



part of Independent Schools Inspectorate

British Schools Overseas

Inspection Report

St George's British International School

November 2024

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School's Details

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| School | St George's British International School | | | |
| Address | Via Cassia km 16 La Storta 00123 Rome Italy | | | |
| Telephone number | 00 39 06 308 6001 | | | |
| Email address | info@stgeorge.school.it | | | |
| Principal | Dr John Knight | | | |
| Chair of governors | Dr Flaminia Muratori | | | |
| Proprietor | St George's School Association | | | |
| Age range | 3 to 18 | | | |
| Number of pupils on roll | 974 | | | |
| | Early years | 48 | Juniors | 345 |
| | Seniors | 422 | Sixth form | 159 |
| Inspection dates | 5 to 6 November 2024 | | | |

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 St George's British International school is a co-educational day school. It was founded in 1958 to serve Rome's British, international and expatriate communities. The main campus, comprising a junior and the senior school, is based in La Storta on the northern outskirts of the city. A second campus, located in central Rome, educates pupils up to the age of 11. The management of the school is overseen by a group of governors who form the St George's School Association. Their work in turn is overseen by a group of three trustees.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school states that its mission is to ensure that all pupils become the very best version of themselves so they can excel today and into the future. The school seeks to achieve this through a focus on the inspirational teaching of a broad, deep and balanced curriculum leading to the holistic development of highly competent, knowledgeable, compassionate and committed pupils who are inspired by the best British international education within the rich cultural and historical context of Rome.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from families with a range of professional backgrounds and over 100 nationalities are represented in the pupil body. Data provided by the school shows that the ability profile of the pupils is above that typically found in independent schools in the UK. The school has identified 149 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 81 of whom receive additional specialist support. Of the 220 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), 117 require additional specialist support.

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 2014.

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 Leaders ensure the school provides a British curriculum which reflects its international context. It provides pupils with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. It enables them to acquire effective speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills and a good understanding of English. It provides a programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and teaches relationships and sex education (RSE) in line with UK guidance. The school develops an adequate economic awareness in pupils. There is a wide choice of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum and the activities programme develop pupils' understanding of British values, whilst also reflecting the values inherent to Italian society.
- 2.4 The teaching throughout the school is provided through the medium of English. Appropriate additional support is provided for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). Teaching is suitably adapted for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teaching is well planned, employs effective teaching methods, uses a range of resources and manages behaviour well. Teachers have good subject knowledge which ensures that high academic standards are maintained. The vast majority of pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that their teachers know their subjects well and that their skills and knowledge improves in lessons. There is a relaxed yet purposeful environment in lessons because of challenge which is presented calmly. Pupils enjoy and embrace the opportunities to work with each other and independently. Many of the tasks seen in lessons encouraged pupils to take appropriate levels of responsibility through independent thinking and problem solving. The teaching does not discriminate because of protected characteristics.
- 2.5 Pupils are assessed frequently, and their performance is monitored systematically by the school. The school is working to improve the consistency which pupils receive feedback on their work across the school. Standardised data shows that pupils make good progress to GCSE and to International Baccalaureate (IB). Pupils who have SEND make progress which is in line with that of their peers due to the effective support provided for them. Those pupils who speak EAL make good progress with their use of English. The monitoring of pupils' performance informs the school's development planning. Pupils highly value the careers guidance which is afforded them in the school. It provides advice which is suitably aspirational and information about a wide range of career pathways and higher education institutions, largely in Europe and North America. Most pupils go on to selective courses with around a half of pupils each year going on to undertake further study in the UK.

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 The school promotes values which are fundamental to life in Britain as well as to many other countries through its PSHE programme and assemblies. The school's value of inclusivity permeates the life of the school and encourages pupils to have respect for other people regardless of their background or the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. This is clearly evident in much

of the pupil's work and in pupil created displays around the school. The school effectively promotes tolerance and harmony between the many different nationalities represented in the school. Pupils speak warmly of the friendly atmosphere, a feature that was also noted by the inspection team. During the inspection, pupils attended a moving and inspiring Remembrance Service, largely led by pupils themselves telling stories of relatives in WW1 and WW2 supported by family archive material. This opportunity to reflect was clearly and carefully delivered, articulately by pupils, and warmly received by their attentive peers.

- 2.8 The school prepares pupils for the responsibilities of citizenship in the UK, Italy and the wider world. The school encourages respect for democracy and the democratic processes. It helps pupils to have well-informed and balanced views on political issues. It provides opportunities to make meaningful contributions to the lives of others within the school, the local community and globally.

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 Leaders make appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. The school's safeguarding policy is suitably adjusted to the school's context and is implemented effectively. The procedures are based largely on guidance for schools in England but also take local requirements into account. Safeguarding matters are overseen by a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and five deputies. All of them have undertaken advanced safeguarding training and have a thorough understanding of their roles. The school maintains confidential records of all child protection concerns. These contain sufficient detail and record any discussions, decisions and action taken. The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. The governing body has appointed a lead governor to oversee safeguarding to verify that procedures are implemented appropriately.
- 2.11 Staff are thoroughly trained in the school's procedures, not only when they join the school but through training sessions at the start of each school year and through regular updates. Staff know what to do should they become aware of any safeguarding concern about a pupil or if there is an allegation against a member of staff. Almost all of the staff who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that their safeguarding training equips them to deal with any concerns about pupils.
- 2.12 Pupils are made fully aware of issues that might affect their welfare, health and safety, particularly with regard to online safety, through assemblies and topics covered in the school's PSHE programme. Pupils have ready access to specialist support for their mental health if required. Leaders have developed a number of ways to ensure they hear the views of individual pupils. As a result, in discussion with inspectors, pupils stated that they feel safe in their school and know to whom they can go should they wish to share any concerns.
- 2.13 There are clear and positive expectations of pupils' behaviour throughout the school. Almost all of the pupils and parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that the school expects pupils to behave well. Pupils' behaviour is well managed. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere throughout the school. This is because pupils are aware of the need for self-regulation. The school ensures that restorative conversations take place when pupils make bad behavioural choices.
- 2.14 The school is proactive in ensuring that there is an emphasis on inclusivity and teaching pupils about positive relations. This enables pupils to form close relationships with each other. Pupils are confident in challenging poor behaviour when it occurs. Consequently, bullying is rare and dealt with appropriately when it occurs.

- 2.15 The school's policy states that health and safety is of paramount importance at the school. Health and safety is a standing item on leadership team meetings. The board is provided with frequent updates. Procedures for carrying out, actioning and monitoring risk assessments are provided. The responsibilities of all staff along those with key roles in the management of health and safety are outlined in the policy. The school implements the health and safety policy effectively. There is an effective culture of care which is reflected around the school.
- 2.16 Fire exits and doors are fitted with alarms. Exit signage, exit routes, and fire extinguishers are clearly marked and well-maintained. Fire alarms are appropriately placed and regularly tested. Routine fire drills are conducted, ensuring pupils know what to do in case of an emergency. Suitable and effective monitoring procedures are in place.
- 2.17 Both sites have effective procedures for the administration of first aid. This includes fully trained nurses on site as well as many members of staff trained in first aid. Some staff are trained to a higher level including the use of defibrillators. Medicines are stored securely and are easy to access in case of emergency and for use on school trips. The requirements of pupils who have specific needs such as diabetes or allergies are managed effectively. Staff are aware of who they are and how they should be treated. All records are maintained effectively.
- 2.18 A well-planned rota of staff supervision duties is in place. The school has identified areas where specific supervision is required, and staff are given appropriate guidance. A suitable policy is in place to ensure that pupils are properly supervised on trips and visits.
- 2.19 The school maintains its register of admissions as required. Effective systems are in place to monitor and address any attendance concerns. Comprehensive records are kept, with an efficient process of absence monitoring which places due importance on the welfare of pupils.
- 2.20 Leaders have a strategic and comprehensive approach to the management of risk. Risk assessments are thorough and detailed. Staff are well trained to identify and address risks in the very wide range of the school's activities both on and off site.

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

- 2.21 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**
- 2.22 The required checks are carried out on staff, supply staff and governors to ensure their suitability to work with children. The school verifies each person's identity and previous employment history. It carries out criminal record checks with Italian authorities and, where relevant, with overseas authorities. New staff complete a self-declaration that they are fit to work. The school checks each person's right to work in Italy. Checks ensure that no staff appointed from the UK have been prohibited from teaching, or from managing a school.
- 2.23 All checks are recorded on a single central record of appointments (SCR). Staff files contain copies of relevant documentation used to carry out suitability checks and indicate that the information recorded on the SCR is accurate.

Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.24 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**
- 2.25 There are adequate toilet and handwashing facilities. Separate facilities are provided for adults. Both the City Centre and La Storta sites have medical rooms which provide appropriate accommodation for

the short-term care of the sick. They include beds and seating areas and have washing facilities and are close to toilets. Both sites are maintained and kept clean to a standard which ensures the health, safety and welfare of pupils. There is a clear and effective cleaning regime in place. Suitable acoustic and sound insulation conditions are in place. Internal and external lighting are suitable for the purpose of the school's activities. The school has suitable facilities for drinking water including water fountains and taps. Hot water does not pose a scalding risk. Drinking water is marked as such. Both sites have adequate space for physical education (PE) outdoors and outside play.

Part 6 – Provision of information

2.26 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

2.27 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and relevant local authorities. This information includes details about the proprietor, the aims of the school and the curriculum offered. The safeguarding policy is published on the school's website. Arrangements and policies for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, complaints, health and safety, first aid, provision for pupils who have SEND and those who speak EAL are available on the school's website as well as copies of the school's most recent inspection reports. Particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year are published. The school provides a full written report annually on each child's attainment and progress as well as holding parent-teacher meetings.

Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.28 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

2.29 The school's complaints policy is made available on the school's website. The policy allows for any concern to be considered initially on an informal basis. It then ensures that it has suitable arrangements in place for a formal complaint to be made in writing for consideration by the head and the chair of governors. Finally, provision is made for a hearing before a panel which includes an independent member and allows for the parent complainant to be accompanied. At this panel stage, there are suitable arrangements in place to allow the panel to make findings and recommendations and for a confidential record to be kept of such findings. Appropriate records are kept of formal complaints; these detail actions taken by the school regardless of the outcome of such complaints.

Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

2.31 The governors ensure that the leadership and management of the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards for British Schools Overseas are met consistently and the well-being of pupils is actively promoted. A very large majority of parents in their response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, agreed that the school is governed, led and managed well. Inspection evidence supports this view.

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, attended registration sessions and an assembly. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick and injured pupils. The responses of parents, pupils and staff to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

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|-------------------|---|
| Mr Alasdair McBay | Reporting inspector |
| Mr Gareth Evans | Team inspector (Headteacher, ECIS school, Serbia) |
| Mr Jason Lewis | Team inspector (Senior teacher, HMC school, UK) |