Inspection of International School of London

139 Gunnersbury Avenue, London W3 8LG

Inspection dates:	22 to 24 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Sixth-form provision	**Good**
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	**Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy studying a broad curriculum with an emphasis on learning modern foreign languages. Pupils who speak English as an additional language continue learning their first language while studying other languages, such as French, Arabic, Chinese and Spanish. Pupils who speak English as an additional language get personalised support to develop their English language skills. Students in Grades 11 and 12 like the small size of the sixth form and the close attention they get from teachers in lessons.

Pupils are encouraged to respect the many different backgrounds, faiths and beliefs of pupils at the school. Through events such as the 'Cherry Blossom Festival' and the 'Arabic Night' they learn about the cultures of others. The school makes sure that new pupils settle in quickly and feel welcome when they join.

Staff listen and help pupils should any concerns arise. 'Speak out' sessions in form time each week give pupils the opportunity to discuss any concerns or to ask questions about issues, such as healthy relationships. Pupils are sensibly behaved and respectful towards staff and other pupils.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The curriculum is coherently structured from early years to sixth form. Through the curriculum, pupils explore themes and concepts that go across subjects. Learning in all subjects is carefully thought through, so that pupils learn subject-specific knowledge as well as developing key skills, for example, in research and the use of technology. In the sixth form, the school's broad curriculum ensures that students can choose to study the subjects of their choosing. Pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

The school has identified key component knowledge that pupils need to know and determined the order in which key content should be taught, so that the curriculum effectively builds pupils' learning cumulatively over time. For example, when learning about the concept of governance, children in the Kindergarten learn about different roles within their own community. In Grade 4, they learn about local government and governments in other countries. In the secondary phase, pupils find out more about governance when they study topics, such as globalisation in Grade 7 and urbanisation in Grade 10.

Teachers across the school create opportunities for pupils to discuss and share their learning in lessons. This helps pupils to develop their communication skills. The school has a strong emphasis on explaining key vocabulary and ensuring that pupils remember specific words in the long term through repetition and recall. For example, children in the early years remembered the words for different mathematical shapes when using sticks to build a house for the three little pigs in the story they had read. The school has strong systems in place to identify pupils

with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers adapt their teaching to help all pupils access the same curriculum.

Staff use a variety of strategies to check what pupils know and can do. For example, when pupils arrive from abroad, staff identify any gaps in required subject content that they need to know for current learning at this school. Sometimes, this information is not used effectively to tailor work to pupils' needs. In lessons, checks on pupils' understanding to identify and address any misconceptions are not as routine, particularly in the secondary phase. This affects how well pupils learn the curriculum long term. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and are supported to maintain their expertise through subject-specific training.

Staff have thought carefully about the school's approach to teaching reading. Teachers are skilled in teaching the phonics programme that the school recently introduced. The school has invested in books to ensure that pupils practise the sounds they know, including for older pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read English. Support for weaker readers helps pupils to catch up quickly. Reading is well promoted across the school and pupils have access to a selection of high-quality books.

Pupils are encouraged to get involved in school life, for example, as members of the student council and as student ambassadors. Pupils involved in the 'Fox Media' group help to keep others informed of school events through their weekly news reports. The school takes pupils' opinions on board when deciding what extra-curricular activities to organise. Pupils can choose from a wide range of enrichment opportunities, such as in sports, music, arts and crafts, and technology. Community service is woven through the curriculum and pupils help others, such as charity work. The school arranges a variety of outings for pupils to enhance their learning, such as visits to art galleries, theatres and museums. In the early years, the school organises regular outings to the local park to explore nature. The residential journey for each year group encourages pupils to make new friends and develop teamwork skills.

In the secondary phase, pupils receive appropriate careers guidance. Pupils are encouraged to consider a wide range of career choices and options for their future education. In the sixth form, students receive individual careers advice and guidance with applications to both national and international colleges and universities. In their lessons on relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), pupils are taught about a range of issues, such as peer pressure and online safety. Pupils are taught what it is to be a citizen, including about democracy and how the laws in Great Britain differ from those in other countries. While the statutory content for RSHE is covered, the planning and delivery of this is not routinely strong across phases.

The school's 'community charter' sets out the school's high expectations for behaviour. Classrooms are typically calm, and pupils work alongside each other sensibly and concentrate on their work. Attendance rates are high. Staff work closely with pupils and their families to address any barriers to attending school regularly.

The proprietor body works closely with school leaders to check the quality of aspects of the school and ensure that the school meets all the independent school standards consistently. However, at times there is a lack of oversight of some aspects of the school's work. This means that leaders do not carefully check to see that their actions are having the intended impact. The school has ensured that the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are met. The school meets all the standards of the early years foundation stage.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- Staff do not routinely check in class what pupils know and remember, particularly in the secondary phase. This means that some gaps in knowledge are not identified and addressed. On occasion, the tasks that pupils are set are not carefully chosen for pupils' individual needs. The school should ensure that the tasks are well chosen to support pupils to learn the intended curriculum and that any gaps in pupils' knowledge are picked up quickly and addressed.
- At times, there is a lack of rigour in the way that leaders and the proprietor body check and evaluate aspects of the school's work. This means that sometimes, leaders do not ensure and assure themselves that the school's work follows what is intended. The school should ensure that oversight of the school's effectiveness is strengthened.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use Ofsted Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further guidance on how to complain about a school.

School details

Unique reference number	102550
DfE registration number	313/6063
Local authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	10286375
Type of school	Other Independent 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	429
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	65
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	International Community College Limited
Chair	Amine Makarem
Headteacher	Richard Parker
Annual fees (day pupils)	£22,100 to £30,730
Telephone number	020 8992 5823
Website	www.isllondon.org
Email address	mail@isllondon.org
Date of previous inspection	12 to 14 March 2019

Information about this school

- The school operates from two premises. The main school site at 139 Gunnersbury Avenue W3 8LG provides education for pupils aged 3 to 16. The sixth-form site is located at 15 Gunnersbury Avenue W5 3XD. The school makes use of a nearby sports centre for physical education.
- The school teaches the International Baccalaureate curriculum. Pupils in the primary phase, including early years, are taught the Primary Years Programme (PYP). The early years foundation stage framework is incorporated into the PYP. Pupils in Grades 6 to 10 (Years 7 to 11) follow the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and pupils in Grades 11 and 12 (Years 12 and 13) the Diploma Programme (DP).
- Since the previous inspection, there have been some leadership changes. The principal of the secondary phase took up post in September 2022. The coordinators for the MYP and DP were appointed in September 2023. The head of the primary phase is currently covering the role of PYP coordinator. A new head of pastoral started in September 2023.
- A high proportion of pupils join and leave the school other than at the usual times. Many pupils join and leave the school throughout the school year, often coming from, and moving to, different countries. Many pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other school leaders and the managing director of the proprietor body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, science, performing arts and humanities For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons,

spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors considered the curriculum in other subjects. They spoke with school leaders and visited lessons in a range of subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of evidence to check compliance with the independent school standards.
- Inspectors considered online survey responses from parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lascelles Haughton	His Majesty's Inspector
Jonathan Newby	Ofsted Inspector

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