



SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE

BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS (BSO) INSPECTION REPORT FOR THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF BARCELONA

The key inspection judgements for this school are:

The quality of education	Good	2
Pupils' personal development	Outstanding	1
Safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety	Outstanding	1
Leadership, management and governance	Good	2
Effectiveness of the Early Years' provision	Good	2

Compliance with the British Schools Overseas Standards:

The school meets the standards required of British schools overseas (BSO).

Date of inspection: 8 – 10 March 2016

SECTION A: SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

The British School of Barcelona provides a good quality of education and has made some significant improvements since its last inspection. The personal development of students and the provision for their welfare, health and safety are outstanding. The school is intrinsically British in nature. It balances sympathetically the needs of the Spanish and Catalan requirements and the many different nationalities of students. Teaching, including the use of assessment, is good with a small amount that needs improvement. Where this happens, very strong support and guidance for both teachers and students ensures that all continue to make consistent progress. The consistency of good teaching over time is the reason why all students make outstanding progress and achievement. This is especially the case for those with special educational needs. Students in the sixth form make consistently outstanding progress. There is a good curriculum which provides a wide range of learning experiences but the use of technology in all subjects is underdeveloped. The two periods per week devoted to 'societies' give students extensive opportunities to participate in a wide range of different activities in subjects they do not normally study. The executive headteacher provides an experienced and very strong lead to the work of the school. He is ably supported by a good senior and middle management team and a staff that share his vision and ambition. This shared sense of purpose is what is driving the school forward and gives it a strong capacity for further improvement. Together, the senior managers have ensured that the British schools overseas (BSO) standards are met. They have a realistic evaluation of the school's performance and are well aware of the need to address the issues raised by this inspection concerning curriculum development, technology and the smooth transition for pupils between primary and secondary departments.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

To secure further improvement, the proprietor should:

- improve technology resources and improve the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons, so that students can develop and use their skills for research, enquiry and recording in all subjects;
- consider introducing a combined science double award course into Key Stage 4 alongside the current triple science provision to enable all students to have more choice in their final scientific qualifications; and
- enhance the transition for students between the primary and secondary phases.

SECTION B: INFORMATION

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION:

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service (SIS) in accordance with the inspection framework agreed by SIS and the Department for Education (DfE) in England for the inspection of British schools overseas.

In reaching their judgements, the inspectors observed lessons, had meetings with senior leaders, many other staff, the proprietor and students. They scrutinised documentation provided by the school including schemes of work, policies and handbooks and considered questionnaires from parents and from students in Years 7 – 11. Inspectors observed students during break and lunchtimes and when they entered and left the school.

The inspectors were:

Reporting Inspector:	Mr David Collard
Team inspectors:	Mr Ted Cohn Dr Christine Jones Mrs Linda Kelsey Mrs Eileen McAndrew Mr Michael Wickham

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL:

The British School of Barcelona is a school for pupils aged 3-19. It was founded in 1958 in Castelldefels, south of the city under the name of The Anglo-American School. The school moved to its present site in 1999, when the name was changed to The British School of Barcelona to reflect the type of education offered. The school is a founding member of the National Association of British Schools in Spain (NABSS).

In 2008 the school was bought by Cognita - a UK-based, group of UK and international schools. Since then the school has expanded in both pupil numbers and facilities. The school is divided into distinct, specifically designed buildings for Early Years, primary and secondary. The school also has specialist sports and theatre facilities.

Since its last inspection, in May 2011 the school has had three headteachers. The current Executive Headteacher officially took up post in January 2016. There are 1053 students, evenly divided between boys and girls, and including 112 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and 110 in the sixth form. Children from 46 different nationalities attend the school, of whom the highest proportion of students are Spanish nationals. 833 students speak English as an additional language. The school is non-selective: 145 students are identified as having learning needs and 52 are regarded as able, gifted or talented.

SECTION C: THE INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

1. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

Pupils' learning and achievement

Pupils learn outstandingly well at all stages of the school and make consistently high levels of progress. They develop good learning habits which gives non-English speakers a great deal of support in developing their English language skills. Students with special educational needs are provided with extra, consistent and well-founded support enabling them to make at least good and often outstanding progress.

In Early Years, children make very good progress. This continues into Key Stage 1 and 2. In Key Stage 3, the school's initial baseline test shows that the pupils come from the full ability range and progress is again very good, especially in English. The good outcomes achieved are used as a basis for setting challenging targets for Key Stage 4. The International General Certificate of Secondary Education ((I)GCSE) results at the end of Key Stage 4 are excellent and almost all students gained 5 GCSE grades A*- C including English and mathematics in 2015. This is well above the average found in Britain and for this examination board. Over half of all the (I)GCSE grades gained were at the higher A/A* grades. In the sixth form, students achieve well although progress at 'A2' is not as marked as at AS. This is largely due to the impact of students having already achieved the results they need for further study and losing some impetus for further study.

In many lessons students relish the challenging work, are highly motivated and work at a demanding pace, ensuring learning progresses rapidly. This has the greatest impact on learning where sufficient thinking time is allowed by teachers for a response. Students have high expectations of what they wish to achieve. There are a number of highly gifted students, such as in art and music, who are ably supported with extension activities or ideas for their wider study. All students are very willing to learn from each other, for example in group work sessions in English where they listen closely to each other and undertake serious discussions. Students use resources very well to support their learning and development of skills in many areas such as those required in the sixth form for practical science sessions. This is due to the excellent knowledge, skills and understanding they have gained in literacy and mathematical understanding through their time at the school. They treat each other with respect creating a relaxed and calm atmosphere where learning thrives.

The quality of teaching and assessment

Teaching and assessment are good. They are consistently good in the Early Years, in the primary school and at Key Stage 3. In the secondary school, teaching is particularly strong in the sixth form. The consistency of good teaching over time is the reason why all students make outstanding progress and achievement. Teaching is not outstanding overall because a small number of lessons in each key stage require improvement. Where this happens leaders intervene to support teachers and, in some cases, provide extra lessons or

activities to ensure that students catch up. Planning in the lessons is thorough following a common format. Learning objectives are clearly identified so everybody is clear about what is expected. Individual lesson planning pays attention to elements within the School Development Plan such as extended writing.

The development of language rightly has a high priority in the Early Years and the primary school. This focus remains a strong feature in the secondary school where the specialist and technical vocabulary of individual subjects is consistently used. Students acquire high levels of oral and written competence in English.

The depth of teachers' subject knowledge, questioning and expectations are a significant strength. The best lessons are characterised by a palpable enthusiasm, engaging pupils in learning and ensuring students of all abilities, but especially those with special educational needs, make excellent progress. For example, in a science lesson for older pupils on evolution, good modelling of concepts strongly supported the learning.

Teachers enjoy teaching and relationships are outstanding. They plan opportunities for students to work collaboratively in pairs and groups contributing significantly to their own and each other's learning. Work seen in English, science and history gave pupils the responsibility for leading lessons, which they undertook with impressive maturity. They developed themes and identified areas for discussion and exploration.

The innovative approach of societies to enrich learning opportunities is supported by good quality teaching and particularly ensures those with specific talents are extended. Projects are varied and imaginative with opportunities to develop new understanding and skills in areas as diverse as a large number of sports, yoga, the making of jewellery, the brief history of animation, law, reading and science, drama, various genres of dance and music making, aero modelling, chess, Duke of Edinburgh awards, cookery and meditation. It encourages students to lead, think and direct activities working towards a tangible outcome.

Assessment is good and has improved significantly across the school over the last two years. The 'Pupil Asset' and Raising Achievement Profile (RAP) programs provide an effective tracking system for individual and group progress. Assessment is embedded in the Early Years and throughout the primary school, where a useful range of standardised tests are carried out, enabling teachers to compare the progress of their pupils with those in Britain. Regular termly assessments are conducted informatively in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In the secondary school assessment provides helpful predictors of pupils' attainment at GCSE and A level. Tests in all subjects are routinely undertaken, including twice yearly formal internal examinations. Learning targets are drawn from assessment results and set by students in consultation with subject teachers. Assessment in lessons is generally well established, though occasionally opportunities are missed to move learning forward. The best diagnostic and developmental marking is seen in Primary, English, the humanities and music. As a result of peer marking, pupils show a keen understanding of the criteria against which work is assessed.

The quality of the curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is good. There is a good balance of linguistic, mathematical, aesthetic and creative areas of experience. The primary school curriculum has a strong emphasis on the development of language and mathematical skills but also provides good learning opportunities in most other subject areas. Creative work and food technology add interesting opportunities for students to explore and investigate. The development of previously acquired skills in information and communication technology (ICT) is not strong as pupils are not getting enough opportunities to integrate and use it as a tool in the subjects they study.

In the secondary school, the curriculum is appropriate. In order to meet Spanish and Catalan matriculation requirements students have to follow a humanities course called 'sociales' and the school is considering innovative ways to incorporate this within other (I)GCSE courses. In science, pupils get a broad and balanced experience at Key Stage 3, including working at GCSE level in all the sciences in Year 9. However, at GCSE only about half the pupils take more than one science subject. The limited range of technological provision across the school, apart from skills lessons in ICT, restricts students' broader technological development.

Other aspects of the curriculum enhance pupils' educational experiences significantly, such as the learning of Spanish and Catalan. In addition, and notably, the societies programme across the school provides many opportunities to develop new understanding and skills in many diverse areas. The educational experience of pupils is enriched further by various after-school activities and visits and trips that pupils make, many of them enhancing the provision in particular subjects, but also more broadly, such as the one to England. Generally the provision takes good account of the curriculum and accreditation commonly used in English schools, so that pupils could easily re-enter the English school system.

Curricular planning is good. It includes some outstanding features such as the way teachers benefit greatly from the excellent support and guidance they receive about pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs. The learning support team are particularly good at separating the needs for second language students against those with specific learning difficulties. Curricular planning to support transition from GCSE into the sixth form is good. Between the primary and secondary schools transition for subjects is less well developed. The best practice is in English where there is regular and effective liaison between staff which ensures that the move into Year 7 is seamless. This is not as strong in other subjects.

Considerable work has been done on developing personal and social education (PSHEE) through a well-organised programme. Careers education and guidance is well developed in most respects, including the effective use of different forms of work experience after the end of examinations in Year 11.

2. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Students' personal development is outstanding in a school that values everybody. Attendance is broadly in line with UK standards. The youngest children quickly settle to routines and are able to share and collaborate with each other, whatever their background or language. As pupils move through the primary school, they learn to work together and help each other. In many lessons there is a buzz of excitement, when new work is introduced and children almost always settle to work quickly and efficiently. In all lessons, at break times and when moving around the school students behave impeccably. These excellent attitudes to work continue and mature as students move through the secondary school and into the sixth form. They are very well prepared when they leave the school to make the most of their future lives.

Students have a strong sense of right and wrong and willingly express their views and listen to others with great confidence. The international dimension of the school enables students to balance their own cultural views and beliefs with those of others. Both UK nationals and those from other countries understand the fundamentals of British values and how these impact upon the wider world. For example, older students can talk very maturely about the current world migration problems or the present UK referendum on membership of the European Union. Equally, students have a strong understanding of life in Spain. The school enhances the students' strong moral, social and cultural values well through a programme of social education and through informal activities such as form periods and work in different subjects. Their contribution to the wider community is evidenced through their participation in various events such as the local festival where the school has been instrumental in providing a comprehensive music programme.

3. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS' WELFARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY

The school's provision for students' welfare health and safety is outstanding. Since the last inspection leaders have undertaken a thorough review of all procedures. Staff recruitment procedures meet current regulations. These have taken into account the need to balance the expected requirements within the UK with those in relation to Spanish and Catalan law.

Staff have received regular and comprehensive training on all aspects of safeguarding including child protection, e-safety and risk assessments such as on school trips. Day-to-day procedures, such as through designated safeguarding leaders and inclusion support staff, ensure that issues are promptly identified and dealt with. Students say they are confident to approach members of staff if they have personal issues and that their voice will be heard. In more sensitive matters students are aware that, on some occasions, it will be necessary to pass on information to a higher authority and feel comfortable that they will not be discriminated against. Younger pupils and older students can describe the issues connected with social media, and other technology as well as about avoiding radicalisation and know what to do should they have any experience of it. Pupils say that cases of bullying are rare, minor and quickly dealt with.

A small minority of students and parents have some individual concerns such as the healthy choices at lunchtime. The school has recently changed the meal time

facilities and is now monitoring this to ensure it meets the highest expectations for a healthy lifestyle.

Regular fire practices are in line with local requirements and are reviewed effectively when alterations to the buildings take place. The clinic provides students with full medical facilities and the staff liaise closely when, for example, students make regular visits there. This also includes monitoring of absence and lateness to see if any patterns are emerging which might affect the student's performance at school. There is a wide choice of sporting activities both during lessons and outside school hours. These are developed for each age range, are well-attended and enjoyed by many. Risk assessments for these and outside visits are regular and thorough.

4. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management are good. The newly appointed executive headteacher has a very clear, realistic and ambitious plan to improve the school's provision and facilities. He is supported well by the senior and middle leaders who share this common aim. A number of improvements are evident since the last inspection, particularly in the quality of provision for students with special educational needs and in the use of assessment. The school has also reviewed all safeguarding and welfare systems, the management of the premises, and procedures to ensure students are kept safe. There are many examples of best practice. For example, case studies of complaints show that the systems are thoughtful, timely and very well-managed. All these systems conform to those usually seen in the UK and meet BSO standards. Leaders are now rightly implementing a suitably well financed plan to improve the use of technology across subjects and to develop further sporting and other facilities in this ever-growing school.

Leaders use the individual strengths of staff well to bring about improvement and to eliminate the minor variability in teaching quality. This also includes rapid intervention and good support if individual teaching quality is not consistently good. As a result, morale is high and relationships between staff, students, parents and the proprietor are good. The strong performance management and continuing professional development procedures ensure that teachers are fully supported in their teaching methodology. This strong focus on consistency in teaching quality is a key reason why students of every ability and background make outstanding academic and personal progress through the whole school. Transition arrangements are particularly good between the primary and secondary schools within the English department and for those with special educational needs where teachers and support assistants work together on a day-to-day basis. Leaders recognise that systems are not as good within other subjects and are presently devising ways of strengthening these arrangements.

Self-evaluation is realistic, recognising the strengths and those areas which need to develop further. This evaluation is well informed. Staff are expected to help provide the relevant information which is then analysed carefully to produce a manageable whole school action plan. The handbooks of subject departments lay out the achievements and what improvements are needed. These are presented in a format that provides the aims for the improvements, given

timescales, and responsibility for completion. A good example of this is the case for ongoing consideration of a better balance to the Key Stage 4 secondary science curriculum to bring it more in line with that now generally seen in British schools.

Governance

The proprietor has a close working relationship with the school and particularly so with the executive headteacher. The proprietor has ambitious plans to expand the facilities of the school such as through a new sixth form block and upgraded information technology infrastructure. There is a full commitment and funding to ensure the school continues along its successful path. The proprietor has a comprehensive set of company policies and procedures which the school uses. These are enhanced very well by internal school policies aimed at making them more school specific. Since his recent appointment, the new board representative has already made some recommendations for improvement to teaching and learning.

Partnership with parents

Parents generally have a good working relationship with the school. The returned questionnaires to the parents' survey, while low in number, are supportive, although a minority of parents have individual concerns such as the high turnover of teachers, parents' lack of access to teachers and the large class sizes. Leaders are very aware of the concerns and are using innovative ways to alleviate these problems. For instance, while classrooms in the Nursery and Reception classes are small there is good access to the outside and a high ratio of adults to children. The school provides a wide range of information to help parents support their children. This includes regular reporting on academic and personal progress as well as newsletters and a website holding the school's policies, achievements and how to contact the school if they wish to complain. The administrative and inclusion staff work very efficiently with parents and follow up quickly any incidences such as lateness or absence. Where data, analysis or informal discussions with students suggest they are appearing to have personal or learning issues, meetings are quickly arranged with parents and the student to try and resolve these before they become too serious.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS' PROVISION

Provision for Early Years is very effective. Children make a secure start to their education. Teachers know their subject and understand how young children learn. They plan well for continuous imaginative activities set up for them both inside and outside the classroom. These activities promote an interest in learning through investigation, exploration and meaningful play. A strong focus of these activities is the promotion of language development, first through speaking and listening and second through writing and story-telling. Teachers cleverly use the topics to extend the children's language and never miss an opportunity to develop their literacy skills. Assessment procedures are well developed; these enable staff to know children well. Systems for assessing children's abilities follow a continuous cycle of rigorous assessment against the early learning goals. Teachers know exactly how well children are doing at an individual level. The

school accurately identifies children with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented and has programmes to support them in their learning.

Children can work very well in groups. They can run, ride bikes and climb on apparatus. Although language skills are more limited in Nursery, by the time they reach Reception they can speak in English and Spanish, often switching seamlessly between the two. Many can write their name and a few words to form a simple sentence. A few can write several sentences and add numbers to 10. Many know the value of numbers to 20. Most children are performing at similar levels to their peers in the UK by the end of Key Stage 1 in mathematics, but are below these levels in English. ICT is not well used by the children in Early Years and there are too few opportunities for them to start on the path of using technology as an integral part of learning.

The leadership and management ensure that children make good progress. Management systems are thorough and securely embedded. Leaders and managers have a deep and accurate understanding of the setting's strengths and weaknesses. Issues for improvement are correctly identified from this. Performance management and professional development are integral to the improvement in overall provision. An example of this is the recent training for the good continuous provision planned in the Nursery and Reception classes. This has led to a better balance between child-led and teacher-directed activities and has significantly helped improve children's English communication, language and literacy skills.

Children get on very well together. They share resources and work well together. Behaviour is outstanding and there is rarely a cross word or incident of bad behaviour. Children are willing learners. They have good relationships with each other and with the adults who work with them. The classes benefit from a high level of adult support, which enables children to learn how to play and get on well with each other. The classroom environment, including the outside areas, is well used, is safe and well supervised at all times. As in other parts of the school, consideration of the welfare, health and safety of children is outstanding. There are clear routines for children to follow and they understand what is expected of them. There are strict routines for the supervision of children in free flow activities both inside and outside where children make their own choices about the activities. Adults are good at intercepting learning by inviting children to lead their own activities and then prompting them with careful questioning. For example, the introduction of drums into the learning environment immediately attracted children's attention where they quickly got involved.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	The British School of Barcelona		
National Registration Number	137589-6005		
Status of application:	Application for BSO accreditation renewal		
Local ages of compulsory schooling	From:3	To:16	
Age range of pupils:	From: 3	To: 18	
Number on roll (full-time pupils aged over 5):	Boys:462	Girls:478	Total:940
(part-time pupils aged over 5):	Boys:1	Girls: 0	Total:1
Pupils aged under 5 (full-time):	Boys:59	Girls:53	Total:112
Pupils aged under 5 (part-time):	Boys:0	Girls:0	Total:0
Number of pupils registered locally as needing educational/ medical support:	Boys:0	Girls:0	Total:0
Address of school:	Calle Ginesta 26 Castelldefels Barcelona		
Telephone number:	0034 936651584		
Email address:	headteacher@bsb.edu.es primary@bsb.edu.es secondary@bsb.edu.es		
Website address:	www.britishschoolbarcelona.com		
How many sites does the school occupy?	One		
Name of Headteacher:	John Bell		
Direct contact details for Headteacher	Direct Line: 0034 936651584 Email address: headteacher@bsb.edu.es		
Name of Proprietor:	Cognita Schools UK		
Name of Chair of Governors/Trustees:	Chris Jansen		
Date and type of last BSO inspection:	28-30 March 2011		

This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which is approved by the Department for Education in England to provide independent professional inspection of British schools overseas. The report is available from the School Inspection Service website: www.schoolinspectionsevice.co.uk.