



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

**British International
School**

**Al Khobar
Saudi Arabia**

Date
Inspection number

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1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education (DfE) has put in place a voluntary scheme for the inspection of British schools overseas (BSO), whereby schools are inspected against a common set of standards that BSO can choose to adopt.

The inspection and this report follow the 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; the school's complaints procedures; and leadership and management. If appropriate, there is a separate section on the quality of boarding provision. 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 DfE on the extent to which schools meet the standards for BSO.

During the inspection visit, 46 lesson observations took place across all subjects and year groups. 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 pupils. The inspection took place over three days.

The lead inspector was Nan McKeown. The team members were Wendy King and Kevin Maddocks.

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 relevant standards are:

Part 1 – ‘2(2)(d)(ii) - encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation as set out in the Equality Act 2010;’

and

Part 2 – ‘5(b)(vi) - encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 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

The British International School, Al Khobar (BISAK) provides an environment where pupils thrive, due to the positive commitment of staff to develop them as confident, compassionate learners. The values of *Belief, Internationalism, Success, Aspiration* and *Knowledge* are central to school life. The high quality of the many additional learning experiences provided, is commendable. Behaviour is excellent. The leadership and management of the school are outstanding in all respects. BISAK is highly respected within the community. A sense of care permeates the school.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including:

- The school vision is central to the leadership's focus
- The values of the school are embedded in daily practice
- Safeguarding systems are robust and have the highest priority
- Pupils thrive in a safe environment
- A culture of trust has been driven by the principal and senior leaders
- Leadership opportunities are developed at every level
- A committed governing body supports the school in all aspects of its operations
- Staff self-development is encouraged and supported through a varied and extensive Continual Professional Development (CPD) program
- The school is committed to ensuring the wellbeing of staff and pupils
- Strong teacher subject knowledge
- Robust quality assurance processes are in place
- The day to day running of the school is smooth, calm and highly efficient
- Pupils are extremely well behaved and have excellent manners
- Relationships between all staff members, pupils and parents are built on mutual respect
- The school keeps parents well informed on the progress of their children
- Improved data systems are having a profound impact on standards
- There are consistent long- and short-term plans in place, leading to high quality teaching and learning
- The sense of community and pride all stakeholders have for the school

3.2 Points for improvement

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

1. Continue to develop and share good practice across the school.
2. Provide further opportunities for pupils, particularly in the senior school, to lead and be active in their own learning.

4. The context of the school

Full name of School	British International School, Al Khobar				
Address	3909 As Sadafah District, Al Khobar, 34215-8640 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia				
Telephone Number/s	+966 13 831 7300				
Website Address	www.bisak.org				
Key Email Address	stephenviner@bisak.org				
Headteacher/ Principal	Mr Stephen Viner				
Chair of board/Proprietor	Mr David Valentine				
Age Range	0-18 years				
Total number of pupils	939	Boys	484	Girls	455
Numbers by age	<i>0-2 years</i>	1	<i>12-16 years</i>	278	
	<i>3-5 years</i>	80	<i>17-18 years</i>	92	
	<i>6-11 years</i>	468	<i>18+ years</i>	20	
Total number of part-time children	0				

British International School, Al Khobar (BISAK) is a co-educational international school that provides a British style education for pupils aged 0-18 years. Established in 1977, it is one of the oldest British curriculum schools in Saudi Arabia. In 2019, the school moved from its original site in central Al Khobar to the present campus. The school has extensive facilities and is very well resourced.

The school is licensed under Saudi Arabian Law as a private and non-profit-making school. It is registered as a "Foreign Community School" with the Ministry of Education of Saudi Arabia. It is also registered with the Department for Education in the UK.

BISAK is proud of being multi-national with over 50 nationalities represented. It is held in high regard in the local community as a school that cares. The school vision of "Empower our pupils to become confident, compassionate learners and proactive global citizens prepared to thrive in an ever-changing world" drives all that they do.

4.1 British nature of the school

- The school promotes British values through the school's vision, curriculum and enrichment activities.
- The school embodies the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- English is the medium of instruction for lessons. Communications from the school, including school publications, reports, letters and the website, are in English.
- The school is well resourced with high quality learning materials; the library has an expansive range of British literature.
- Teachers are from the UK or are UK trained and qualified, meeting the UK teaching standards.
- The school has a strong commitment to continuous professional development (CPD).

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

The quality of education provided at BISAK fully meets the standards for BSO and is outstanding.

5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding.

In the prep school the revised curriculum, implemented in August 2024, is cohesive, progressive and challenging. Previously each year group worked independently resulting in disjointed learning. This lack of progression has now been eliminated. In the design stage, teachers work across year groups. The long-term curriculum plan ensures that lessons build upon previous knowledge and lead into next steps. It allows for challenge for more able pupils and supports those who find aspects of learning challenging.

The curriculum is responsive to the British nature of the school and its international nature. It takes into consideration the different learning needs of the pupils. It is aligned with the age-related expectations of the National Curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework ensuring that it is appropriately challenging. Although in its early days, the revised curriculum is resulting in consistent coverage of content and clear progression in skills across all subject areas.

In the EYFS, pupils follow the framework using the *Development Matters* milestones which builds strong foundations for future learning. There is a strong focus on planned play and continuous provision facilitated through superbly designed, inside and outside learning areas. Pupils are immersed in a language rich environment where they can explore and develop independence.

Throughout the school there is a focus on mathematics and English including the learning of phonics. Alongside this, pupils enjoy the full range of the primary and EYFS programme. Cross-curricular links are made where relevant. Theme days are used to start new topics. During the exciting “space day” observed during the inspection, teachers and pupils dressed up as astronauts. Pupils were excited to ‘discover’ a video of a spaceship landing in their playground overnight, which the teachers had ingeniously planned.

Opportunities for all year groups to take part in trips or to welcome visitors into their classroom enhance the curriculum. During the visit, year 2 were eager to talk about what they had learned on their trip to a restaurant to make pizzas. Year 6 have a

residential Dibba Camp in the UAE. Other trips which enrich learning include the *Numou Centre*, *SciTech* and the *Ithra* museum.

The curriculum offer is augmented by specialist teachers from the EYFS to year 6 in art, music and PE. In response to pupil feedback an extensive range of diverse extra-curricular activities offer further opportunities for all. Clubs include extension activities for more able pupils.

Marking and feedback focusses on the learning objective of the lesson and teachers identify whether this has been met. When necessary, intervention or support is put in place to ensure any gap is filled as soon as possible.

The senior school offers a broad curriculum and aligns with curricula commonly used in the UK. All subject teachers design their scheme of work for each year group with clear details of Learning Objectives, resources and timelines of activities. These schemes have been made available electronically to parents and pupils along with information specific to their lessons. The curriculum is well monitored and reviewed regularly. Teachers consider the needs of all pupils and differentiate their lessons accordingly. When required, heads of year will intervene to ensure appropriate strategies are in place to support pupils in their lessons.

Practical and creative subjects give pupils a variety of experiences in their learning. In Key Stage (KS) 3, drama and dance, cooking and nutrition, art, music and design technology allow pupils to move away from their comfort zone and develop new skills. Themed weeks, such as Anti-Bullying Week, help to support the PSHE curriculum.

In 2023-2024, over 99 after school activities were available to pupils in the senior school. These included activities that cover the arts and sports. Other clubs offered help cement academics, values and higher-level thinking with the Model United Nations being a strong example of this. The curriculum is further enhanced by the opportunity to participate in a range of trips that are linked to the planned curriculum and school values. These were highlighted on wall displays around the buildings and pupils were excited to discuss their experiences.

Processes have been implemented to enable smooth transitions between each key transition point. Year 6 pupils participate in senior school projects and observe activities through the school year. A Transition Week for pupils and an information evening for parents ensures that they are well prepared and informed.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding.

Lessons observed during the inspection were good with a significant number being outstanding. The impact of the revised curriculum from year 1 to year 6 is apparent in the progression noted between year groups, the standards achieved by pupils and the engagement in lessons.

From the EYFS to year 6 pupils show an impressive ability to work independently, in pairs and groups. They persevere when things are challenging. Pupils communicate well with each other and the use of talk partners is embedded.

Varied teaching approaches are used across the school to promote progress and maintain engagement. Practical tasks and hands on learning opportunities ensure pupils are active participants in their learning. In upper prep pupils planned and carried out a fair test to explore which products dissolve in water stimulating a discussion about whether the heat of the water is a factor. Teachers use artifacts to create curiosity and deepen understanding. An example of this was seen in a lesson where pupils were given the opportunity to handle a set of teeth when learning about mammals and food sources. In a year 2 class pupils were stimulated to learn about the Great Fire of London when introduced to burned bread and fire buckets.

Increasingly, ICT is being integrated into the curriculum to facilitate collaboration and to develop technical skills alongside subject specific skills and knowledge. In the best lessons teachers intervened, reframed, supported and challenged with notable impact.

The school has a strong focus on metacognition and pupils were observed looking back in their books and linking the current lesson to prior learning. Pupils in the EYFS used the ambitious language vocabulary to talk about the learning strategy they were using. Teachers are confident to break knowledge and skill acquisition into smaller steps. For example, in a lesson on performance poetry the teacher skilfully ensured the pupils gradually consolidated and extended their ability to perform 'The Jabberwocky'.

The teaching of vocabulary is embedded into lessons with teachers identifying key technical vocabulary and teaching it explicitly. Subject specific words are consistently reinforced to aid understanding and recall and there is an expectation that pupils use them correctly. In one lesson, the teacher was seen talking to pupils about determiners and it was clear that they knew what these were. Correct use of technical vocabulary was observed in all subjects.

Learning assistants effectively deliver the targeted and well-planned intervention programme as well as working alongside pupils in class. The school has prioritised their professional development providing training in, for example, 'what to do when a child says I don't know', 'scaffolding' and 'making thinking visible.' It is clear that this is having an impact on their work. In one lesson a learning assistant was observed breaking the task into smaller steps and in another, supporting a pupil to find a way to solve a challenging problem.

Classroom management is highly effective. Lessons are well paced. Electronic boards are used to display expectations for work and the time in which pupils should complete a task. Teachers continually monitored pupils as they work, offering support and guidance when needed.

In the best lessons, teachers allow the pupils to think independently allowing them to lead discussion and explore their ideas. In such examples, pupils were encouraged to expand on their initial answers, think carefully through problems independently and work through their ideas in groups before presenting them to the class.

Pupils are encouraged to be creative and widen their experiences. In a year 7 dance lesson all pupils were actively involved in learning and practicing the choreography for two songs. The teacher motivated pupils of all abilities and they, in turn responded well to the given instructions. The pupils performed exceptionally well in their routines.

Learning environments are well designed with attractive and relevant wall displays. These included pupils work that emphasised the high standards achieved. Other displays included important information that teachers could refer to during lessons to assist as pupils learned specific concepts.

The marking of pupils' work is consistent. 'Book Looks' take place through the year to ensure that marking is regular and in line with the school's policies. There is a clear and robust framework in place to assess pupils' ongoing work. Teachers show a sound understanding of the abilities, needs and prior attainment of the pupils.

5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

The standards achieved by pupils is outstanding.

The leadership team in the prep school is acutely aware of all progress and attainment data. Since September this has been significantly enhanced through the introduction of *DCPro* which is already having a profound impact on the data available and the ease with which it can be analysed. Half termly data drops in reading, writing and mathematics followed by subsequent analysis ensure that progress and attainment are rigorously tracked from a year group, subject, class and individual pupil perspective. From year 2 the school uses standardised tests in reading and mathematics and moderated tasks in writing to ensure the data is reliable. In the EYFS observations against all the areas of learning are regularly moderated ensuring data effectiveness. There is evidence to show that current attainment, including in those areas that showed a decline or were below UK averages at the end of the last academic year, is on track to be well above UK expectations in 2025. This reflects the aspirations leaders have for the school.

At the end of the EYFS, Good Level of Development (GLD) outcomes are consistently above UK averages. Pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes towards their learning. They enjoy their experiences, participate with confidence and persevere.

This year the school has introduced a baseline assessment enabling them to track the impact of the phase and to effectively target teaching from the early days of school. In 2024 phonics results at the end of year 1 showed a decline. Leaders have been responsive to this and all but one of these children have now reached the expected standard in year 2. Staff training in Read Write Inc and an enhanced oversight of teaching have been effective, and current assessments indicate that standards in phonics will be above those in the UK at the end of the academic year.

In 2024, attainment at the end of KS1 was in line with UK averages except in mathematics where it was above. Current analysis shows that attainment is on track to be well above the UK in all areas in 2025. In the same period, attainment in KS2 was well above that in the UK in reading and mathematics. Writing outcomes were below. Plans to improve writing across the school are already having an impact with attainment in all year groups on track to be well above UK averages at the end of the year.

Phase leaders have a strong understanding of data and use it effectively to plan provision in their phase. It forms the basis of pupil progress meetings and phase leaders report that conversations with teachers about the individual needs of children in their class are highly focussed. Increasingly this is having an impact on daily adaptive teaching which is something the school continues to prioritise and

improve. Interventions are well planned focussing on 'keeping up' not 'catching up' as well as extension for the more able. They are finely targeted, and time bound supported by half termly reviews. They are also adapted in response to formative assessment and individual need.

Learning assistants lead interventions effectively and the school ensures that there is time for them to work with teachers to plan, monitor and evaluate. They contribute greatly to the provision of learning experiences.

In the senior school, teachers have a good understanding of pupils' starting points, using data taken from CAT4 as a baseline. Teachers set high expectations for pupils' academic attainment. Data tracking is used to monitor the progress of pupils throughout their time in the senior school. This has led to successful interventions designed to support learning and enhance pupil progress. Departments have their own internal tracking to support curriculum and lesson planning.

Progress of pupils in most subjects is outstanding with evidence of high achievement in examinations and academic competitions. Pupils are aware of their targets and what is required to achieve them. In KS4 and KS5, small class sizes have allowed teachers to meet the needs of all learners.

A decrease in GCSE and the top AS level results has been identified by the school and strategies to address this have been implemented. Mock Exams now take place one month earlier to allow more time for any intervention strategies required for pupils. A focused approach to higher attainers has been implemented to help pupils achieve their potential. In addition, each year group now has dedicated leaders that help to monitor pupil performance and identify pupils that require interventions.

The school has identified a need to offer vocational qualifications to their pupils. From 2025 IBTEC qualifications will be planned for in both KS4 and KS5. A dedicated space for these courses is currently in development. It underlines the school's commitment to providing a curriculum that meets the needs of all learners in an ever-changing world.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils meets the BSO standard and is outstanding.

Respectful relationships are evident between all stakeholders and are a cornerstone of the school ethos. This results in pupils who are confident, independent, and empathetic with a sense of responsibility to those around them.

PSHE is taught across the school through a well-planned curriculum which has a notable impact on children's cultural and social understanding and moral values. The deputy headteachers of both phases maintain an overview of teaching to ensure that it complies with the norms of the country.

Conduct and learning behaviour are excellent including at those times when pupils are not directly supervised. All pupils show a commitment to the BISAK values and there is a palpable expectation that everyone adheres to these. Positive behaviour and learning are consistently recognised through feedback and anything exceptional is awarded BISAK or achievement points. Celebration also takes place using certificates, assemblies and 'Pupil of the Month'. The school has clear pathways for any behaviour that does not meet the high expectations. Interestingly neither prep nor senior pupils are aware of these, reflecting the fact that such behaviour is rare. There is a clear sense from pupils in both schools that when incidences do happen, they are effectively dealt with effectively.

Learning behaviour is excellent. Pupils value their education and work hard. They appreciate the efforts made by staff to make the lessons interesting and challenging and feel well supported. They know there is always someone they can talk to if they find an aspect of learning difficult.

Pupils feel safe at school. They say that everyone fits in, is kind and that they all look out for each other. They believe the staff care for them and they know who to talk to if there is anything worrying them. Bullying is rare. Breaktimes are harmonious and there is a wide range of play equipment, overseen by the play leaders, which supports purposeful play. Supervision levels are appropriate, and staff maintain an overview of the area.

Pupils appreciate the diversity of the school, recognising that the exposure to different cultures help them develop an open-minded outlook. Opportunities to reflect on, teach about and celebrate the diversity of the school are included through the curriculum and school events. Pupils talk about where people are the same in their school and where they are different. One prep school pupil commented that although everyone has different views, different ways of doing things and come from different countries 'we all have the same blood'. A senior school pupil said that everyone has the same drive but different approaches to how

they do things. Cultural understanding is further developed through the celebration of national and international events such as Saudi National Day, Poppy Day, Remembrance Day and International Day. Local holidays and traditions are recognised.

All staff know the pupils extremely well and this, combined with effective pastoral systems, ensures that any vulnerable pupil is identified and excellent support put into place. Wellbeing surveys are effectively analysed and any individual concern noted with action agreed and monitored. Strong support is offered by the pastoral support teacher when needed. Changes are made in response to any whole school issues. For example, upgrades have been made to the KS3 and 4 outside areas in response to an interrogation of the data relating to the enjoyment of breaktimes. A university fair was held in February which provided career advice to all senior school pupils. Visits to local universities are also arranged. All pupils have access to *Unifrog* platform. Intensive targeted support and career guidance is offered to the Sixth Form to ensure they are fully prepared for the next stage for their education.

There are many ways that pupils can take on leadership roles and contribute to the life of the school and the community. Leadership opportunities include librarians, house captains, play leaders, the pupil leadership team, pupil council, prefects and head boy and head girl. Through elections for some of these roles, pupils learn about democracy and are able to reflect on the importance of this. A creative approach to encourage volunteering is seen in the adverts in Sixth Form common room with pupils applying for jobs identified by teachers. Regular opportunities exist for pupil led initiatives to raise money for charities such as 'Save the Children' and 'Children Back in School'. They have raised funds to purchase resources for another club, the leavers event and 'Grow 10 SAR.' Pupil voice is strong, and they are able to influence the provision in the school. For example, pupils helped review the extra-curricular programme to evaluate the impact of the diverse range on offer. The new house logos were designed by pupils, and they helped mould curriculum choices in the revised prep school curriculum. In the senior school some departments are using pupil voice to evaluate the impact of their work.

Safe use of ICT is well taught, and pupils know who to talk to if something concerns them. Impressively, no pupil in the focus group had experienced any issues with social media use in school.

Attendance at the school is good with an average daily attendance of 95% during the inspection period. This reflects the importance that pupils attach to their education and the support of parents. The recently revised attendance systems, consistently used across the senior and prep schools, ensure that attendance concerns are immediately identified and followed up.

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

The provision for the welfare, health and safety at BISA is outstanding.

A caring approach to pupils and their wellbeing is a key priority for all staff. A clear and detailed Health and Safety policy has been implemented and is effective in practice. Local legislation is adhered to, and the school adopts UK regulations where possible.

Pupils are well supervised throughout the day from drop off until their departure. Staff are fully trained in safeguarding and understand the procedures and their responsibility in keeping children safe at school. TES Develop (Educare) courses are used by staff to keep up to date with current practice and regulations. All training is registered by the human resources (HR) team. A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) oversees a team with 7 deputy DSLs. Staff, pupils and visitors are made aware of their responsibilities. Posters are visible through the school to reinforce this. Pupils know who they can go to if they have a worry or problem.

A teacher with specific qualifications to help pupils with pastoral needs is available. A comfortable room has been designed as a space where pupils can meet with her. In addition, heads of phases/years and form tutors overview the pastoral needs of their pupils.

The school environment helps to foster good relationships through a wealth of creative and recreational spaces. These have been carefully designed with pupil safety and wellbeing in mind. Celebration and pride of pupils' successes are emphasised through high quality displays and presentations, contributing to a sense of positive wellbeing.

Risk assessments ensure that due consideration is given to all trips and activities. The school is well maintained by a facilities management team (FMT) and cleaners with systems in place to record and log any maintenance needs.

Fire systems in the school have been recently improved. Fire drills take place termly with assembly points, fire routes and procedures clearly visible around the school. Lockdown drills are practiced, and pupils know what to do in the event of the alarm being raised.

The qualified nurses are well respected by pupils. The medical facilities are clean and well equipped. An additional 62 staff members have received first aid training, provided by a local hospital.

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

The suitability of the proprietor and staff meets the standard for BSO. It is outstanding in its quality.

A single central register (SCR) is kept of all staff in the school. This system holds records of all teaching staff, supply staff and governors.

Staff recruitment procedures are detailed and robust. They fully meet the requirements of safer recruitment. The human resources department is diligent in ensuring staff files are comprehensive and kept up to date. Detailed checks are made including identity, medical fitness, right to work in the host country and qualifications. Police checks are conducted through the relevant system of the country where the applicant has lived and worked. They comply with all local regulations. Staff who have been at BISA for more than 3 years undergo further checks.

To ensure the effective transition of staff, the school has a streamlined supportive onboarding process. Staff undergo an induction process when joining to ensure they are fully familiar with the schools' routines and policies prior to commencing teaching. They also undergo mandatory safeguarding training. Similarly, when staff leave the school, the off-boarding process supports them fully.

Teaching staff have qualifications appropriate to their role and many staff have further academic or teaching qualifications. Well-coordinated and individualised professional development is in place to ensure that standards within the school are maintained to the highest level.

The chair of the governing body has checks to ensure their right to work in the country and be on the school premises. He further ensures that other members of the body are similarly checked. Vetting is carried out by the British Embassy, Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Education. Governors have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They take a full and active part in all aspects of the schools' management. The Governing Body has a positive impact on the running of the school.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation of the school are outstanding.

Pupils have access to high quality facilities. The indoor and outdoor spaces are well used across all divisions of the school to enhance learning. The learning environments are generous in size, with the classrooms benefitting from abundant natural light. The library areas are large and inviting. Most EYFS and prep school classes have direct access to extensive outdoor play areas. There is a significant amount of shaded space outdoors including areas where pupils can participate in physical activities.

The buildings are well maintained with key staff arriving early each day to ensure site readiness. All facilities are regularly checked and meet the expected health and safety standards. Any faults are logged through a computer aided facility management system and rectified swiftly. The bursar deals directly with any serious safety concerns that are raised.

Security is excellent with access to the site and movement within the buildings monitored. Visitors are required to sign in through an electronic system and are provided with an identification badge. They are accompanied for the duration of their time in the school.

Windows on the first and second floors have been modified by the FMT to ensure that they do not fully open and are safe. Electric keypads have been fitted to some doors to further bolster security.

Although many of the security and FMT are hired through an external provider, they have been welcomed into the BISAK team. They are well appreciated and an example of the impact of the schools' values.

A wealth of specialist facilities has been developed, and these are used exceptionally well for lessons and activities. The food technology room, music rooms, dance studio, sports hall, auditorium, design and technology room, computing and STEM centres are of a high standard. A cafe is available for senior school pupils to purchase snacks and drinks with water coolers provided for all pupils in convenient locations. Toilets are placed on each corridor within the buildings, with staff and pupil toilets clearly signposted. Lighting and air-conditioning throughout the school are appropriate.

It is a credit to the school that they continue to plan for additional investment to further extend facilities.

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 is outstanding.

Relationships and partnerships with parents are a strength. All staff, including senior staff, are highly visible and parents have confidence in them and in the effectiveness of communication. Parents spoken to were extremely positive about all aspects of school life and all that that BISAK offers.

The website is easy to navigate and clearly frames the philosophy and aims of the school. It contains up to date information for current and prospective parents including relevant school policies, parent handbooks and advice about the admissions process. It is clearly divided into the different areas of the school enabling ease of access. Parents can also find information about their child's attendance, timetable or reports via the Engage portal. Regular headteacher letters provide additional opportunities for communication as well as celebrating and sharing success. Information pertinent to a class, subject or phase is provided as appropriate.

Parents overwhelmingly feel their child is safe at school. One parent said her child felt 'super-safe' while another reflected that his child was the safest he had been in any school. Children at the very early stage of English acquisition or who have experienced different educational systems can join the school part way through a year. Their parents value the care and flexibility shown by the teachers who ensure they settle quickly and soon become part of the school community.

Parents appreciate the sense of care and kindness in the school. Teachers are easily accessible and available at the beginning and end of the day for informal chats. Any emails are responded to quickly and meetings are arranged if needed. The sense of personal support is palpable, and parents welcome the individual targeted help for and communication about their child. For example, one family spoke in glowing terms about the bespoke provision for their child with dyslexia and another about how she and her child were supported with separation anxiety.

Interim reports are provided in term 1 and term 2 with information about achievement in all subject areas. A full report is issued in term 3 which includes an overview of social and emotional development. The termly reports are followed by parent meetings which generally take place online and provide the opportunity to discuss the report in greater detail. Parents are confident that any issues that arise during the term will be discussed with them outside of the normal reporting cycle. They feel well informed about their child's progress. Parents appreciate the focus on academic standards alongside the priority the school places on the development of the whole child. They recognise the range and diversity of the extra-curricular and enhancement opportunities.

Parents are invited in regularly to look at their children's books and to watch assemblies and school performances. The use of *Tapestry* in EYFS allows parents to load photos of their child at home and share fun learning experiences such as reading in unusual places. Parents and carers are included in stay and play in EYFS and join fun activities such as 'sew a mouse', in lower prep.

The school currently runs coffee mornings and regular parent information sessions on subjects such as wellbeing, the curriculum, options for GCSE and A Levels or how to revise. Parents greatly appreciate the school's proactive approach. BISAK regularly reviews how they keep parents informed about school life and continually seek ways to include them even further in their child's education.

11. *Standard 7*

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school's procedure for handling complaints meets the standard for BSO. It is comprehensive and demonstrates the schools' commitment to fairness and equality.

The formal complaints policy is easily accessible to parents. It is transparent, open and effective. It considers local laws and regulations.

The procedure for dealing with parental concerns is clearly set out in a systematic manner. The school makes it clear it will not deal with anonymous complaints, except for those related to child protection or where issues of safeguarding are identified. Established time limits for handling a complaint at every stage, ensures they are handled as swiftly as possible. The school respects confidentiality and seeks always to ensure full and fair consideration of all concerns.

The school aims to find a resolution to problems by informal means wherever possible. Parents are encouraged to speak directly to teachers or leaders in the first instance, either at start of day or close. Senior leaders can also be spoken to while supervising school arrivals and departures.

Where a complaint demands a more formal investigation, a letter must be sent to the principal stating the grounds for the complaint in a concise way. If the complaint is regarding the principal, the letter can be sent directly to the chair of the governing body.

If the complaint is escalated to the chair of governors at this point, a sub-committee will be set up, comprising a minimum of three governors. An investigation will be conducted, and the parents kept informed of progress. If a meeting is required, there is provision for both the complainant, and the person named in the complaint to be accompanied by another person. The complaints sub-committee will send a written response within 10 working days. If still not satisfied, parents have the right of appeal, which would involve a meeting with the appeals sub-committee. The decision of the appeals subcommittee is final.

The school keeps records of all complaints for three years after the date of the last correspondence of the issue. These records are kept confidentially and are not part of pupil records. Records checked show there have been no serious complaints and that any issues have been resolved appropriately. Parental feedback indicates a high degree of satisfaction when issues are raised.

12. *Standard 8* Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding and a strength of the school.

The school's vision, values and strategic direction is shaped by an experienced, inspirational principal and executive leadership team (ELT). The ELT comprises the principal (CEO), the bursar, the head of the preparatory school and the head of the senior school and sixth form.

School improvement plans (SIPs) are meticulously designed. The prep school and senior school plans underpin the whole school plan. Subject specific plans also ensure a continual focus on improvement. The cycle of school self-review is well established. BISA is a school that knows itself well. Communication across the school is strong.

Distributed leadership and succession planning is evident. A culture of trust and mutual respect has been developed and embedded in practice. Leaders at all levels have autonomy to develop their departments. Internal growth is encouraged. Internal promotions have bolstered the ELT. The coaching model of observations has led to a non-threatening system of support where teachers' skills are continually being developed. This is impacting positively on standards of teaching. Retention is high.

The leadership is rightfully proud of the recent continual professional development (CPD) programs. The coaching, mentoring, external and internal CPD has had a positive impact on staff personal growth and school development. External providers have included training on metacognition.

Performance management guides and supports teaching staff through 3 targets: whole school, personal and subject specific. Learning assistants in the prep school benefit from the program of focussed training which is overseen by the assistant head of the prep school and a senior teacher.

Parents and pupils trust that the school leadership teams support them and are working in their interest. Consequently, relationships throughout school are excellent.

The school operations are extremely effective. The bursar is highly efficient and focussed on enabling the smooth daily running of the school and its' extensive range of operating systems. Financial planning is forward thinking with plans in place for budgeting to 2030.

The governing body hold all to account. The support and collaboration as a critical friend strengthen the school's capacity to continue to develop and grow.