary of 'fire-fighting' is now embedded in students' daily language and life.

EYFS sets a very strong foundation for the students' school career. Standards are high and the love of learning developed through a stimulating and rich setting. Children make excellent progress and achieve high standards; almost all children meet and many exceed the Early Learning Goals at the end of Foundation Stage (FS) 2 and many are secure in the end of year 1 targets, providing a good starting point for KS1.

In lessons, and evidenced in their recent work, students achieve high standards and make strong progress. Attainment data for KS2 and KS3 shows standards are well above UK averages, particularly in reading and mathematics, in relation to GL PTE and PTM tests in years 3 to 6, and CAT4 in years 7 and 8. 2021-22 progress data for the same external assessments shows higher than expected progress for a significant number of students in mathematics, English and science.

6. *Standard 2* Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is excellent, it is a key strength of the school.

The school has a warm, welcoming, family feel for both members of the community and visitors alike.

Opportunities for students to develop spirituality are plentiful, with the abundance of nature and tranquillity all around. Awe and wonder of the natural world are celebrated across the school in many ways. For example, in a year 6 science lesson, students were amazed as they observed and made careful written and pictorial recordings of bacterial cultures that grew from swabs of surfaces, including their hands. Their understanding and appreciation of living things grew as they marvelled at the different colours, shapes and textures.

The school has a clear set of values which are promoted at every opportunity. Responsibility, kindness, perseverance and respect are known and understood by almost all students. In lessons and assemblies, students and teachers discuss how these values apply to school life and beyond. Morals are taught and modelled by the adults in the school; this is evident in the way children interact with one another and treat their environment. Stories are also used as a way to teach moral values.

Social skills are strong; students show remarkable maturity for their age; from FS1 the children are courteous to each other, can take turns and are generally well mannered. They respond well to their teachers and contribute to lessons eagerly without fuss; no standing up, calling out, wiggling fingers, calling 'Me, me, me', even in the lower year groups.

Cultural diversity is a part of daily school life. In some classes, children answer the register in the language of their home country. Qatari culture is taught, respected and celebrated. In a Year 4 class, each group is linked to an Arab celebrity, with an inspiring quotation, for example, Hassan Al-Haydos 'Have confidence and trust in what you want to be'. Other world cultures are explored through topics, stories and on International Day. All cultures are respected and equally valued.

It is clear through observations that students love school and are actively engaged throughout every session. Attendance is good in both statutory hours as well as optional extra-curricular activities.

High expectations of behaviour are set by all teachers, which in turn leads to high standards of behaviour, in and out of the classroom. Teachers speak to pupils in a calm and respectful way, getting a similar response in return. One year 1 student was observed declining an invitation to play with another student, with the very polite response, 'No thank you, I don't

want to today'. Students are confident, they smile, greet and hold open doors for visitors and often instigate conversation. Bullying was reported by both students and parents as being rare, and where incidents of bullying do occur, they are swiftly dealt with to everyone's satisfaction.

The introduction of new PSHE programmes have had a significant impact on students and the school environment. The understanding of, and vocabulary related to healthy friendships, and how to navigate the highs and lows, can be heard and seen in playground discussions. Adding additional schemes to address topical concerns such as 'Body Image' for KS 2 and 3 students, has further developed students' wellbeing.

Students are active members of their school and wider community, finding ways to support school initiatives and make a difference where they can. A democratically elected student council for primary students and the student management group for years 7 and 8, act as conduits between the student body and the school, bringing ideas from their peers for discussion with school leaders. Students across the school share responsibility for the school's physical and social environment, from FS1, where children take turns to water gardens and deadhead the flowers, to KS3 students who carry out supervision duties for the younger year groups. Students find ways to help their wider community through programmes such as the beach clean-ups to organising donations of food for a local dog charity.

The understanding of British values including tolerance, democracy, and respect for others is clearly reflected in everyday school life. Even if a student is clearly annoying another child, they are very patient and polite in their responses. In FS registration the children were observed voting for their favourite use of honey, and all children took turns and waited for their time to contribute.

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

The provision for welfare, health and safety is excellent. Students are exceptionally well cared for as a result of the consistent application of robust policies and practice.

Safeguarding and child protection practices at DESS are exemplary. All staff have Level 1 training, which is refreshed annually, while the safeguarding team and governor with a safeguarding oversight have Level 3 training. Training is delivered in home language for staff such as guards, cleaning staff and ECA providers. Clear reporting procedures for any concerns are in place using 'Edukey', which is effectively monitored to check for any patterns. Information about the safeguarding team is clearly displayed on posters in all classrooms and corridors, and members of the team wear pink lanyards for easy identification.

A comprehensive range of health and safety policies are in place. Thorough risk assessments are carried out for the school site and any off-site visits which take place. The facilities are checked regularly. The school site is secure; parents and carers wear a red lanyard and guards vigilantly check the documentation of any unfamiliar visitors before allowing them entry. Frequent fire, lockdown and evacuation drills and clearly displayed evacuation routes ensure the safety of students. Fire extinguishers are available around the school and are up to date.

Appropriate supervision of students is in place across the school. A suitably equipped clinic, staffed by two qualified nurses, provides first aid and an oversight of any students with ongoing health conditions. In addition, a significant number of staff are first aid trained and first aid kits are available around the school and in every classroom. Storage of food and cleanliness of the school canteen is regularly checked and a food sample is kept for a week in case of suspected food poisoning. Healthy lifestyles are developed through initiatives such as workshops for students and parents, and the promotion of healthy lunch boxes.

Students create healthy friendships, are very polite and their behaviour is excellent in and out of the classrooms. The behaviour and anti-bullying policies allow staff to deal promptly with any behaviour incidents and are effective in preventing bullying. Students receive training in e-safety and are aware of online dangers. Further initiatives such as the scanning of a QR code to talk to the learning mentor enhance the welfare provision of the school. Students are happy and thrive in school, as confirmed by lesson observations, discussions and PASS survey data.

Students have a voice and are actively involved in school life through the student management group and school council, which have a whole school impact. For example, first aid training is being organised for the Year 8 students after this was requested by the student leaders.

Transitions are given due consideration across the school and are particularly effective from year 6 to 7, ensuring that students' next steps in their educational journey are as smooth as possible and made with confidence and excitement.

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

The suitability of the proprietor and staff meets and exceeds the standard for BSO.

The governing board, working in partnership with the principal, provides a clear strategic direction for key school development goals as well as sound financial guidance. All governors have received safeguarding training and one governor, who has Level 3 training, has overall responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of safeguarding are maintained, including making regular checks on the school's single central register. All governors have specific responsibilities and sit on specific sub-committees, as well as having a specific curriculum area of interest, in order to fully understand and help form school development priorities. The constitution of the governing board has recently been revised, further strengthening the effectiveness of the group.

Robust recruitment procedures are in place including advertising, scrutiny of applications, video uploads, interviews and observing teachers teach in their current school, wherever that may be. Thorough background checks are conducted which include the applicant's right to work in the host country, qualifications, health and suitability to work with children; all these steps ensure that teachers are qualified and fit to teach the age group and subject areas for which they are employed.

An induction programme effectively informs newly appointed teachers about the school's values and mission as well as safeguarding, curriculum and matters related to classroom practice. Lesson observations, learning walks and the scrutiny of students' work conducted on a regular basis allow leaders to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school, and provide support and direction to individual teachers as needed. A programme of professional development meets whole school and individual training needs. The school subscribes to the National College providing a wide range of training opportunities for all staff members, not only teachers. Many of the school's leadership team have successfully completed qualifications from the National Professional Qualifications (NPQ) suite of training. All staff have clear job descriptions outlining their role.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

Premise and accommodation of the school meets the standards for BSO; they are excellent.

The school buildings and sport facilities provide an environment which enhances the learning experiences and well-being of students. A well-stocked library is enjoyed by students and the swimming pool is well-utilised by the PE department with lessons taking place throughout much of the year. New buildings for years 7 and 8 have added significantly to the school's facilities, including a well-equipped science laboratory, art/design technology, computing and music rooms, common room and café, which is enjoyed by secondary students and parents alike.

In EYFS and primary, there is a sense of ownership with personalised elements for each child including photographs. Displays in classrooms are bright and colourful, and provide a good balance of celebrating students' work and supporting learning. Learning walls are a key feature of displays in all primary classrooms and are used effectively. Each early years and primary classroom has a garden that students take care of, and which provides a comfortable oasis for learning and relaxation.

Outdoor facilities are excellent and include an adventure playground which the students use enthusiastically. The playground has a soft surface which reduces the risk posed by falls. There is appropriate shading in outside areas; shade supports are suitably padded. External lighting is appropriate, including emergency lighting.

The lighting in all classrooms is suitable and there is appropriate sound insulation in each room, including the music rooms. The internal corridors are wide with suitable lighting, cooling and ventilation. There are age-appropriate toilet facilities and access arrangements for students with physical disabilities. Drinking water is available at many points around the school and students are encouraged to bring their own refillable water bottle.

Washroom facilities are age-appropriate, have an adequate supply of hot and cold water and are regularly cleaned. These facilities are separate to staff facilities and are clearly labelled. There are separate changing and shower facilities for boys and girls, which are close to the gymnasium and swimming pool. A renovation in the changing rooms and the gymnasium would further improve the premises and accommodation of the school.

The health and safety manager conducts weekly meetings and checks of the facilities to ensure the school is clean and well maintained. Clear maintenance records are kept.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information provided by the school to parents, carers and others meets the standard for BSO, it is wide ranging in breadth, informative and accessible.

The school's details are available online, as are the names of key staff. The school website is comprehensive and easy to navigate, it shares important documents including more than 20 key policies relevant to parents, along with details of the registration and admissions process. The school prospectus is also available together with the latest BSO and COBIS reports.

There is limited performance data online, due to the age of the students, who do not sit formal examinations. There is reference to 2018 year 6 SATs results; this could be updated with more recent GL standardised test data as a performance comparison measure to other British schools. Consideration is also being given to how this standardised data can better be used to inform parents and students of standards and next steps to learning.

DESS has a social media presence on Facebook and Instagram, where it celebrates important school events as well as highlighting announcements such as upcoming admissions windows, governor vacancies and social events. The school also has a twitter account which is used less often.

Class Dojo supports one-to-one communication between individual parents and teachers. Drop off and collection occurs inside the campus which facilitates informal communications between parents and teachers. The recent introduction of the *iSAMS* portal for whole school messages has streamlined communications and been well received by parents, particularly the bi-weekly newsletters, which are clearly marked showing whether actions are needed or if a document is 'read only'.

Progress reports outlining students' academic, personal and social development are sent home at the end of terms 1 and 2. They provide information for parents regarding their child's attendance, behaviour, effort and attainment levels. These are followed up with parent consultation sessions where parents and teachers discuss the reports in greater detail. Term 3 summative reports provide greater information and also suggest targets in core subjects.

An active Parent Council meets half-termly with senior leaders in the school. There is a representative for each year group which ensures balanced representation. The council is involved in identifying issues and challenges, trialling new systems and contributing to the decision-making process.

Parents are invited into school for key events. There are a range of family social gatherings which add to the school's community spirit, for example, the recent film night. Workshops are offered throughout the year to guide and inform parents, such as phonics in the EYFS.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school's procedure for handling complaints meets the standard for BSO.

A transparent complaints policy is published on the school's website and easily located. It fulfils the criteria for BSO, setting out clearly the different stages a parent or other complainant would follow should they have an issue which could not be settled informally. A sub-committee within the board of governors is charged with handling any formal complaints. The complaints process includes a person independent of the school who would sit on a complaints panel.

Processes are in place for any complaints raised against the principal, which would directly involve the board of governors.

The school aims to resolve all matters informally, either directly with the member of staff and parent concerned, or by a member of the school's leadership team.

Clear records are kept of all formal complaints raised. There have been no formal complaints by parents in the last year.

12. Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are excellent. At all levels, leaders are committed to giving students the best possible opportunities to develop academically, and as well-rounded individuals who are well prepared for life beyond DESS.

The board of governors provides effective support and challenge, and works with the principal to develop the school's strategic direction. A balance of professional skills within the board including finance and the law, ensures high quality guidance is provided.

The school's values and vision provide a solid framework on which the ethos of the school has been built. The values are known and understood by all stakeholders. There is a collegial atmosphere across the school, strong relationships, and high levels of staff morale.

School leaders are committed to excellence in all aspects of school life. They set high expectations for staff and students alike. They are ambitious for the future development of the school as well as to ensure ongoing high-quality provision. Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. School development priorities are clearly identified through rigorous self-evaluation and clear plans are drawn up to bring about improvements in the areas identified. A programme of performance management linked to student outcomes, school development priorities and individual professional targets, provides feedback and guidance to teachers. Continuous professional development (CPD) provides the relevant support to move on and embed developments, as well as meet individual teacher's training needs. School leaders are forward thinking, and keep themselves and staff abreast of the latest developments in best practice in the UK.

High standards are achieved across a range of key functions, notably student outcomes, both academic and personal, teaching and assessment, safeguarding, and welfare, health and safety. Leaders analyse a range of data, including attainment and progress for students, PASS data and surveys of parents, staff and students to identify and fill any gaps in provision. The well-being of students and staff is seen as a key priority.

The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and finances are effectively managed. The school is well stocked with a range of high-quality teaching resources.

Communications with all stakeholders are effective, professional and warm. High visibility of the leadership team and an open doors policy is valued by staff and parents alike.