



part of Independent Schools Inspectorate

British Schools Overseas

Inspection Report

St Paul's School

September 2023

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School's Details

School	St Paul's School			
Address	Rua Juquiá 166 J Paulistano São Paulo SP 01440-903 Brazil			
Telephone number	+55 11 3087 3399			
Email address	twce@stpauls.br			
Headmaster	Mr Titus Edge			
Chair of governors	Mr Philip Reade			
Proprietor	Fundação Anglo-Brasileira de Educação e Cultura			
Age range	3 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	1171			
	EYFS	145	Juniors	485
	Seniors	387	Sixth Form	154
Inspection dates	18 to 19 September 2023			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 St Paul's School is a co-educational day school which occupies an urban site in the Jardins area of São Paulo. The school was founded in 1926 by a consortium of British companies and in 1961 was established as a non-profit foundation, officially registered as Fundação Anglo-Brasileira de Educação e Cultura (FABEC). The school prepares pupils for IGCSE and IB qualifications and is divided into three sections: pre-prep for pupils aged 3 to 7 years, prep for those aged 7 to 11 years and senior for pupils aged 11 to 18 years.
- 1.2 The school is overseen by a board of governors, appointed by trustees of the British Society. The honorary president of the board is His Majesty's Ambassador to Brazil. In addition, the headmaster is advised by a director who is appointed by the Brazilian education ministry. Since the previous inspection, a new headmaster has been appointed, the leadership team has been re-structured, the prep and pre-prep areas have been re-designed, and a counselling centre has been built.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school seeks to nurture excellence and aims to provide a high-quality British and Brazilian holistic education for the academic and personal development of pupils within a framework of a caring community which shares a common set of core values.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Almost all pupils join the school at the age of three. Children are assessed for their readiness to undertake a full-day programme and their understanding of English. Parents represent the business and professional communities of São Paulo. The ability of pupils on entry to the school is above average in the school's local context. Almost all pupils become bilingual in English and Portuguese during their time in the school. The school has identified 136 pupils with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND), of whom 107 receive additional support. The more able are encouraged to participate in enrichment activities.

2. Inspection of Standards for British Schools Overseas

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting independent schools in England and overseas.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the Standards for British Schools Overseas (BSO). It also takes account, where relevant, of compliance with any local requirements. Schools may opt for an inspection of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include: an exhaustive health and safety audit; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures; an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law; in-depth consideration of the extent to which the school meets the requirements of local law and custom.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas. The standards represent minimum requirements, and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. In order to gain BSO accreditation, a school is required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report. If a school does not meet all of the standards, it may elect to be re-inspected once it has taken the required actions in order to gain BSO accreditation.

Headline judgements against the Standards for British Schools Overseas indicate that the standards have been 'met' or 'not met' for accreditation.

Accreditation as a British school overseas lasts for three years. The school's previous inspection was in February 2019.

Key findings

2.1 The school meets all the Standards for British Schools Overseas and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

Part 1 – Quality of education provided

2.2 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

2.3 The curriculum is well planned and supported by appropriate policies and schemes of work. These take account of the aptitudes and needs of pupils of all ages, including those with SEND and the more able. The curriculum is based on the English National Curriculum and the framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It also fulfils the requirements of the *Curriculo da Cidade de São Paulo* and Brazilian National Curriculum (BNCC). It is suitably broad and provides pupils with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. It enables them to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. It is particularly effective in developing pupils' understanding and use of spoken and written English in a setting where almost all pupils speak English as an additional language. Pupils have the option of acquiring two Brazilian certifications alongside the IGCSE and IB examinations. These are *Ensino Fundamental*, awarded at the end of Year 10, and the *Ensino Médio*, a high school certificate for school leavers at age 18.

2.4 The curriculum enables all pupils to learn and make progress, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in both Brazilian and British society and for the next stage of their education. An extensive personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme, which incorporates themed weeks, is effective in developing pupils' understanding of fundamental British values and how they reflect the value systems of other countries. This includes age-appropriate relationships and sex education. Suitable careers education is provided, appropriately matched to the ages of the pupils. In discussion, older pupils were highly appreciative of the support and guidance they receive in making informed choices about universities and other pathways. The school provides an extremely wide range of extra-curricular activities designed to provide opportunities for pupils to acquire additional skills. This is reflected in responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, where an overwhelming majority of both parents and pupils agreed that the school provides a good choice of activities.

2.5 Teaching shows an understanding of the pupils' needs and abilities and demonstrates secure subject knowledge and effective use of resources. Additional help provided by the learning support team enables pupils with learning and other disabilities to make progress at least in line with their peers. More able pupils are challenged in a variety of ways, including through individual education plans in the prep school and enrichment sessions in the senior school. Teaching utilises a suitable range of approaches to foster application and interest, and enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress. Strategies for managing behaviour in class are effective. In discussion, pupils showed a good understanding of fundamental British values. The teaching does not discriminate against pupils due to their gender, ability, beliefs, disability or race. The school has a suitable framework to report on pupils' performance.

Part 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

2.6 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.

2.7 Through its PSHE programme and the curriculum as a whole, the school actively promotes 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 programme enables pupils to gain knowledge of public institutions in England and the responsibilities of citizenship; to understand the importance

of laws and justice; and teaches them to have respect for the democratic process. The school encourages a balanced presentation of political issues. In line with its ethos and aims, the school empowers pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence, to distinguish right from wrong and to accept responsibility for their behaviour. Pupils show respect for each other and for the staff.

- 2.8 It ensures that principles are actively promoted which encourage respect for other people, regardless of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, race, marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity. Weekly assemblies, sometimes led by pupils, support the curriculum in promoting pupils' social, moral, cultural and spiritual development, as do various themed weeks that champion causes such as equality, women's rights, anti-bullying, mental health, wellbeing and sustainability. Pupils also have the opportunity to serve on the school council, on the prefect team or to train as peer mentors and listeners in both the prep and senior schools. Participation in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE) offers additional opportunities for service.

Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16] are met.

- 2.10 Suitable arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils, which take account of both UK and local requirements and practices. Effective implementation of the safeguarding policy ensures the protection of pupils from all types of abuse and harm, including the dangers of extremism. Staff are appropriately trained when they join the school and subsequently through training sessions and updates as required. In discussion, they confirmed that they feel suitably equipped to manage any disclosures. Staff are aware of their responsibilities with regard to the staff code of conduct and whistleblowing policies. Effective structures exist to ensure that pupils are listened to and receive early help, and they receive suitable guidance relating to issues that might affect their welfare, health and safety through the PSHE programme, tutor time and assemblies. As a result, pupils say that they feel safe in the school and that they can talk to a member of staff if they are worried or concerned in the knowledge that they will be heard and action will be taken. They particularly appreciate leaders' and governors' provision of a counselling service. Governors oversee safeguarding effectively by undertaking an annual review of safeguarding policies and procedures in addition to meeting and being briefed on a regular basis by the safeguarding team. The school operates suitable safer recruitment procedures.
- 2.11 Procedures to promote good behaviour are known and understood by pupils and staff and are implemented effectively. A suitable system of rewards celebrates pupils' success, efforts and achievements, and appropriate sanctions are applied if the need arises. Records are kept of all behavioural issues, and these are monitored effectively in order to identify any trends. Bullying, including cyber-bullying, is prevented as far as is reasonably practical, and pupils expressed confidence in the fact that the school takes any reported incidents seriously.
- 2.12 The school complies with relevant health and safety laws and fire-safety standards, including those which apply locally. Record-keeping is thorough and shows that there is an effective overview of health and safety procedures. Fire and lockdown drills are carried out regularly and suitably recorded. The emergency exits, fire detectors, extinguishers, alarms and route signage are maintained through a triple layer of oversight: daily onsite checks from fire officers, fortnightly audits by an external consultant and regular inspection by the government authorities. Pupils are appropriately supervised throughout the school day and on school trips. The premises are maintained to a suitable level of safety and hygiene. Admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained. The school has an appropriate policy for first aid, and its effective implementation enables pupils who are ill or injured to be treated in a timely manner. Suitable risk assessments have been drawn up for all areas of the school and its activities, as well as for individual pupils with particular needs or concerns.

Part 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.13 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**
- 2.14 The school carries out the required checks on staff, proprietors and any other adults working or volunteering at the school to ensure their suitability to work with children, in line with both local requirements and guidance issued to schools in the UK. These include local and overseas police checks, and checks on the right to work in Brazil, medical suitability, qualifications and employment history. A suitable single central register of appointments is maintained which details the recruitment checks undertaken. The school does not engage supply staff.

Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.15 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**
- 2.16 Premises are maintained to an exceptionally high standard, providing an environment that is vibrant, welcoming and conducive to learning. This is particularly evident in the pre-prep and prep schools, as a result of a creative and attractive re-design and refurbishment programme. Any maintenance issues are promptly addressed, and leaders and governors ensure that there is an ongoing programme of renewal. Much work has been done to strengthen the security of the site, which is a constant priority. Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for pupils of all ages. A medical room caters for the needs of pupils who are ill or injured; it has appropriate washing and toilet facilities. Acoustic conditions and both internal and external lighting are suitable. The provision of drinking water is adequate. Sufficient outdoor space is available for physical education and play.

Part 6 – Provision of information

- 2.17 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**
- 2.18 All the information required by the standard is provided or made available to current parents and parents of prospective pupils. The contact details for the school, the headmaster, the chair of governors and a statement of the school's aims and ethos are published on the school's website. Policies and particulars of arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions; provision for pupils with SEND; the procedure for complaints; the curriculum; arrangements to promote good behaviour and to prevent bullying; health and safety and the school's provision for first aid are also available on the school's website. The school's policy on safeguarding pupils is published on the school's website. The school provides a written report on each pupil's progress and attainment annually.

Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.19 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.**
- 2.20 The school's complaints procedure is published on the school's website. It provides for a three-stage process with clear timescales, including an initial informal stage. If concerns are not resolved informally, parents are able to proceed to a formal stage by submitting a complaint in writing. If the concerns still remain unresolved, the school makes provision for a hearing before a panel which includes at least one person independent of the management and running of the school, which parents may attend, accompanied if they wish. The panel will then make findings and recommendations. A confidential record is kept of all complaints and findings, including action taken by the school, whether or not the complaint is upheld. The school's records indicate prompt responses to and resolution of any concerns or complaints received.

Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.21 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

2.22 The leadership team work effectively to promote and realise the school's aims. Governors are well informed and take a keen and active interest in the life of the school. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, most parents agreed that the school is governed, led and managed well. Development plans, including the provision of an off-site outdoor learning centre and the extension of the school's scholarship programme to promote further inclusion and diversity, indicate that leaders and governors are constantly looking for ways in which to improve. The leadership and management of the school, including the governors, demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities so that the BSO Standards are met consistently and the wellbeing of the pupils is promoted.

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick and injured pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Stephen Fox	Reporting inspector
Mr Barnaby Sandow	Team inspector (Head, HMC school, United Kingdom)
Mr Marcus Wild	Team inspector (Assistant principal, NABSS school, Spain)