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16 November 2015

**Sir Michael Wilshaw**  
Her Majesty's Chief  
Inspector

The Rt Hon. Nicky Morgan MP  
Secretary of State for Education  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

Dear Secretary of State

**Annual report on the quality of the inspection work carried out by the inspectorates of British schools overseas in 2014/15**

I have pleasure in presenting my annual report on the quality of the inspection work carried out by the inspectorates of British schools overseas in 2014/15. The report will be published on Ofsted's website.

Based on this report's findings, it is Ofsted's view that the seven inspectorates should all continue to be approved to inspect British schools overseas.

Yours sincerely



**Sir Michael Wilshaw**  
**Her Majesty's Chief Inspector**

## **Annual report on the quality of the inspection work carried out by the inspectorates of British schools overseas in 2014/15**

### **Introduction**

British schools overseas may choose to be inspected against the British schools overseas standards by one of the seven approved overseas inspectorates.<sup>1</sup> The Department for Education (DfE) commissions Ofsted to monitor and report on the quality of the approved inspectorates' work.

### **The British schools overseas inspectorates' inspection activity for 2014/15**

During the 2014/15 academic year, the seven approved inspectorates conducted 36 inspections across 18 countries.<sup>2</sup>

### **Ofsted's monitoring of the British schools overseas inspectorates in 2014/2015**

Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) reviewed 13 inspection reports.

### **Findings**

- No analysis can be made of the performance of individual overseas inspectorates because the volume of inspections for each inspectorate is low. This report reflects common themes from this year's monitoring of published reports.
- Most reports focused well on pupils' welfare, health and safety, including the schools' arrangements to safeguard children. This is an improvement on the position last year.
- Inspectorates reported on the impact of the curriculum on pupils' personal development and academic outcomes particularly well. Pupils' understanding of life in the United Kingdom featured highly in a few reports as an integral part of all four aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Some reports provided detail of the impact of the schools' work for different groups of pupils such as age range, ability and proficiency in English.
- In almost all reports, unambiguous qualitative statements in the main findings section provided a particularly clear overview of the quality of the school's work, including a succinct synopsis of whether it met the standards and requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> The approved inspectorates are: Cambridge Education, CfBT Education Trust, G2G Education Ltd, Independent Schools Inspectorate, Penta International, School Inspection Service and Tribal Education Ltd. Additionally, the Department for Education approved a partnership between the Dubai School Inspection Bureau and CfBT to conduct inspections of British schools overseas in Dubai.

<sup>2</sup> Cambridge Education 3, CfBT Education Trust 7, G2G Education Ltd 0, Independent Schools Inspectorate 10, Penta International 13, School Inspection Service 2, Tribal Education Ltd 1.

- In a few reports, the quality of the school's work was not clear because the text was contradictory between different sections in the report, and was not a good match to the relevant inspectorate's grade descriptors, where available. Similarly, not all areas for improvement were written clearly and this remains a weakness that Ofsted reported last year.
- The impact of leadership and governance is reported clearly in most reports, particularly to explain why aspects of the school's work are good and not outstanding.
- Most of the inspectorates provided information in the reports that explained how the inspections are carried out. Although the level of detail varied, this is an improvement on the position last year.
- The approved inspectorates are required to publish their inspection reports on their website. Two of the inspectorates do not do this.
- One of the approved inspectorates published its framework and documents on its website. Two inspectorates provide guidance for inspections of British schools overseas in their guidance for inspections of schools in England and these documents were available for Ofsted's monitoring. Not all inspectorates provided HMI with the up-to-date guidance used by their inspectors.

## **Recommendations**

Ofsted recommends that:

- the inspectorates should continue to be approved to inspect British schools overseas
- the inspectorates ensure that there is consistency across different sections of reports, that the text matches the grades awarded and all areas for improvement are written clearly
- each inspectorate publishes its inspection documents on its website and provides up-to-date documents for Ofsted's monitoring.