

INSPECTION REPORT

British School of Valencia

ADDRESS: Avda. Peris y Valero, 57
46006 Valencia

Date of visit: Tuesday 28th March 2017

Lead Inspector: Joan Gemmell

Team Inspector: Amaya Lorenzo

Overall recommendation:

The British School of Valencia is recommended for authorisation for six years from pre-nursery to Year 13 for up to 900 pupils.

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Accommodation and Resources**
- 3. Health and Safety**
- 4. The curriculum**
- 5. Staffing**
- 6. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment.**
- 7. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.**
- 8. Leadership and management of the school**
- 9. Conclusion**
- 10. Recommendations for improvement**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The British School of Valencia, which was originally known as the British School Children's Garden, was opened in 1992 as a co-educational school in the centre of Valencia by the Carmen Santafé Company.
- 1.2 Since the last inspection, numbers have grown considerably and adjacent buildings have been taken over and adapted to the school's needs. Currently there are 859 pupils on roll from pre-nursery to Year 13. Of these, 475 are in the junior school and 384 are in the senior school.
- 1.3 Almost 90 per cent of the pupils are Spanish and the remaining 10 per cent is made up of diverse nationalities, including Chinese, American and Russian.
- 1.4 The purpose of this inspection visit is to inspect the whole school, from pre-nursery to Year 13, for authorisation as offering a British education and meeting the requirements of the U.K. government for British schools overseas.

2. Accommodation and Resources

- 2.1 The school is accessed from the main road in the city centre and has six entrances, all of which are supervised appropriately at entrance and exit times.
- 2.2 The dining facilities are adequate and well-equipped. Meals are provided by an outside catering service. Due to the location of the school and the two-hour lunch break, many of the children go home for lunch.
- 2.3 All classrooms are well furnished and equipped with interactive whiteboards to aid teaching and learning.
- 2.4 There are sufficient toilet facilities for pupils and staff throughout the school.
- 2.5 There is a multi-purpose covered assembly area in the playground, which can also be used in bad weather for outdoor play. There are two other recreation areas which are secure and well equipped with appropriate play equipment for all age groups. These areas are used

for football and basketball. The gymnasium is well-resourced. Since the last inspection, the access to the Early Years Foundation Stage (E.Y.F.S.) playgrounds has been rearranged, providing a more stimulating outdoor environment for this area, and a safer, soft flooring has been installed.

2.6 The school has a well- equipped art room, two computing rooms, each with 25 computers, and there are two trolleys of tablets and laptops for general use throughout the school. The Early Years Foundation Stage (E.Y.F.S.) children use these trolleys with confidence and ease. There are two well-equipped science laboratories. However, as mentioned in the previous inspection report, the science laboratory lacks a fume cupboard and class cabinets are not securely locked at all times.

2.7 A specialist music room is well-equipped with eight keyboards, among other musical instruments.

2.8 Samples of children’s work, posters and teaching aids all celebrate and support learning in the primary school classes. However, the secondary school makes little use of displays of pupils’ work to support learning.

2.9 Staffrooms provide a suitable base for teachers to work in and sufficient space is available for meetings.

3. Health and Safety

3.1 Apart from the previously mentioned laboratory conditions, children confidently explore and learn in secure, safe indoor and outdoor spaces.

3.2 The school has a satisfactory health and safety policy and the school employs a qualified nurse. In addition, several members of staff are trained to administer first-aid in the case of an accident.

3.3 Fire evacuation procedures are displayed in classrooms, halls and corridors. Drills take place at several times throughout the year.

3.4 All members of staff have appropriate Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) or equivalent checks.

3.5 Effective implementation of anti-bullying policies, reinforced at student council meetings, ensures good behaviour.

3.6 Arrangements for the supervision of children before school begins, throughout the school day and after school, are very thorough.

4. Staffing

4.1 The teaching staff is a good mix of younger and more experienced teachers and most teachers in Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2) are British qualified. There are still several teachers in E.Y.F.S., who have only Spanish qualifications. They follow the Early Learning Goals well, but to ensure a consistently British style of teaching and learning throughout the school, future recruitment should concentrate on employing more members of staff with British qualifications and experience.

4.2 Opportunities for staff professional development are improving and several courses have been planned for the coming months, including on-line courses in child safeguarding and special educational needs In-service training is provided by experienced staff, and teachers who attend external courses share what they have learned with colleagues.

4.3 The school has an educational psychologist who oversees special needs provision and it also works with an outside agency, specialising in creative psychology. There is an English as a second language specialist as well as a Spanish as a second language specialist for those children who come to the school with little or no English or Spanish, to enable them to integrate into the school and the local community as quickly as possible.

4.4 There is good provision of full-time classroom assistants in the E.Y.F.S as well as in KS1 and KS2, and a laboratory technician in the secondary school is suitably deployed.

5. Curriculum

5.1 The school offers a well-balanced curriculum covering most areas of the National Curriculum (N.C.) However, there are still some inconsistencies in the allocation of time for some subjects in Key Stage

3 (KS3); for example, French has more time in the timetable than geography. The school should ensure that all subjects have an appropriate time distribution.

5.2 The schemes of work are well developed with long and medium-term objectives, including planning to ensure that work matches the needs of the differing abilities of the pupils.

5.3 The opportunity for pupils to start learning French in Year 5 helps to extend their skills and understanding well. The level of spoken French, as well as comprehension, in the secondary school is very good and the results are similarly very good.

6. Teaching and Learning and Assessment

6.1 Overall, staff have good knowledge and understanding of how to support children's learning effectively and the children show a positive attitude to learning.

6.2 The starting points for each child's learning are well known to the teachers and progress is carefully monitored in relation to these starting points. Expectations are high and methods engage pupils in productive learning. This ensures good progression through the curriculum.

6.3 Marking is carried out regularly in the primary school but is quite inconsistent throughout the secondary school where the use of questioning, to both check pupils' progress and challenge their thinking, is not systematic. The marking policy should be updated and followed by all classes to make it effective.

6.4 Internal and external assessment results are good and these results are used to inform future planning and set future targets. Strategies are in place to assess whether or not objectives have been achieved.

6.5 Relationships between staff and children are good, and pupils are proud of their school. There is a positive ethos throughout the school and pupils feel well supported both emotionally and in their learning. A house system provides effective incentives and awards and encourages high standards in achievement as well as in behaviour.

6.6 In the 16 lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory in the secondary school. The majority of lessons in the E.Y.F.S. and in the

primary school were good or outstanding. Characteristics of the best teaching observed were:

- effective use of teaching assistants and other support.
- time used effectively and high standards of behaviour insisted upon.
- children able to explain clearly what they learned and relate the lesson to work done previously.
- children appropriately encouraged and challenged.

Where lessons are only satisfactory, time is used ineffectively and the use of English, at all times, between the children, is not insisted upon.

7. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

7.1

- A good personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum has been implemented and the school effectively provides for the development of pupils' attitudes and values. Pupils are rewarded with house points when they demonstrate good behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils are encouraged to show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life by participating in fund-raising for several local charities, including a Cerebral Palsy Association.

8. Leadership and Management

8.1 The leadership of the school provides clear educational direction and there is a very positive relationship between the owner, the headteacher, heads of department, key stage co-ordinators and the rest of the staff.

8.2 The headteacher has produced a detailed school development plan which shows a clear commitment to drive the school forward towards further improvements. Middle leaders and class teachers are aware of the school's development priorities and all staff reflect the school aims and policies in their work. For example, an effective strategy is being

implemented in E.Y.F.S. and KS1 to improve writing and to enhance the P.S.H.E. programme.

8.3 Communication with parents and carers is good. The school uses an internal computerised platform, from which they can access information about their child. This includes examination results and homework. Parents can also follow day-to-day activities in the school through social networking sites.

The school has two formal parents' evenings in the year and reports are sent out each term, providing parents and carers with clear information about their children's progress.

9. Conclusion

The British School of Valencia meets the requirements of the U.K. government for British Schools overseas and is recommended for authorisation for six years from pre-nursery to Year 13, for up to 900 pupils.

10. Recommendations for improvement

10.1 Resources

The school should aim to:

- Continue to develop library resources and as the secondary school expands, a library should be made available for this area of the school with non-fiction books related to specialist subjects studied, as well as fiction books.
- Install a fume cupboard and ensure all cabinets in the laboratories are securely locked.

10.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The school should aim to:

- Reinforce pupils' achievements by exhibiting more pupils' work in the secondary school.
- Update the marking policy and make sure it is followed by all classes throughout the school to make it more effective.
- Insist upon the use of English in all lessons.

10.3 Staffing

The school should aim to:

- Employ more British-trained staff in all areas of the school so that a British style of teaching and learning is ensured.

10.4 Curriculum

The school should aim to:

- Rectify the inconsistencies in time allocation across subjects, especially in Key Stage 3.