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**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**  
**BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS**  
**INSPECTION REPORT ON**  
**NEW CAIRO BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**Full Name of School** New Cairo British International School

**Address** Road 17, 1st Zone, 3rd Settlement, 5th District, New Cairo,

**Egypt**

Telephone Number +2 02 27582881

**Fax Number** +2 02 27581390

**Email Address** info@ncbis.net

**Principal** Mr Raymond Williams

Chair of Governors Mr Paul Woodward

Age Range 3 to 18

Total Number of Pupils 720

Gender of Pupils Mixed

**3-5: 80 11-18: 319 Numbers by Age**

**5-11: 321**

Number of Day Pupils Total: 720

**Inspection dates 11th to 14th November 2012**

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## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the ISI Schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas. The inspection consists of two parts: a preliminary two-day visit followed by a four-day (team) inspection.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools in England and overseas. As such, ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the relevant Standards for British Schools Overseas and the ISI Framework requirements. ISI is also the agency responsible for the inspection of schools in membership of the Associations of the Independent Schools Council (ISC). Accordingly, ISI inspections of British schools overseas are required to:

- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education and of the care for their welfare;
- provide objective and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and build on their strengths and to identify and remedy any weaknesses;
- inform parents and the wider public of the quality of British schools overseas by placing reports in the public domain;
- report to the DfE the extent to which schools comply with the published Standards for British Schools Overseas;
- where applicable, assure ISC Associations that their member schools maintain the quality of provision expected.

ISI inspection is for the benefit of the pupils in the schools and through public reporting makes the information available to parents, governments and the wider community.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. The major difference is that schools in England must comply with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, which do not apply with legal validity to schools outside the United Kingdom. However, the inspection of overseas schools takes account where possible of compliance with any local requirements and it judges the extent to which the schools comply with the British Government's Standards for British Schools Overseas. The range of these Standards is as follows.

1. The quality of education provided by the school (Curriculum, Teaching and

Assessment). 2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. 3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils. 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff. 5. The premises and accommodation. 6. The provision of information for parents, carers and others. 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints. 8. The quality of provision for boarding. 9. Leadership and management of the school.

**The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:**

**(i) an exhaustive health and safety audit (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its**

**services or other physical features (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting**

**procedures**

**(iv)an in-depth investigation of the school’s compliance with employment or company law.**

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

1.1 New Cairo British International School (NCBIS) was founded in 1978. It operated initially as Heliopolis British International School and changed its name on moving to its present location in the city of New Cairo in 1998. Also at this time, the Shell School amalgamated with NCBIS and a Dutch school was created as a section of the school. This is inspected separately by the Dutch authorities. NCBIS is the sole operating activity of the Heliopolis Society for the Cultural and Social Care of English Speaking Foreigners (The Society), which is an independent, non-profit organisation established to operate and manage the school. Membership is open to all parents with children at NCBIS. The Society elects from within its membership the board of directors, who are thus all parents of pupils at the school. It is they who govern the school and are responsible for determining its strategic direction.

1.2 The school's mission is to be a caring, vibrant and forward-thinking international community, aiming to develop independent, confident and principled individuals able and willing to fulfil the role of valuable members of society. It aims to provide a secure, stimulating environment, promote staff and pupils' self-esteem, foster a culture of understanding and respect for each other, nurture creativity and encourage high standards of achievement. It seeks to enable pupils to fulfil their potential by preparing them intellectually, socially, spiritually, emotionally and physically for life-long learning and adulthood.

1.3 Of the 720 pupils, 386 are boys and 334 girls. The primary school numbers 383 pupils, of whom 78 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for pupils from the ages of three to five. The secondary school numbers 319, of whom 48 are in the sixth form. The Dutch section numbers 18 pupils. Of the 266 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), 40 receive specific school support for their English, as do two of the three pupils, for whom Dutch is an additional language (DAL), for their acquisition of Dutch. The school has identified 93 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 62 receive specialist learning support from the school. Pupils from the transient expatriate community come from over 50 nationalities, but approximately four out of every ten pupils come from the fairly stable community of Egyptian residents, some with dual nationality. The ability profile of the secondary school is slightly above the United Kingdom (UK) average. In the sixth form, it is above. No measures of ability using standardised tests are available for the primary school pupils. It was agreed in conjunction with the head that the ability profile of the primary school was in line with the English national average, albeit with below average starting points in use of English for a large number of pupils.

1.4 Over the last three years, extensive building renovations and extensions have taken place. Changes in senior management have included the appointment of a new principal, who took up his post in August, and a new chair of the board of governors who took up his post in September. The school has been formally recognised as an International Baccalaureat (IB) World School.

1.5 English National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

2.1 The pupils are well educated in line with the school's aims. They make good and sometimes excellent progress in their learning, because of their positive attitudes to study, some inspiring teaching and a challenging curriculum, which is enriched by an excellent range of extra-curricular trips and activities. Results in external examinations have been good in relation to English national norms. Curricular changes have resulted in a greater spirit of inquiry throughout, especially in Years 12 and 13, where pupils relish pursuing individual, independent research. Pupils with EAL and those with SEND make good progress, because of appropriate targeted provision, but able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) resources is variable within the curriculum. Participation in activities is high, albeit sometimes restricted by clashes produced by the timing of popular choices on the same day.

2.2 The school is an inclusive, caring community, in which pupils develop excellent levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. The pupils feel safe and secure, and this allows them to nurture their talents freely and gain in self-esteem. Success is celebrated. The quality of pastoral care is excellent and strongly supports pupils' personal development. Comprehensive procedures safeguard pupils' welfare, health and safety. Medical care is outstanding, with a fully qualified doctor and nurse on site throughout the day. The strengths of British culture pervade the school ethos. Pupils' commitment to service in the community is exceptional. The quality of relationships is excellent. The commitment of most staff to caring for their pupils is exemplary.

2.3 The good quality of governance, leadership and management is a vital factor which enables the pupils to succeed in their achievements and personal development. The new board of directors has not yet agreed its strategic development plan for the school, but leadership is already providing clear educational direction. Links with parents are good and improving. Most parents recognise this and appreciate the warm welcome offered them on site at the beginning of each day. Almost all parents responding to the questionnaire valued the school's promotion of worthwhile attitudes and views. A small minority of parents raised concerns about the provision for pupils with special needs, particularly the gifted and talented and about homework, although, on this, contradictory opinions were expressed. Inspectors found provision for pupils with EAL or SEND to be good, but agree that able pupils are insufficiently challenged and the setting of homework is variable. A small minority were not satisfied with the information they received about their child's progress, but inspectors found the school's procedures appropriate. The pupil questionnaire responses reveal that a minority of pupils felt their views were not listened to, not all teachers treat them equally and some are unfair in their use of rewards and punishments. Inspectors found little evidence to support these claims and agree with those pupils, who told them, in discussion, that the school council was becoming more effective and that the situation with regard to teachers treating them fairly was improving.



**2.(b) Action points**

**(i) Compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas**

(The range of the Standards for British Schools Overseas is given in the Preface)

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Standards for British Schools Overseas.

**(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Agree an educational vision for the school and devise a strategic development plan to implement it.
2. Raise the quality of teaching further by identifying and sharing the outstanding practice observed in several lessons, so that more able pupils are challenged.
3. Make the use of ICT resources an integral feature of pupils' learning.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills**

3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and of their learning, attitudes and skills is good throughout the school.

3.2 In the primary school, the pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims. They exhibit highly competent literacy and numeracy skills and show a strong ability to think independently. They enjoy expressing their high levels of knowledge and understanding, which result from the inquiring, cross-curricular approach to learning promoted by the IB Primary Years' Programme (PYP). Pupils discuss and debate articulately and maturely. They have good ICT skills and show strong creativity in their writing and in art, music and, above all, drama. Their good physical skills result from a high take-up of sporting activities. The EYFS pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well in relation to their starting points and capabilities, making excellent progress in English and mathematics. Pupils' performance in the 'Mathlympics' competition testifies to effective application of strong mathematical skills. They are strong active learners, able to work independently, think critically and be creative. Throughout the primary school, pupils with EAL and those with SEND make rapid progress, thanks to tailored support, both individually and in lessons. The progress of gifted and talented pupils is restricted by a lack of challenging provision. Pupils achieve significant success in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, not least in drama productions.

3.3 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against English national tests, but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be good in relation to English national age-related expectations. Inspection evidence, including lesson observations, pupils' written work and curriculum interviews with them, confirms this judgment. Pupils follow a broad curriculum and most continue into the secondary school for the next stage of their education. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability.

3.4 The pupils are eager, resourceful, confident and articulate learners. They concentrate well, enjoy working independently and co-operate effectively in group work, showing a mature, thoughtful awareness of others.

3.5 In the secondary school, pupils are well educated in line with the school's aims. They achieve well in all aspects of their learning, making highly articulate contributions to class discussion and crafting sophisticated essays and oral presentations, which demonstrate cogent, logical thinking, a keen curiosity and considerable independent research. They exhibit strong creativity in art and drama. Pupils apply their mathematical skills appropriately and display strong and often creative ICT skills, as seen in their use of digital technology in musical compositions. Sixth-form pupils display strong research skills in their IB extended essays and develop a wide range of talents through the IB creativity, action and service (CAS) programme, which stimulates high participation in a wide range of activities. Almost all of last year's leavers secured a place at their first-choice university. Pupils achieve significant success in graded music examinations, the International Award, combining adventure training and service, international football

and swimming tournaments, national representation in fencing and golf, and the Model United Nations (MUN), in which, this year, the school had a pupil in the role of Chair for the first time.

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3.6 The following analysis uses the English national data for the years 2009 to 2011. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE and at A level have been good in relation to the English national average for maintained schools. In 2010 and 2011, results at A level were in line with the English maintained selective schools' average. Nearly half of the grades awarded at GCSE were A\* and A; at A level, almost six out of every ten grades were A\*, A or B. These results, interpreted in the light of inspection evidence of a high proportion of effective teaching and learning, and the pupils' positive attitudes and inquiring minds, particularly in the sixth form, indicate that all pupils, including those with EAL or SEND, make good progress when compared with others of similar ability.

3.7 The pupils demonstrate an exceptional attitude to their learning. Highly motivated, they engage equally well in active learning, lively discussion and reflective thinking. They concentrate and persevere, making strong individual contributions to debate and working well collaboratively.

### **3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)**

3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision, including community links, is good throughout the school.

3.9 The primary curriculum is highly effective in its coverage of all the requisite areas of learning. It is designed to meet the outcomes of the English National Curriculum through the pedagogy and structure of the PYP. It places strong emphasis on promoting a spirit of inquiry in the pupils, embracing the humanities, science, art and personal, social and health education (PSHE) in cross-curricular units, which help stimulate increasing levels of independent, reflective learning. The curriculum offers strong provision in the core skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Arabic, French, music and physical education are taught by specialists. ICT is taught as a discrete element within the timetable. Excellent library facilities complement curricular provision.

3.10 This broad and challenging curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of most pupils. The provision in the EYFS focuses on varied approaches to the core elements of literacy and numeracy. Throughout the school, extremely supportive in-class and individual teaching enables pupils with very little or no English to become articulate within a year or so of entering the school, after which they play a full part in lessons. Similar well-planned, thorough programmes enable pupils with SEND to meet their targets and make good progress. Effective one-to-one support is provided. Specific arrangements to challenge the gifted and talented pupils were observed in mathematics, but such provision is not consistently in place across the curriculum. Fluent-speaker classes are organised in the different languages provided.

3.11 The curriculum is enriched by a wide choice of excellent activities, ranging from sports such as swimming, boys and girls football, hockey and basketball to ballet, chess, drama, art and craft, junior choir and primary science. These make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development.

3.12 The secondary curriculum is rich and varied, exposing pupils to all requisite areas of learning. It broadly follows the English National Curriculum in Years 7 to 11, and pupils sit GCSE or IGCSE examinations. In Years 12 and 13, the IB diploma programme promotes pupils' independent research. Its

creativity, action and service (CAS) component reinforces the school's aims and contributes greatly to pupils'

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personal development. Thinking skills are an integral feature of the course. In Years 7 to 11, ICT is a core element and drama is also offered as a discrete subject. Strong provision is made for modern foreign languages. In order to provide a logical transition for pupils from PYP to the diploma programme, critical thinking skills are taught to Years 7 and 8, whilst Year 9 pupils undertake a personal research project to extend their individual research skills.

3.13 The curriculum is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. Provision for pupils with SEND and EAL is good and improving rapidly. Dedicated EAL classes bring pupils' language skills up to levels necessary for them to access successfully the mainstream curriculum. Individual education plans are in place for pupils with SEND and are systematically reviewed to ensure that they are making good progress towards their targets. Effective provision for the gifted and talented is not yet embedded in classroom strategies. Tutors' teaching of PSHE was observed to be outstanding, reflecting in exemplary fashion the school's caring ethos. Pupils value and use the well-resourced school library.

3.14 The curriculum is supported by a very wide range of excellent extra-curricular trips and activities, including sporting fixtures with other schools in Cairo and further afield. Outstanding provision was observed in drama, ballet, choir, gardening and Indian dance, taught by an Indian pupil to pupils from other cultures. Groups travel abroad to MUN conferences. Trips in excursions' week, such as those to Uganda and Kenya, include hands-on activity and community work, which make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning and personal development. Links with the community are an outstanding feature of the school's provision. Exemplary activities include Year 12 and 13 pupils teaching English to workers on the Cairo rubbish recycling project and the school's support for the Tawseela project working with some of Cairo's poor urban children.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

3.15 The contribution of teaching to pupils' achievements, learning, attitudes and skills is good throughout the school, helping pupils to fulfil their academic potential.

3.16 In the primary school, the quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes excellent. Teachers know their pupils really well, understand most of their needs and plan lessons to respond to them. At all levels, lessons are well planned and well paced, with good time management. Good questioning techniques and focussed discussions were observed. Most lessons involve a variety of teaching strategies, which involve pupils actively in their learning, often working collaboratively. Such an enabling approach was observed, particularly in some EYFS lessons, to stimulate pupils' interest and excitement in their learning. However, in some lessons, teachers are too prescriptive in their approach and restrict the possibilities for pupils to be fully engaged and to think for themselves.

3.17 Teachers have good subject knowledge, which underpins their lesson planning. They make good use of available resources, but not all teachers have integrated the use of ICT into their planning. Teachers respond well to the needs of pupils with SEND, offering appropriate support and consulting with the head of student support services, when necessary. The teaching of pupils with EAL is highly effective, both within lessons and in discrete tuition, enabling pupils' rapid progress in second language acquisition. Not all teachers have embraced the need to identify and challenge their gifted and talented pupils. However, able mathematicians were observed working together on advanced investigations during a lesson.

Effective use of teaching assistants makes an important contribution to pupils' learning.

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3.18 The primary school does not have a formal marking policy. Much marking is encouraging and gives appropriate advice for improvement, but the quality is inconsistent. Some use is made of assessment in the planning of subsequent work.

3.19 In the secondary school, teaching is good overall and sometimes excellent, particularly in Years 12 and 13. Standards of teaching in Years 7 to 11 are inconsistent and vary widely in quality. In many lessons, varied tasks, active learning, lively discussion, a rapid pace and high expectations effectively foster pupils' interest and stimulate both independent and collaborative learning. Assessment is often used to help plan the next steps in pupils' learning. The best teaching is inspirational, combining excellent subject knowledge with focused planning and the ability to galvanize pupils' excitement with their learning. A few lessons lacked pace and variety and the pupils' attention and interest were not engaged.

3.20 Teachers understand their pupils' needs and take every opportunity to support pupils who are having difficulty. They receive guidance on classroom strategies to deal effectively with pupils with EAL or SEND. Extension work is provided for able pupils, but, in most cases observed, it was insufficient to challenge them. Some excellent use is made of ICT to support learning, including the use of pupils' tablet computers. However, in many lessons, opportunities to bring ICT into learning activities were not exploited.

3.21 The quality of marking and assessment observed was inconsistent. At its best, it offers constructive feedback and encouragement. National Curriculum levels are used to help pupils understand the progress made, and to provide clear targets. Baseline data and standardised measures of progress are also used to monitor pupils' progress and set targets.



## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils**

4.1 The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent throughout the school, enabling it to meet its aims to promote self-esteem, foster a culture of understanding and prepare pupils socially, spiritually and emotionally for life-long learning.

4.2 Throughout the primary school, pupils are imbued with a growing sense of self-awareness, as they strive to personalise the values outlined in the IB learner profile and clearly established in the EYFS. These values encourage pupils to become inquirers, thinkers, communicators, and risk-takers, who are knowledgeable, principled, open-minded, caring, balanced and reflective, attributes, which fit closely with the school's aims. These values are consistently reinforced in assemblies and create a positive, inclusive ethos, which enables the development of outstanding personal qualities.

4.3 The pupils' spiritual awareness is sensitively raised through teachers encouraging them to have open minds. They develop a strong feeling of self-worth, giving them the confidence to express their personality and be open and responsive to others' needs. They develop outstanding emotional maturity. Although religious studies is not a discrete timetabled subject, pupils nevertheless explore a broad range of spiritual matters in lessons.

4.4 The pupils develop strong moral awareness. They know right from wrong, and their behaviour is excellent. They understand the need for rules, for which they show consistent respect. They identify what constitutes good behaviour, particularly through its recognition, rewarding and celebration.

4.5 The pupils develop a strong sense of social responsibility. They participate fully in community life and activities, model good and considerate play through their 'peer supporters', and undertake responsibility as house captains. The pupils' social and cultural understanding, allied to their moral awareness, leads to empathy with the less fortunate, as illustrated in their providing street children in Cairo with food, clothes and opportunities to learn.

4.6 The pupils develop a strong cultural awareness as they grasp the myriad opportunities provided by their multi-cultural community to explore their own and others' rich and varied cultural traditions. 'International Day' offers further insights into life in the enormous variety of cultures represented by the school population.

4.7 In the secondary school, the pupils' excellent self-awareness and unassuming self-confidence stem from a supportive, caring environment, which allows them to develop their talents and gain in self-esteem. Outstanding spiritual development is seen in the pupils' mature levels of emotional empathy and open-minded concern and compassion for others. They feel able to be themselves without fear of, for example, bullies because their school environment is safe and secure. In the creative and performing arts, pupils were seen to reflect on the beauty and power of the intangible.

4.8 The pupils' moral awareness is excellent. They have a mature sense of right and wrong. The minute's silence on Remembrance Day was observed with great respect. Pupils think through the consequences of their own and others' actions, as observed in various ecologically-aware initiatives such as re-cycling and the CAS



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garden. They benefit from a comprehensive PSHE programme which provides an effective moral framework.

4.9 The pupils' outstanding social awareness and sense of social responsibility is seen in their exemplary involvement in service to the community. For example, they support Sudanese refugee children living in two local orphanages, helping to maintain the building and visiting the school weekly to teach art, music and basic English. Secondary pupils coach primary swimmers. Pupils participate enthusiastically in school activities which demand teamwork and commitment, such as debating, sports, music and drama productions.

4.10 The pupils' daily school experience, in which friendship groups comprising many cultural identities are the norm, testifies to their outstanding cultural awareness, which is further strengthened by participation in the MUN groups. Cultural diversity is appreciated and accorded dignity and respect within the context of a British School following an essentially British curriculum, exhibiting "core British values".

### **4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety**

4.11 The quality of pastoral care and the arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety are good throughout the school.

4.12 In the primary school, the quality of pastoral care is excellent. From the beginning, every pupil is valued, supported and encouraged to show care and concern for others. As a result, EYFS pupils consistently present themselves as happy, confident and secure and solid foundations are laid for strong personal growth. The school is successful in meeting its aim of fostering a respectful culture, recognising that all individuals share equal value and status. The pupils report that bullying rarely occurs and is dealt with effectively, when it does. They express confidence that staff help them to overcome problems. Class teachers play a vital role in ensuring the effective implementation of a supportive, caring ethos. Good behaviour is celebrated. The school leadership team, including all year group team leaders, successfully ensures and monitors the promotion of pastoral awareness.

4.13 The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is excellent. The pupils mix harmoniously and show respect for one another. Staff know their pupils well and are exemplary in modelling courtesy and kindness, which the pupils value highly and consistently emulate.

4.14 In the secondary school, the quality of pastoral care is excellent. It is a major contributor to the creation of the supportive, caring community which underpins the excellent personal development of the pupils. Outstanding care from a committed team of tutors and co-tutors lies at the heart of the school's systems of pastoral care. They offer academic and personal support and guidance, deliver the PSHE programme and are the parents' first port of call, often by email. Co-tutors provide invaluable support in the delivery of PSHE in situations where a tutee needs the tutor's undivided attention to make further progress. Tutors report to the heads of Key Stage in each section of the school, who oversee and monitor the quality of provision most effectively.

4.15 The school's aim to promote staff and pupils' self-esteem, and foster a culture of understanding and respect for each other, is well met. The quality of relationships is excellent. An air of mutual trust and

respect is successfully fostered. The pupils feel safe and report that bullying rarely occurs and is dealt with effectively, when it does. Good behaviour is praised and rewarded. A very accessible student support officer provides individual counselling and fulfils an important role in the procedures for

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safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety. The pupil questionnaire responses reveal that a minority of pupils felt their views were not listened to, not all teachers treat them equally and some are unfair in their use of rewards and punishments. Inspectors found little evidence to support these claims and agree with those pupils, who told them, in discussion, that the school council was becoming more effective and that the situation with regard to teachers treating them fairly was improving.

4.16 Throughout the whole school, secure, comprehensive policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety, including safe recruitment, are implemented effectively, within the constraints of local culture. All staff have been appropriately trained in safeguarding. Regular external audits of health and safety are carried out, with the school committing itself to implementing recommendations. All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Risk assessments cover all aspects of school life, including trips off-site. Medical care is outstanding, with a doctor and nurse on site throughout the day. Pupils understand the importance of choosing a healthy diet and take regular physical exercise. The admission and attendance registers have been accurately maintained.

## **5. EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

5.1 The quality of governance is good.

5.2 The excellent standards of pupils' personal development and their good academic achievements are testimony to the board of directors' successful oversight of the school in line with its aims. They follow the example of their predecessors in discharging extremely well their responsibilities for financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources. They also provide excellent challenge and support for the principal and his senior managers in their drive to raise educational standards to higher levels. The school owns all its land and buildings.

5.3 The board's strengths lie in the business and financial acumen and commitment of its members, and in its multi-cultural composition, representative of the parent body, of which they are all members. As such, they have an excellent insight into the workings of the school, but they have been less successful in fulfilling their responsibility to provide strategic leadership. The board has undertaken away-day training to review their roles and responsibilities, focusing on the importance of school mission and vision, but no such vision has yet been agreed, nor has it been committed to a strategic development plan. The board has carried out its annual review of safeguarding. The need to ensure compliance with Egyptian law, as well as to monitor the effective implementation of their policies for child protection and for welfare, health and safety has led to the re-establishment of the governors' compliance committee.

### **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management**

5.4 The quality of the leadership and management of the school is good.

5.5 Leadership and management have steered the school through turbulent times and successfully implemented extensive curricular change, as the school prepared for and achieved its status as an IB World School, in order to further meet its aim to develop independent, confident and principled individuals. New leadership now has the task of consolidating the change. Whilst awaiting the new governors' strategic plan, the principal and his senior management group are proving highly effective in evaluating the school's immediate needs and setting priorities. Emphasis is being laid on the provision of a warm, safe and supportive learning environment, in line with the school's aims. Initiatives include the instigation of regular expert auditing of the school's health and safety procedures, further development of its safeguarding policies and their implementation, improving the school's physical and learning environment and extending the use of technology as a learning tool.

5.6 Now that IB programmes have been successfully embedded in the culture of the school, clear educational direction is diverting the focus away from programmes of study towards improving the quality of teaching and learning, where inconsistencies are apparent. Successful curricular transformation has exacted its price in hours spent planning changes, and systems that support teaching have been neglected. Time has not been found to implement regular and rigorous appraisal and monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, especially in the primary school, where the departure of senior staff has

led to managers taking on more than one role. The primary, secondary and Dutch school leadership teams recognise their delegated responsibility to address these issues and have begun to do so.

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However, academic managers throughout the school are not at the moment universally effective.

4.17 Leadership and management are successful in attracting and motivating high quality staff, but their induction is inconsistent. Constructive dialogue regarding professional development is included in the procedures for appraisal, but these have not been comprehensively implemented, particularly those concerning the monitoring of teaching and learning. The excellent practice seen in several lessons has not all been identified by managers and has thus not been sufficiently disseminated across the curriculum.

5.7 Secure procedures safeguard pupils' welfare, which include ensuring checks are made on the suitability of all staff. Appropriate staff training is undertaken, including for support staff, who make an important contribution to the success of the school.

### **5.(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians**

5.8 The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is good.

5.9 The school maintains a constructive relationship with parents in accordance with its aims. Concerns are handled with care, in accordance with the complaints procedure, and logged appropriately. Parental responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire show that they are generally satisfied with the education and support provided for their children. Considering the turmoil the school has been through, parental satisfaction is sound. Almost all parents valued the school's promotion of worthwhile attitudes and views and the great majority approved of the high standards of behaviour achieved. Communication and encouragement to be involved were much appreciated, as was the provision for pupils with EAL. A small minority of parents' criticised the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs, particularly the gifted and talented, the quantity of work set to be done at home and the quality of information they received about their child's progress. Inspectors found that able pupils were not sufficiently challenged and homework set was variable. They also found that the school's procedures for informing parents of their child's progress are sound. A small minority of parents expressed concern with the range of extra-curricular activities offered. Inspection evidence did not support this view, but inspectors noted that the simultaneous timings of many popular activities restrict pupils' choices.

5.10 The school's informative website gives prospective parents and pupils much useful and relevant information. Letters, text messages and emails allow effective communication to parents and a newsletter is used to inform them about subjects and future events, as well as celebrating the work and talents of pupils. Parents are informed about the educational progress of their children through good quality reports issued four times per year. Teachers meet with parents twice a year and on other evenings. Informal contacts, as when parents come to collect their child at the end of the school day, are particularly helpful, especially with regard to the youngest pupils. The new principal's open door policy typifies the welcoming approach espoused by leadership and management.

5.11 Parents with special skills assist the school by sharing their expertise in areas such as careers, gardening, nutrition and diving. The parent's group organises events to raise money for charities and offers effective support to the school. Parents frequently support events such as concerts, swimming galas, drama productions, coffee mornings and parenting courses. An excellent cyber awareness course run by the student support officer attracts both pupils and parents. Each morning,





**New Cairo British International School 13**

parents are warmly welcomed at the school entrance by the principal and heads of school.

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## **New Cairo British International School 14**

### **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and staff and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mr John Sugden Mr Nigel Archdale

Mr Michael Dodd

Mr Andrew Hansen Mr Derek Llewellyn

Mrs Carolyn Thomas

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Reporting Inspector Team inspector, (Former Head, COBIS school, Poland) Team inspector, (Head of Department, ISA school, UK) Team inspector, (Assistant Head, COBIS school, Czech Republic) Team inspector, (Former Head, maintained school, UK) Team inspector, (Former Head of Department, CIS school, France).