

British schools overseas report

An evaluation of the third year of inspection in British schools overseas

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361

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Introduction

1. The Standards for British schools overseas came into effect on 1 September 2010. They are modelled closely on The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2010, as amended, used in independent schools in England and thus enable comparisons to be drawn between British schools overseas and their counterparts in England. The inspection of British schools overseas is voluntary, and does not exclude inspection work by other non-approved inspectorates. Schools may choose to be inspected against the Standards by one of the seven approved overseas inspection service providers. These 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. The Department for Education has commissioned Ofsted to monitor and report on the quality of the inspections of British schools overseas.¹
2. This is the third year in which the inspection of British schools overseas has been in operation, and there has been sustained participation in the scheme. The number of British schools overseas inspections since the scheme was introduced is more than 50. This year has seen 21 inspection reports published which is a similar number to the previous year. Six of the seven approved inspection providers have now completed at least one inspection. As part of the agreed monitoring arrangements, Ofsted has monitored on-site, one inspection of a British school overseas which took place in the Middle East. Also, an evidence base review was completed for an inspection of a British school in South America. Both were judged to meet the requirements set out by the Department for Education. The strengths of these inspections were the expertise and experience of inspectors who have significant knowledge of British schools overseas, the range of the evidence gathered to ensure schools are meeting the Standards for British schools overseas and the effective partnerships between the inspection provider, other locally based inspectorates and the schools. The schools involved were positive about their inspection experience. Additionally, Ofsted reviewed two inspection reports. One inspection was conducted for a British school in Spain (in partnership with host country inspectors from the National Association of British Schools in Spain (NABSS)). The second was the first conducted by a newly approved inspection provider, also in Spain. Both reports were judged to meet the requirements. The reports were clearly written and suitably identified the school's strengths and weaknesses. Both reports included appropriate inclusion of the extent to which the school meets the Standards for British schools overseas.

¹ *Protocol between Ofsted and the approved independent overseas inspection providers for British schools overseas* (100254), Ofsted, 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/protocol-between-ofsted-and-approved-independent-overseas-inspection-providers-for-british-schools-o.

Safeguarding arrangements received suitable coverage. Also, the reports explained clearly how well pupils were prepared to enter or re-enter the British educational system if required. Useful points for improvement were highlighted to help the schools' further development.

3. No analysis can be made of the individual performance of each of the independent overseas inspection providers at this stage, since volumes for each remain comparatively low, but the system continues to operate effectively. As the volume of inspections increases, it is Ofsted's intention to publish individual reports for each inspection provider on an annual basis.
4. British schools overseas exist in many forms. Many are members of associations such as the British Schools of the Middle East (BSME), Council of British International Schools (COBIS), The Federation of British International Schools in South East Asia and East Asia (FOBISSEA) and the National Association of British Schools in Spain (NABSS). Some schools were originally set up to provide education for an expatriate community and have a long history of providing a British curriculum; others have been set up more recently to provide a British education for international students or students of the host country whose parents want them to be educated in English. Many schools provide an extensive range of extra curricular activities which make wide use of the international links provided via parents and carers and their employers. British schools overseas vary in size and type. The schools inspected thus far are mainly well established and well known international schools. The inspection outcomes of the schools inspected under the British schools overseas scheme so far show overwhelmingly strong performance with good or outstanding features for most.
5. The map below gives an indication of where the British schools which have already been inspected under the British schools overseas scheme are located.



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6. This map is included in this report with the permission of the Department for Education, and is available on their website here:
www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/bsob0077259/prebsoreports/atoi.
7. All the reports on British schools overseas are available from the Department for Education's website at:
www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/bsoa0077259/school-inspection-reports.