



Inspection report

**St. Christopher's
International Primary School**

**Penang
Malaysia**

Date of Inspection: 17th – 19th January 2017

Contents		Page
1	Purpose and scope on the inspection	2
2	Compliance with regulatory requirements	2
3	Overall effectiveness of the school	3
	3.1 What the school does well	3
	3.2 Points for improvement	4
4	The context of the school	5
	4.1 The British nature of the school	6
5	Standard 1 The quality of education provided by the school	7
	5.1 Curriculum	7
	5.2 Teaching and assessment	9
	5.3 Standards achieved by students	11
6	Standard 2 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students	12
7	Standard 3 The welfare, health and safety of students	13
8	Standard 4 The suitability of the proprietor and staff	14
9	Standard 5 The premises and accommodation	15
10	Standard 6 The provision of information for parents, carers and others	16
11	Standard 7 The school's procedures for handling complaints	18
12	Standard 8 The quality of provision for boarding	-
13	Standard 9 Leadership and management of the school	19

1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education has put in place a voluntary scheme for the inspection of British schools overseas, whereby schools are inspected against a common set of standards that British schools overseas can choose to adopt.

The inspection and this report follow the Department for Education (DFE) schedule for the inspection of British Schools overseas.

The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's management on the overall effectiveness of the school, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent schools in the United Kingdom.

The inspection and report covers the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation (including boarding); and the school's complaints procedures. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for students and students' achievements.

This inspection was completed by Penta International. Penta International is approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the English Department for Education (DFE) on the extent to which schools meet the standards for British Schools Overseas.

During the inspection visit, the whole of the first day and much of the second day were spent in classrooms with the pupils and teachers. All teachers were observed and many learning walks took place during the visit. School documentation and policies were analysed and pupil data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the head, the senior staff, teachers, other school staff, representatives of the board of directors, parents and groups of students. The team was in school on three days.

The lead inspector was Mark Evans. The team members were Rebecca Baggaley and Nan McKeown.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

St Christopher's International Primary School meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

St Christopher's International Primary School (SCIPS) is a good school with many outstanding features. It provides a high quality of education and outstanding care. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is outstanding. Parents, staff and students are very supportive of the school. It continues to make very good progress in terms of further improving the quality of learning, sharpening up the way that students' attainment is analysed and used, and focussing on developing the excellent learning environment.

3.1 What the school does well

SCIPS has many strengths:

- Students' behaviour is exemplary: they have excellent manners, and there are very positive relationships between adults and children.
- Respect, tolerance and understanding amongst all members of the school community are highly valued: cultural differences are cherished, appreciated and celebrated throughout.
- After-school activities (ASAs) are excellent in range and quality, and involve all members of staff, as well as some external coaches.
- Communication with parents is outstanding. Parents are very positive and comment about the ease of communication with the school and regularity of information provided.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and embrace the ethos wholeheartedly. They praise the school highly, appreciating not only the quality of education their children receive, but also what they describe as the genuine care and attention provided by the school 'family'.

- Blending the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) with the National Curriculum from England enables good coverage of subjects. With strong priority planning, core subjects are taught as per the National Curriculum.
- Use of a themed assessment week to gather data has been very effective in enabling teachers to review students' targets through engaging activities. The information and data gathered is used to set targets with students, and shared in reporting to parents.
- The plans for the future highlight the school's commitment to improve the curriculum and facilities, impacting on the quality of learning experiences of the students.
- A rigorous recruitment process has ensured positive and enthusiastic staff fit in easily to the SCIPS family. Staff talk passionately of their ideas for the future. They feel highly valued as part of the school team and are committed to moving the school forward.

3.2 Points for improvement

Whilst not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- Develop further the cycle of school improvement, to incorporate more detailed school development planning, ongoing reviews, continuous professional development (CPD) and a system of performance management, to support the drive forward and ensure all staff remain involved and accountable.
- Use attainment data in a focussed manner, ensuring maximum progress for all students, for example by analysing summative and formative data to identify trends, areas of weakness and those students who are not making expected progress, and ensuring required intervention strategies are implemented to ensure students to make outstanding progress.
- Ensure the quality of teaching is consistently as high as that of the best by:
 - ❖ maximising challenge in lessons for all students, for example by encouraging and planning for the most able to think "outside the box"
 - ❖ considering a range of activities which will enable learners to use investigative and enquiry skills more routinely, demanding critical thinking and promoting creativity

- ❖ linking the training and deployment of teaching assistants to the performance management system.

4. The context of the school

Full name of school	St. Christopher's International Primary School				
Address	No. 10, Nunn Road, 10350, Penang, Malaysia				
Telephone number	+604 226 3589 / +604 228 0752				
Fax number	+604 226 4340				
Website	http://www.scips.org.my/				
Email address	martin.towse@scips.org.my				
Head	Martin Towse				
Chairman of Board of Governors	Danny Goon				
Age range	4 - 12 years old				
Total number of pupils	583	Boys	294	Girls	288
Numbers by age	0-2 years	0	11-16 years	65	
	3-5 years	70	16-18 years	0	
	5-11 years	448	18+ years	0	
Total number of part-time children	n/a				

SCIPS was established in 1963, to deliver a broad, balanced British-based curriculum that is tailored to meet the needs of the diverse local community. It hosts families of over 32 different nationalities, and aims to provide primary-focused international education in a caring and nurturing environment. It is a non-denominational, not-for-profit making school, proud of its history and achievements.

Because SCIPS is registered as a not-for-profit company in Malaysia, it is required to have a board of governors similar to a board of directors. The school's board works in partnership with the principal to ensure that the school both obeys the law and meets its published aims and values.

The law applying to a school includes legislation, which is specifically about education and more general matters relating to such issues as health and safety, employment and financial probity. Together with the principal and the staff of the school, governors share pledges made to parents in the school prospectus. These are concerned both with the ethos of the school and what children learn.

4.1 British nature of the school

The British nature of the SCIPS is evident throughout the school.

The language of instruction in the school is English. The school is organised according to the structures used in English schools. Classroom management, displays of work, three term year and age-related year groups contribute to a British feel of the school.

The majority of the staff are UK trained and qualified. Most of the rest hold qualifications recognised by the UK DfE. Staff CPD training has been delivered by leading British trainers.

The core elements of the National Curriculum of England has been adopted throughout the school from Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) to Year 6. Parents are highly supportive of the UK theme of the curriculum. Interviews with parents suggested they appreciate and value the British style of education.

The school demonstrates a commitment to British education initiatives, both in terms of curriculum and assessment. There is a clear commitment to a broad and balanced curriculum. Extra-curricular provision including clubs and school trips, is very important, and managed in line with British best practice. The school has forged strong links with many British International

schools and is a member of FOBISIA, a regional federation of the leading British international schools in Asia.

The curriculum is enriched with a wide ranging co-educational programme, including trips and visits locally, regionally and overseas where British historic sites and events are noted.

Students are encouraged to develop effective social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with students from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.

Assessment methods are also reflective of standard practice in England. Commercial tests introduced in 2015 will, over time, provide a comparison to UK standards.

5. Standard 1 - The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided SCIPS is good with some outstanding features.

5.1 Curriculum

The school provides a broad balanced curriculum, which is primarily the National Curriculum of England. The blending in of IPC ensures an integrated approach to curriculum subjects. The curriculum gives students experience in a wide range of areas of learning, including linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. It meets and reflects the needs of the diverse community, while promoting a love of learning.

There is full-time supervised education for students of compulsory school age, meeting local regulations. The principal language of instruction is English. The school has a written curriculum policy which is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work. The policy is implemented effectively, enabling students to acquire skills in speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy.

It takes into account curriculum and external examination accreditation commonly used in schools within the UK. This enables students to enter, or re-enter the UK educational system at an appropriate level, if that is what they wish to do. The subject matter is mainly appropriate for the age and aptitudes of pupils, including those students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Some lessons do not plan for sufficient challenge of the most able students, however.

Children enter EYFS when they are 3 years old and are immersed in English language opportunities. There is a curriculum focus on literacy and numeracy skills in Early Years, which continues to be developed in Key Stages 1 and 2. English is spoken at all times in school, even

when students are socialising at break-time.

Analysis of assessments is used to inform planning of lessons and differentiate activities. The development of 'Beginning', 'Developing' and 'Mastering' skills is tracked by pupils as they self-assess their learning, and by teachers as they track performance.

The personal, social, and health education (PSHE) policy has recently been reviewed. The school places great importance of this strand of the curriculum. Enrichment activities are wide-ranging and offered at all ages. Students have access to an extensive choice of different after school activities including sports, *wushu*, art and modern foreign languages. Concerts, assemblies and the speech and drama club, all serve to develop speaking and listening skills.

Students enjoy field trips to local places of interest such as Escape Adventure Park and the Australian Air force base, which support curriculum topics. A trip to Laser Zone enhanced the children's understanding of light. Residential trips to Langkawi, Cameron Highlands, Kuala Lumpur and Taiping, add to the life experiences and a deeper understanding of the world, for Key Stage 2 students.

Students talk with great enjoyment of being able to take part in so many different activities after school. Year 1 through to Year 6 are offered ASAs ensuring all students can access an important social feature of school life. No matter how few students wish to sign up, the club will still run. The range is exemplary.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

Teaching and assessment are consistently good; some teaching is excellent.

Lessons are well planned; teaching methods are effective and often great fun. For example in a Year 3 IPC lesson, students were researching jewellery in different cultures and ages. The atmosphere was very learning-focussed, and students were clearly engaged and excited about what they were finding out. Classroom time is managed well and teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, cultural background, needs and prior attainments of the students. In a few lessons, the most able are not sufficiently challenged, leading to wasted opportunities. The large number of students who speak English as a second language are well supported.

Teachers encourage all to behave responsibly and to care for one another. For example in a Year 2 Mandarin lesson, the teacher placed great emphasis on working together and supporting one another's learning. They encourage students to apply intellectual, physical and creative effort, to show interest in their work, and to think and learn for themselves.

The styles of teaching, learning and assessment equip pupils very well with the knowledge and skills necessary to enter (or re-enter) the UK educational system at an appropriate level. In one Year 6 mathematics lesson on shape, for example, students learned about 3D shapes by designing and constructing the entrance to their imaginary theme park. In setting the lesson up, the teacher used a range of 2D shapes inspired by photographs, including of British buildings.

Classroom resources are of an excellent quality, quantity and range. They are used and stored effectively. For example in the nursery and reception class phonics lessons, students were able during the free-flow of activities, to use a wide range of resources to support their learning.

Assessment is ongoing and mainly formative. Historically SCIPS administered the NFER papers in mathematics, literacy and non-verbal reasoning in term one, to provide a baseline assessment. This was the starting point for the cycle of assessment which was completed with summative assessments in May, in the form of national curriculum SATS and optional papers from Years 3-5. In light of the changes to the UK national curriculum and the uncertainty around the SATS, SCIPS now subscribes to a commercial assessment programme to provide summative data for their children in mathematics and literacy. As of academic year 2015/16, the school started using these assessments, setting a baseline test in term one from term 3 of the previous academic year. This has provided effective end of year summative assessments to back up ongoing formative assessments, and demonstrates progression over the course of the academic year.

Formative assessment is mainly carried through continuous teacher assessment, marking of books and identification of 'next steps', across the curriculum. The school uses criteria for 'beginning', 'developing' and 'mastering' criteria. Across the school, books are marked with a consistent approach against these criteria, with a range of light and deep marking. Verbal feedback is embedded throughout the teaching practise and sometimes students use smiley faces for self-assessment purposes. In general, students do not respond overtly to the marking in their books. In some classes, students are encouraged in some classes to place their finished work in an appropriate tray to show whether they felt they were beginning, developing or mastering their understanding of the learning that had taken place.

End of unit tests are administered in science using questions taken from a different commercial scheme. These offer knowledge based assessment, while enquiry based skills are assessed through the themed assessment week, a school-wide event which is planned and organised to assess skills linked to the IPC through science activities. IPC standards are assessed against two of the eight personal learning goals that the school has focused on, currently Communication and Co-operation.

A 'Big Write' is also undertaken during this week, inspired by a FOBISIA writing competition

linked to the same theme. During the five days of the themed assessment week, different mathematical skills are assessed through the national curriculum strands. Resulting targets will be identified during this week and reported to parents, linked to mathematics, literacy and PSHE (especially communication and co-operation).

Reports are sent out to parents on a termly basis with targets set in term one for mathematics, English and PSHE. Academic targets will be generated from the school cycle of assessment while the PSHE targets are linked to two of the eight personal learning goals which form part of the IPC: communication and cooperation. Further monitoring of the children's academic progress is available to parents through the parent portal of the school website.

5.3 Standards achieved by students

The standards achieved by students at SCIPS are excellent.

Standards of achievement across the school are high, with at least good progress being made by most students. Students identified as not making the expected progress are targeted for extra support, though this is more common for those attaining average or lower scores.

Data tracking of progress tests from 2015/16 for the end of Key Stage 1 show a mean Standard Age Score (SAS) significantly above the UK national average of 100 Points: SCIPS students achieved an average of 109.1 in English and 112.6 in mathematics. The range in the SAS and the gender differences are comparable to the UK in both key stages.

The school has identified gaps in the phonic knowledge of Key Stage 1 students as a key area for development, especially given the significant number of students who speak English as an additional language. This focus is supported by the end of KS1 PTE scores. It has been the case historically that the value added in English is significantly greater as these students catch up, as they progress through Key Stage 2. Another aspect for development already identified by the school is mathematics/ problem solving. This is already being supported well by modification of the curriculum and its delivery.

As part of their subject development plans, the SCIPS senior managers have prioritised data analysis. The inclusion of different departments across the school to look at trends, identify areas of need and act on these are, appropriately, the next steps.

6. Standard 2 - The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is excellent, especially taking account of the needs of a diverse student body.

Students display great self-confidence from an early age because they are encouraged to develop their self-esteem and self-awareness in all they do. Teachers encourage students to do

their best at all times and give constructive praise, liberally. A love of learning is embedded in all aspects of school life and self-confidence is very well supported.

The school enables students to distinguish right from wrong and encourages them to respect the law. SCIPS is very effective in ensuring that students behave responsibly, show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life. Students take care of each other and reported many examples of other students being kind and mindful. There are 8 personal goals identified by the school: enquiry, resilience, morality, communication, thoughtfulness, cooperation, respect and adaptability, and these underpin and promote personal growth and encourage strong moral values.

Students have opportunities to take responsibility. In Year 6 students are appointed as playground leaders to support the students during break-times. Prefects are proud to take active roles in the school, for example welcoming their peers as they arrive in the morning.

Teachers promote positive behaviour management through liberal praise, clear guidance and high expectations. Students are encouraged to take the initiative and learn to approach minor issues following the High 5 plan. Golden rules are displayed in classes and common areas. House points, sunshine cards and star awards are just some of the ways good behaviour is celebrated. Students' behaviour is excellent and good manners are evident throughout the school. Where there is an infringement of rules, clear sanctions are used in a systematic approach. Students are well aware of the rules and consequences of their actions.

SCIPS helps students acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures, in a manner that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions. Students learn about the wider world, modern British life and global citizenship which is embedded in the Purpose statement of the school. Events such as Fun Food Day, Chinese New Year and Santa's visit emphasise an appreciation of respect for their own and other cultures. The recycling project promotes an environmental awareness. Associations with local companies and sporting clubs, further embed respect and responsibility for citizenship. These provide a broad general knowledge of the responsibilities of citizenship in the host country, the UK and internationally.

7. Standard 3 - The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The welfare, health and safety of the students are excellent.

The school has a shared anti-bullying policy, which is closely aligned with the positive behaviour policy. Other linked and relevant policies are safeguarding, child protection, and health and safety. These policies are shared with staff and students: the school plans to use them in conjunction with a standalone home/school agreement, additional to the agreement signed as part of the terms and conditions on admission.

The incidence of bullying is low and infrequent, a view supported by staff, parents and students. Any incidents that do occur or are raised by students or parents, are recorded on the appropriate form and on student profiles. Incidents are investigated in line with the policies and students are spoken to.

While the behaviour policy sets out general expectations of respect and conduct, and the expectation around the school is consistent, in class, teachers can adopt their own choice of reward strategy. A range of techniques are being used including *class dojo*, star of the week and stickers.

Appropriate processes involved in fire safety at SCIPS are set out in the fire and evacuation policy. This details procedures for both evacuation of the building and furthermore, off the site. Practise drills are scheduled twice a term with one being shared and rehearsed to inform and educate students and the second being unannounced, to ensure understanding of routines and expectations. Evacuation routes are clearly displayed in all classrooms and offices.

The school has in the last year created the post for a permanent on-site school nurse. The students have, to date, had an introductory presentation from the nurse to have her role explained. She keeps files on all students, detailing any visits for injury or sickness. Records are kept regarding the medical conditions, including more serious conditions: information regarding these is displayed for staff to note. All medication, including emergency medication such as epi-pens are kept in the nurse's secure store.

Medical kits are provided to staff for residential and school trips, which are properly risk-assessed in line with policy: some of the teaching assistants are first-aiders. The school has recognised that a local trainer will need to be found to provide further first aid training to staff, as and when required.

Students are suitably supervised during drop off and pick up, when parents come on to site, either in the car park or as part of the drive-through. Student prefects welcome children into school, supervised by a member of staff. Duty rotas indicate the members of staff that supervise break times, in both the eating and play zones. The school keeps daily registers on the school information management and tracking system, which gives attendance and absence data.

8. Standard 4 - The suitability of the proprietor and staff

Prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff (including volunteers), appropriate checks to confirm their identity, medical fitness, right to work in Malaysia, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references. Such information is taken into account in determining whether appointments are confirmed.

In most respects, it is the principal and the other school staff who take day-to-day responsibility for this. However, the governing body takes the role of deciding on overriding principles, discussing and approving documents produced and receiving reports.

Appropriate checks on suitability to work with children, including a British enhanced criminal record check where applicable, are made by the school in respect of all members of staff appointed. There are appropriate checks in the host country and in overseas countries where the person lived, obtaining certificates of good conduct from the relevant embassies or police forces, where practical. There is no evidence that any member of staff or volunteer carries out work at school in contravention of local, overseas or British disqualification, prohibition or restriction.

SCIPS has a committed and highly professional team of governors, who give time voluntarily and generously to support the progress and development of the school. Some are parents of children at St Christopher's, whilst others are representatives of the community. The school takes all due steps to assure itself of the suitability of each individual who is responsible for the governance and leadership of the school. Many have been involved with the school for a long time. The chairperson of the governors meets all local requirements, and in addition been subject to checks confirming his identity, right to work in the host country, and suitability to work with children.

The school keeps and made available to inspectors, a comprehensive list of all staff and volunteers who currently work in the school, or who have worked in the school since the time of the last inspection, showing the dates when they commenced and ceased working in the school.

9. Standard 5 - The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are excellent.

The school buildings and campus are well maintained, ensuring an environment that is conducive to learning. The original SCIPS building is unusual and iconic: it has a special place in the history of the school, and is still very fit-for-purpose. These and all other classrooms and activity areas offer a lively and stimulating learning environment. They are spacious, light and equipped with age appropriate furniture, sensibly arranged to make resources accessible to all students and facilitate independent learning.

The facilities are used well and timetabled to allow access to different year groups. Teaching rooms for music, computing, languages, further enhance the educational experiences of all pupils. A variety of outdoor play facilities support pupils' development of physical, academic, social and emotional skills. These include a dedicated Early Years play area, shaded large play equipment and a newly built turtle pond.

The school provides a well - equipped medical room and employs one full time, qualified nurse. The bright and welcoming library is well stocked.

There are impressive plans for further improvement of the buildings and outside learning areas, demonstrating a commitment by the school to seek continually ways to enhance the learning experiences of the students.

Security of the school site is strong in all respects. Colour coded name tags are used to identify visitors, staff and parents. Access to the school is well controlled. Fire and evacuation procedures are clear and practiced regularly.

There is no reason to believe that the water supply does not meet local regulatory requirements. Drainage is appropriate for hygienic purposes and for the disposal of wastewater and surface water, which is a common occurrence, given the weather conditions. There is no evidence that load bearing structures are not built with due regard to local regulatory requirements. The buildings provide resistance to penetration by wind, sand and dust, and have regard to temperature control (cooling). There is sufficient access for safe emergency evacuation, including for those students with special needs, although more limited from the higher floors.

10. Standard 6 - The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents, carers and others is excellent.

The school's address, telephone number, link to Facebook page and Twitter account are available on the school website. Information regarding the board of governors' role is set out on the website and the chair can be contacted via the school office.

The main form of communication to parents is via email for official events. Twitter and Facebook are used to provide instant updates regarding events and news as well as offering opportunities to celebrate and inform parents about other events, such as sporting fixtures and residential trips.

A school blog covers the ASAs schedule. The assistant principal directs the club on a Tuesday offering the students the opportunity to develop their journalistic skills. Whilst mainly a teaching tool, it is also used as an opportunity to communicate with the parents on the material generated through the ASA.

The online Parent Handbook offers a comprehensive guide to parents regarding policies, procedure and expectations as well as curriculum coverage, by both subject and year group

through Linked documents.

The parent community are freely invited in to the school, within the appropriate security procedures. There is a parents' room, currently serviced by a temporary coffee van, where they can meet to discuss class parent responsibilities, parent/teacher committee (PTC) events and business: it is also utilised by parent helpers. Class reps liaise with class teachers and feed back relevant information via class *whatsapp* groups. The role of the PTC is seen not primarily to be a fundraiser, but instead to uphold the family ethos of the school. Parents suggested it helps bring the community together through supporting and organising a range of different key school community events.

An annual events calendar is available on the school website to keep parents informed regarding key dates and events. These are also emailed out to parents on a termly basis. The parents are kept informed through the students' communication diaries and the teachers' email address format is clearly set out in the parent handbook. Parents are encouraged to communicate through either of these options regarding their child or school events.

Formal parent teacher meetings are arranged and held on a termly basis and additionally, there is an open door policy for parents to come in and meet teachers or SLT at any point. A parent questionnaire is sent out in May: anonymous responses are gathered and outcomes collated. These have previously been shared with parents, and significant points actioned.

Parents report feeling that the school is a family school that caters for the community and also offers an education which would allow their children to transition back to a UK school should they need to. Transition in to a secondary school locally is supported through inter schools events and community visits. Parents suggest that the school is always seeking to improve: "steady and progressive changes to the infrastructure of the school that have impacted positively". One said "We would definitely recommend this school" and another suggested that "If I ever had to leave, I'd want to pick this school up and take it with me."

11. Standard 7 - The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school has a clear policy that establishes a procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints relating to any provision of facilities or services provided. It is transparent, open and effective. It has due regard to local regulatory requirements and circumstances. It aims to ensure any concerns are dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence. The procedure confirms that all concerns and complaints are looked into thoroughly, fairly and in a timely manner.

The policy distinguishes between a 'concern' (an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought) and a 'complaint' (an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action). This distinction works well in the school, and parents expressed satisfaction with the process.

Each level of the procedure offers the opportunity for concerns and complaints to be resolved as quickly as possible. It is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils and sets out clear timescales for the management of the complaint. It also allows for complaints to be made and considered initially on an informal basis. The levels are successive: levels 1 and 2 which are informal, level 3 which is a formal complaint to the principal, and the final level 4, which is a formal complaint requesting a governors' complaints panel.

Complainants wishing to move to level 4 of the complaints procedure need to write a letter to the chair of governors. This formal complaint letter is to be received within 10 school days of the last meeting with the principal concerning the issue. The letter has to set out the complaint that has been previously formally discussed with the principal and demonstrate why the matter is not resolved.

The complaints procedure provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations, and stipulates that a copy of these findings and recommendations are given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about, the board and principal. It provides for written records to be kept of all complaints indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, and whether they proceeded to a panel hearing (including a hearing before the board of governors).

It provides that correspondence, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential, except in cases where Malaysian legal requirements permit access by local authorities.

12. Standard 8 - The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable.

13. Standard 9 - Leadership and management of the school

Leadership and management are good: the vision and direction provided by the principal and the board of governors are excellent.

The board has supported the school with great enthusiasm over many years: a significant proportion of board members, including the chair, have been in place for more than 15 years.

They see it as very important for the board to maintain a positive and productive partnership with the staff, parents and friends of the school. In this respect, they try to be readily available and approachable, and seek to communicate well with the parents as to what is going on at school.

The board has four sub-committees to which are delegated the tasks of monitoring and evaluating the development within the school: each governor is on at least one. They meet prior to every full board meeting: proposals and recommendations are tabled, discussed and decided upon. The chair and the principal attend all meetings. The board presents its annual report at the annual general meeting, which is usually held in February of each year. Governors aim to respect and value the opinions of the school's broad and diverse community, and particularly seek to be aware of parents' perceptions and expectations. They provide appropriate policies and procedures, review them suitably for effectiveness, and ensure sufficiency of resources through careful financial management.

The principal provides clear and thoughtful leadership and direction for the school. He focusses strongly and effectively on the quality of education, the care of the students, and the fulfilment of the school's aims and ethos. He also ensures that the school is a positive and energetic place to work, which has a very positive impact on the quality of learning. He is ably supported by a senior management team which has an effective mixture of experience, enthusiasm and dynamism.

Senior management is increasingly successful in identifying priorities for improvement, planning to meet those priorities, and implementing decisions effectively. The school's self-evaluation process was reported in an innovative and highly effective manner, through a video and hyper-linked PowerPoint presentation, which made it very easy for the inspection team to get to know the school quickly.

The school's leaders and managers are increasingly aware of the possibilities of linking the main development processes together. They provide excellent opportunities for regular professional development sessions and reviews: these are not yet fully linked to more detailed school development planning and the system of performance management.