



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

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**ACCREDITATION INSPECTION OF**

**CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

## **ACCREDITATION INSPECTION REPORT ON**

### **Cambridge International School**

Full Name of School	<b>Cambridge International School</b>
DfE Number	<b>873/6042</b>
Address	<b>Cherry Hinton Hall Cherry Hinton Road Cambridge CB1 8DW</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01223 416938</b>
Email Address	<b>principal@abelards.com</b>
Principal	<b>Dr Harriet Sturdy</b>
Directors	<b>Dr Daniel Sturdy and Dr Harriet Sturdy</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 16</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>252</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed</b>
Day or Boarding	<b>Day</b>
Inspection Date	<b>31<sup>st</sup> January 2013</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Context of the Inspection

- 1.1 This inspection was conducted to assess the suitability of Cambridge International School for membership of the Independent Schools Association. The school was last inspected by Ofsted in February 2011. At that time, the evaluation was that the school: 'provides a good standard of education for its pupils. Parents and carers appreciate the caring and stimulating environment for learning which results in the good progress overall. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is good, with a particular strength in teaching English as an additional language. Provision for the health, welfare and safety of pupils continues to be outstanding and requirements for safeguarding children are fully met. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, reflecting the true international flavour of the school.'
- 1.2 This accreditation inspection was carried out by one inspector over one day. Before the inspection, regulatory and other documentation was scrutinised. During the visit, discussions were held with the principal, the bursar, senior staff in the senior, junior and infant sections and heads of department in the senior school. A tour of the two main sites was undertaken, a drama rehearsal was attended, some pupils' work was examined, eleven lessons were observed in part, and a meeting was held with a group of pupils. Further documentation was seen. Feedback was given to the principal.

### Characteristics of the School

- 1.3 Cambridge International School (CIS) was established in 2006 as part of the family of schools comprising Sancton Wood (a co-educational day school) and Holme Court (a school for children with dyslexia). It is owned and run by two directors, one of whom is also principal. CIS is situated on two sites. Infants and juniors are taught at Cherry Hinton Hall, two miles from the city centre. Seniors are taught at the Temple campus, a few miles outside the city. The school provides education for boys and girls from the ages of three to sixteen. The principal has been in post since the school was founded. The school aims to enable all children to flourish in an interesting and challenging environment with a strong international flavour. It seeks to provide an exciting educational setting, based on mutual respect and consideration for others, and an inspirational educational philosophy that will remain a life-long motivation for the children of local and internationally mobile families.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, there were 252 pupils on the roll, of whom 60 were in the infant section, including 31 in the EYFS for pupils up to the age of five. There were 64 pupils in the junior section for pupils aged between seven and 11, and 128 in the seniors. Just over half of the pupils were boys. Twenty-three pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and seven of these have a statement. One hundred and six pupils use English as an additional language (EAL), of whom 23 receive specialist language support. Thirty-nine pupils have been identified by the school as gifted and talented. Pupils attend from the city of Cambridge and surrounding villages, and come from professional, business or academic backgrounds, with about half coming from overseas. The ability profile of the school overall is in line with the national average, with a very wide range of abilities.

## **2. THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE REPORT OF FEBRUARY 2011**

### **Recommended action**

- 2.1 The inspection report made the following recommendations.
1. Make greater use of assessment information to motivate pupils.
  2. Create specific links between schemes of work and day-to-day lesson planning to provide objectives and tasks matched to the abilities of the wide range of pupils' abilities.
- 2.2 Since the previous inspection, good progress has been made in both the recommendations made at the time. Systems of assessment have been thoroughly reviewed, as a result of which all pupils are regularly monitored throughout their time at the school, using both internal assessment and a range of nationally standardised data in the senior section, as well as teacher assessment and pupil portfolios in the junior and infant sections. Pupils understand the National Curriculum level at which they are working. Junior pupils are now more aware of their reading age and show high levels of motivation as a result of the variety of both formal and informal assessment methods used, including targets and self-assessment. Senior pupils are better informed of what they need to do to move to the next level of progress and have responded positively to this. Department handbooks have been updated to include guidance on linking schemes of work with individual lesson plans, which now include consideration of the needs of all pupils, including the most able and those with SEND and EAL. In addition, greater consideration is given to the range of examinations for which pupils of different abilities may be entered. In the EYFS, the level of classroom support has been increased, particularly for the large number of pupils who speak only limited English on arrival at the school. Facilities have been improved by the provision of an all-weather sports pitch.

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

- 3.1 At the time of the previous Ofsted inspection, pupils' progress, the curriculum and quality of teaching were all judged to be good. The curriculum is broad, reflecting the wide range of backgrounds from which pupils are drawn. It is supported by teaching of good quality which meets the needs of all pupils. In the EYFS, pupils are grouped according to the level of their achievements in phonics and mathematics in order that they receive appropriate challenges. They make effective progress and show enthusiasm and determination, which are reflected in their profiles before they enter Year 1. Teaching in the best lessons in the infant and junior sections showed careful organisation, helpful and constructive marking, and the creation of an orderly, disciplined environment which strongly supported pupils' learning. Assessment during lessons was effective, complementing the termly assessments used to identify strengths and weaknesses. Pupils were given appropriate guidance and helped to feel that they were making genuine discoveries, while being offered a wide range of stimulating activities. High standards of spelling and punctuation were demanded even from the youngest pupils. There was good use of open questions. Pupils had the opportunity to use individual tablet computers to assist their learning. In the senior section, teaching was strongly supportive of both the most able pupils and those with SEND. In the best lessons, teaching was well-paced and effectively structured so that pupils were regularly guided to a successful response to the

challenges they were set. The use of resources reflected the age and ability of the pupils. Information and communication technology was imaginatively used when appropriate, whilst pupils were also introduced to more formal learning in lessons that had a strong literary basis. Pupils regularly volunteered answers during discussion and were able to explain comprehensively the task on which they were engaged. Pupils are articulate, numerate, creative and motivated, showing great enjoyment and perseverance in their work.

- 3.2 The curriculum in the infant and junior sections is based on the National Curriculum for literacy and numeracy. For all other subjects, the school has introduced the International Primary Curriculum (IPC), providing cross-curricular, thematic teaching and reflecting the international background of the pupils. Modern foreign languages are studied by every pupil from the age of four, beginning with French and Spanish. The curriculum also provides a wide range of other modern and ancient languages, including Mandarin Chinese, Arabic and Latin, and tuition in pupils' mother-tongue languages. The amount of additional EAL teaching provided is determined by the needs of individual pupils. The curriculum includes frequent opportunities for music, art and drama, not only as discrete subjects but as part of the wider topic-based approach of the IPC. The primary curriculum is enriched by a range of visits within Cambridge and further afield, and by the parkland surrounding the school which enables pupils to engage in gardening and other activities. In Years 7 to 9 of the senior section, pupils follow the University of Cambridge Checkpoint curriculum for Maths, Science and English alongside a range of other subjects which includes philosophy, current affairs and business enterprise. In Years 10 and 11, pupils study ten or eleven subjects leading to IGCSE. The curriculum is enhanced by an extensive programme of personal, social and health education and a wide range of other activities. Pupils with SEND and EAL are given appropriate support, and teaching meets the needs of those pupils with statements. Since the previous inspection, assessment and the monitoring of pupils' progress have been considerably strengthened.

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

- 4.1 At the time of previous Ofsted inspection, the quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was judged to be outstanding. Inspection evidence indicates that these standards have been maintained reflecting the school's aim to provide an educational setting that encourages mutual respect and consideration for others. Pupils are open and welcoming, showing evident pride in their school and joy in their learning. They speak articulately and with enthusiasm, clearly taking pleasure in each other's achievements as well as their own, and demonstrating a clear understanding of the needs of the school community. Relationships among pupils, and between pupils and staff, are warm and friendly yet respectful. Their behaviour around the school is excellent at all ages. They are involved in a number of local and international charity projects. The international nature of the school encourages pupils to show a mature awareness of difference and helps them to develop a natural sense of belonging to the wider world community. Pastoral care strongly supports this as staff show high levels of commitment to pupils' personal development both in lessons and in other activities. In discussion, pupils felt that there was no bullying, but that if any occurred, there would always be a member of staff to whom they could talk and that the school would deal with it effectively. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education about which there is regular communication with parents, both formally and informally.

- 4.2 The school places a high priority on matters of welfare, health and safety, as it did at the time of the previous inspection. All staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding. Risk assessments are regularly carried out for all relevant school activities and trips. The school provides plentiful, tasty and nutritious lunchtime meals as part of its attempt to encourage a healthy life-style, which itself is fostered by a wide programme of physical and sporting activity. The school has an appropriate accessibility plan for future improvement of the school for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

- 5.1 The two directors and proprietors of the school take an active and close interest in its success, each having a specific role as either financial director or principal. As a result, investment in buildings and resources is closely linked to educational priorities, supporting the school's aim of enabling pupils to flourish in a stimulating educational environment. The directors have a good oversight of regulatory requirements and measures to safeguard and promote the welfare, health and safety of pupils, although no formal system ensures that these are regularly updated and reviewed.
- 5.2 Leadership and management ensures a clear vision exists for the school which is clearly communicated to parents, staff and pupils, reflecting the international nature of the community, and supported by the school's development plan. The staff in each of the three sections of the school form a cohesive team, supporting each other and providing a good, challenging quality of education. They also contribute greatly to the outstanding personal development of the pupils. Staff are regularly trained in safeguarding matters. Recruitment is carried out with care. Appropriate checks are carried out and recorded on a single central register, although a system to ensure that this is comprehensively maintained and regularly monitored was not in place at the time of the inspection. The premises on the two sites visited are well maintained, providing an attractive educational environment and making good use of natural surroundings. A detailed appraisal policy is implemented across the school which complements the considerable amount of professional contact that takes place within the compact settings.
- 5.3 Communication with parents is frequent and of good quality, through both formal reports and informative, attractive newsletters. A complaints procedure is available to parents and published on the school's website. Regular contact between parents and the principal and staff is actively encouraged.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS AND ACTION REQUIRED**

### **Conclusions**

- 6.1 It is recommended that the school should be considered for membership of the Independent Schools Association, taking into account the improvement recommended below.

### **Action points**

- 6.2 The school met all the regulatory requirements at the time of the previous inspection and no new deficiencies have been identified on this inspection.

6.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Ensure that the directors establish a formal procedure for regular review and monitoring of the school's regulatory compliance.

**Inspector**

Mr John Dunston

Reporting Inspector