

St. Stephen's International School

British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

Inspection Dates: 12 – 14 November 2018

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Age Group: 2 - 18

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection report follows the English Department for Education (DfE) Schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas. The inspection was carried out by three inspectors from Education Development Trust who spent three days at the school. Education Development Trust is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas and quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

Education Development Trust is one of the world's leading not-for-profit education companies, providing a range of education services in the UK and internationally. Education Development Trust employs over 2,500 staff worldwide, all working on projects relating to educational quality.

To be recognised by the Department for Education, a British School Overseas must have an inspection report which shows that their performance against all the standards is at least satisfactory. This reflects the standards required for continuing registration as a school in England. Schools meeting the standards will have their inspection reports published on the Department's website and will be registered on Edubase.

Inspectors report on the extent to which schools meet the relevant Standards for British Schools Overseas. These were updated with effect from September 2017. The inspection follows closely the framework for the inspection of independent schools in England but, where appropriate, also takes account of compliance with local regulations.

The Standards are 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.
7. Manner in which complaints are handled.
8. Leadership and management of the school
9. The quality of provision for boarding

The purposes of the inspections are to:

- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education and of the care for their welfare
- provide rigorous and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and celebrate 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.

The BSO inspection was combined with an International School Quality Mark (ISQM) accreditation. It was carried out by the same inspection team. The outcomes of ISQM inspection are contained within a separate report which is available from the school.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Proportions used in the report

90–100% Vast/overwhelming majority or almost all
75–90% Very large majority, most
65–74% Large majority
51–64% Majority
35–49% Minority
20–34% Small minority
4–19% Very small minority, few
0–3% Almost none/very few

Information about the school

St Stephen's International School is an inclusive, independent, privately owned, co-educational international school for pupils aged two to 18 years. It has a sister school in Khao Yai with the same owners and governing body. The school's vision is to be a leading international school embracing the best principles of East and West to create tomorrow's generation of global leaders.

The school is situated in the Chatuchak area of Bangkok and is housed in purpose-built accommodation. The school opened in April 1998 with 60 pupils. There are currently 430 students on roll with approximately 10% in the early years, 45% in primary, 36% in secondary and 9% in post-16. The school is comparable in size to others of a similar type. Last year there was a dip in the number of students, but enrolment is back to previous levels and stable. On completion of the post-16 phase most students leaving the school go on to complete their education in universities, predominantly in the UK, but also worldwide.

Approximately 90% of pupils are Thai nationals, 3.3% are British and the remainder come from 15 different countries including Australia, Malaysia, Norway and Taiwan. English is the language of instruction for all pupils. Approximately 90% of pupils speak English as an additional language, with 4% of these pupils requiring support. Overall, 6% of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

A well-qualified and experienced team of 60 teachers, mostly recruited in the UK, provide a ratio of, on average, one teacher to every seven pupils. Pupils' learning is supported further by 24 learning support assistants. A team of 39 administrative and security staff help the school to run smoothly.

Children in the foundation stage follow the early years foundation stage curriculum. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 study the International Primary Curriculum (IPC). Those in Years 7 to 9 follow the International Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC). From Years 1 to 9 pupils study the national curriculum for England for mathematics and English. From Year 10, pupils follow Cambridge Board IGCSEs and A' Levels. The school is licenced by the Thai ministry of education and regulated by the Thai Ministry of Education's Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA). Thai teachers use the National Thai curriculum framework which is based on OPEC Thai language and cultural guidelines for international schools.

Summary of the evidence base used by the inspection team

The BSO was carried out by a team of three Education Development Trust inspectors. The inspection dates were agreed with the school giving 10 weeks' notice of the start date of the inspection. The inspection team had access to some information about the school prior to the inspection. During the three days, the team observed 43 lessons, four of which were conducted jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors held 22 meetings during which discussions with staff, pupils, parents and governors took place. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and school documents, they analysed the responses of parental questionnaires and generally observed the school at work.

Evaluation of the school

St Stephen's International School is a good school. It provides quality education for all its pupils and meets the standards for British Schools Overseas. It shows good capacity for further improvement.

Almost all pupils speak **English** as an additional language. Children arrive in the early years with skills in English language and communication that are usually well below those typical for their age.

In the early years, most pupils' listening skills improve in relation to their starting points, so that they are able to respond accurately to requests and follow instructions. Their speaking also improves, although opportunities to talk in class are more limited. Reading and writing remain below standards typical for pupils of their age.

Progress and attainment in the primary school are good, and outstanding in the secondary, with a greater emphasis on developing reading and writing skills. Year 2 pupils show an imaginative range of expression and extensive understanding of adjectives and adverbs. Year 3 pupils capture key vocabulary so that they understand increasingly complex spoken and written language. Year 5 pupils are able to write their own convincing version of a folk tale. By the time they leave Year 6 pupils achieve standards in English that are typically higher than those found in UK primary schools. Pupils in Year 11 show excellent knowledge and skill as they wrestle with sophisticated language and ideas in poetry. Progress accelerates until at GCSE pupils achieve results which exceed world-wide averages across the ability range, in literature, and when entering English as either first or second language. Those who continue post-16 also attain outstanding levels.

The accuracy of pupils' writing improves so that the best is outstanding. For a minority of pupils, however, there remains confusion over routine matters of grammar, syntax and spelling: for example, they have difficulty manipulating verb forms, identifying tenses, and distinguishing between singulars and plurals.

Standards in **mathematics** are average in the early years, good in the primary and the sixth form, and outstanding in the secondary. Pupils make at least good progress in all phases, with outstanding progress in the secondary phase by the end of key stage 4.

In the early years there is a strong focus on developing basic skills. By the end of the Reception year a majority of children meet or exceed the early learning goals in numeracy and shape, space and measure. Reception children make good progress in developing their subtraction skills. They confidently express and successfully convert number sentences to sums and answer them correctly.

Primary pupils continue to make good progress and achieve above average standards by the end of Year 6 when compared to the results found in UK primary schools. Year 2 pupils show good skills in counting in different intervals and can recognise and work out missing numbers in a sequence. Year 6 pupils confidently work out the factors of numbers and identify common factors quickly and accurately.

In the secondary school pupils make excellent progress. By the end of key stage 4 they achieve standards at IGCSE that are well above world average. In 2018 the proportion of pupils achieving an A* or A grade was almost twice the world average. Year 7 pupils make very good progress in recognising the order of operation to solve increasingly difficult problems. Year 10 pupils show a strong ability to recognise, manipulate and solve complex algebraic expressions.

Relatively low numbers of pupils post-16 mean that results can vary from year to year. However, pupils make good progress and typically achieve or exceed the standard expected of them.

In **science** children in the early years make satisfactory progress from low starting points in their scientific understanding of the world. At the time of the inspection children were learning about pets and the weather. Role play areas and book corners helped to support learning. By the end of Reception year attainment is broadly in line with early learning goals expectations.

All groups of pupils make good progress in their scientific understanding to reach standards that are higher than those typical for their age. Progress in the development of scientific skills is slower because pupils have less regular exposure to science investigations. Pupils' work shows they use investigation skills to for example, in Year 4, to find out the effects of fizzy drinks on teeth, and in Year 6 to investigate reversible and irreversible changes to materials.

In secondary, progress gathers momentum and by the end of the phase all groups of pupils make outstanding progress. Pupils in Year 8 biology could carry out an investigation to find out if antibiotics, antibacterial, antiseptics and disinfectants kill bacteria. Pupils in Year 11 knew the stages of mitosis and could identify cells and chromosomes using microscopy skills. Standards at the end of key stage 3 are above and by the end of key stage 4 are well above UK and world averages.

Pupils at post-16 continue to make good progress, reaching standards that are above UK averages. Low numbers of students enter physics, chemistry and biology examinations so standards measured against world averages are not statistically reliable.

Pupils make outstanding progress in **information and communication technology (ICT)** at all stages throughout the school. Standards are broadly typical for those of their age when they enter the school. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are secure. A few were uncertain about the most effective approach to searching the internet, but pupils' skills are more than adequate for almost all purposes across the curriculum, and they use tablets and laptops routinely to support their learning in the classroom. Pupils' skills in coding develop well and their results in public examinations are outstanding.

Progress and attainment are outstanding across a range of **other subjects**. Pupils in all phases of the school relish the opportunities offered in PE, art, geography and music to deepen and extend their knowledge. They benefit from expert teaching to develop understanding and skills at a high level.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support and guidance which develop their confidence to work independently. Consequently, they make progress across the range of subjects, typically at the same rate as their peers.

Summary of other judgements against the BSO standards:

- The quality of the curriculum provided by the school is good (see Standard 1 below).
- The quality of teaching and assessment are good overall (see Standard 1 below).
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding (see Standard 2 below).
- The welfare, health and safety of the pupils are outstanding (see Standard 3 below).
- The Standard for the suitability of the proprietor and staff is met (see Standard 4 below).
- The premises and accommodation meet the requirements of the Standard (see Standard 5 below).
- The provision of Information for parents meets the requirements of this Standard (see Standard 6 below).
- The school's procedures for handling complaints meet the requirements of the Standard (see Standard 7 below).
- The leadership and management of the school are good (see Standard 8) below

As a result of this inspection, undertaken during November 2018, the school has demonstrated that it meets the Standards for British Schools Overseas (2017 updated). This judgement is endorsed by the British Government, quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and is valid for a period of three years.

Standard 1. The quality of education provided by the school

The school meets the requirement of the standard. The **curriculum** is at least good in all parts of the school, and outstanding in the primary and post-16 phases. It enables all pupils to make good or better progress. There is clear continuity and progression and a strong British focus throughout.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. This happens mostly through additional support within lessons but may include periodic withdrawal from some lessons for more intensive support. This enables these pupils to make good progress. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and adjusted in response to new developments, changing needs or requirements.

For the youngest children the school follows the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum. The primary school follows the International Primary Curriculum (IPC). At key stage 3 the school follows the International Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC). In both these phases the National Curriculum in English is followed for mathematics and English. In key stage 4, pupils study for International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) qualifications, whilst Year 12 and 13 follow Advanced level (A level) courses. A good range of subject choices is offered in both upper phases despite there being relatively low numbers especially at post-16. The curriculum is enhanced by the addition of Mandarin as a third language. The curriculum is adapted to meet local requirements for the study of Thai language and culture, and to take advantage of the school's context and culture. The curriculum provides a range of learning opportunities that stimulate pupils' engagement and curiosity. The IPC in particular has a strong focus on cross-curriculum links. It promotes creativity, independent thinking and learning skills.

The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of sporting, musical, artistic and academic options. After-school and community activities further enrich the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged and expected to participate in these activities and consequently they are attended well. Year 7 and 8 pupils were very enthusiastic about the Khoa Yai residential outdoor activities trip they had recently attended.

There is a comprehensive programme of high-quality personal, social and health education (PSHE) across the school. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It includes appropriate age-related careers education for secondary pupils.

The curriculum emphasises values of internationalism, democracy and environmental issues. These make a strong contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and tolerance and mutual respect for all. There is a positive and successful commitment to equalities. Pupils are taught sensitively in an age-appropriate way about the protected characteristics such as age, disability, race and sexual orientation. This is reflected in their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum meets all the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010.

The school celebrates key British festivals and occasions. For example, pupils recently celebrated Remembrance Day, some participating in a formal ceremony at the British embassy. Pupils can explain convincingly the meaning of this ceremony and its relevance to their lives. The curriculum also celebrates a wide range of other religious, national and international festivals and events.

The curriculum prepares pupils successfully for the next stage in their education and allows them to enter or re-enter the UK education system. Across 2017 and 2018 the Year 13 leavers successfully joined a range of higher education courses, with about half going to the UK and the rest to a range of international destinations.

Whilst the curriculum is good overall, the school is aware that there are issues related to the coverage and content of science in the IPC. The IMYP has been successfully introduced, but it has not become fully embedded and school is working towards its full accreditation.

The quality of **teaching, learning and assessment** across the school is good. This enables pupils to make good progress in acquiring knowledge, increasing understanding and developing skills across the curriculum.

In early years teachers create an inclusive and supportive environment. This helps children settle into school well and develops children's confidence. Teachers demonstrate adequate understanding of how children learn and develop. They are increasingly providing opportunities for children to learn through active play and exploration. These promote independent learning skills and improves their knowledge of the world around them. As a result, children make good progress overall in achieving the early learning goals.

Across the school relationships between pupils and teachers are very positive and respectful. Consequently, pupils are well-motivated and are keen to participate actively in their learning. They enjoy opportunities to work collaboratively and learn through discussions with their peers. They feel confident in seeking clarification or help if they are having difficulty. As a result, the learning environment in lessons is very productive and pupils say that they enjoy lessons.

Teachers are well qualified and have good subject knowledge. Learning activities are managed well and teachers plan tasks and activities that engage and motivate pupils. Most teachers use questioning skilfully to check pupils' understanding and to extend and deepen their learning. Teachers use a range of resources effectively to motivate and engage pupils in their learning. Pupils use technologies routinely, confidently and effectively to support their learning. The school policy of 'bring your own device' is successful and pupils are encouraged to find things out for themselves. This is especially evident in primary.

Where learning is most successful teachers have high expectations and set challenging work that is closely matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Tasks encourage pupils to think about their learning, rather than just acquiring knowledge, and this encourages them to become more independent and resilient learners. At best the pace of learning is brisk, leading to rapid and sustained progress. Teaching and learning of the highest calibre are not yet consistent across all phases and subjects.

Teachers know pupils well as individuals and have a good knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses. Most teachers assess pupils' work effectively and routinely give constructive

feedback so that pupils know how to improve their work. Some feedback is of a very high quality. There are thorough systems to track and assess pupils' attainment and progress. However, this information is not always used by teachers as effectively as it could be to match work to pupils' individual needs and abilities, and to challenge them to make more rapid progress.

The styles of teaching, learning and assessment take account of those commonly used in schools in the UK and equip pupils with the knowledge and skills to enter or re-enter the UK educational system at an appropriate level.

Although teaching overall is good, expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes not high enough. This means that the work set does not always challenge pupils sufficiently to make the best possible progress or enable them to achieve the highest standards.

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

The school meets the requirements of the standard. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. By the time they leave the school most pupils are mature, confident and articulate. They have a sophisticated understanding of what it takes to be a leader in the modern world, in accordance with the school's overarching aim. They have developed most of the qualities identified in the school's list of 'dispositions' or desirable qualities, notably adaptability, reflectiveness, respect, creativity and compassion.

Behaviour is excellent with conduct around the school orderly, and an attitude in class which is highly supportive of learning. Sanctions are rare: pupils say that the worst is the sense that they have let themselves and their teachers down by allowing their standards to drop. They value the house points system which acts as a public way of rewarding good achievement or effort. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and accept the consequences for misbehaviour. Relationships between pupils are positive. They listen respectfully to one another in class and help others where they can. Pupils collaborate effectively both on academic assignments and informally on projects beyond the classroom, such as charitable fundraising.

Pupils of all ages take pleasure in exercising formal responsibilities across the school, as prefects and school councillors, library monitors and house captains. Equally, and without thinking, they display an advanced level of social responsibility. A new entrant in primary, on his first day, was treated with particular kindness, in line with the school's cultural expectations. Inspectors saw numerous examples of thoughtful, kind and compassionate behaviour, for example towards those who had dropped their belongings, or suffered a knock in playground basketball.

The school offers many opportunities to lead and take responsibility. Pupils make very effective use of them, raising money for those less fortunate than themselves through bake sales, craft fairs, Christmas markets and other special events. The school councils, primary and secondary, have begun to make an impact on school life, for example by influencing healthy menu choices, ensuring greater privacy in toilet facilities, and arranging the best use of the sports facilities. Pupils' views are taken into account through the councils. The International Award is supported well by the pupils; and the Model United Nations congress was recently hosted by the school, and largely organised by pupils. All members of Years 11, 12 and 13 have visited a shelter for

the homeless and a residential care home for the elderly in Khao Yai and Chiang Rai. Pupils relish the chance to invest their time and energy to these and other projects, in preference to making monetary contributions.

Pupils show an excellent understanding of mutual respect and tolerance towards those of different beliefs and faiths, in line with the attitudes they see around them in Thailand. They are strongly in favour of democracy, the rule of law, and individual liberty, consistent themes in the PSHE scheme of work. The ethos of the school is inclusive and precludes the promotion of partisan political views. The protected characteristics of the Equalities Act (2010) are promoted successfully, as seen in a Year 4 PSHE session on accommodating racial differences. Pupils are committed to recycling, running a school-wide scheme, and they generally show good environmental awareness.

Pupils show a high level of understanding of cultural and spiritual matters, and they say that the international flavour of the school enables them to develop a broad view. They celebrate religious and other festivals embracing a range of Thai and western cultures.

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

The school meets the requirements of the standard. The school's arrangements and provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school, feel safe and say that they are cared for very well. Attendance is high at 96 percent. Pupils are punctual to school in the mornings and move promptly to their lessons.

The school is very inclusive and welcoming. Well-established procedures ensure that new pupils settle quickly in the friendly and supportive atmosphere. Pupils are known well as individuals, and positive reinforcement from teachers helps develop their self-esteem and sense of personal worth. The school provides a strong network of support that identifies and addresses any issues quickly and effectively. Pupils know who to turn to if they are having difficulty or face problems. They have great confidence that they will be listened to and any issues addressed. Both pupils and parents comment on the school's friendly, harmonious and inclusive nature. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that if it happens, it is dealt with quickly, appropriately and sensitively. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and healthy. For example, they have a good awareness of cyber-bullying and e-safety, and a full awareness of issues related to fire drills and the 'duck and cover' lockdown procedure. There is a strong and successful commitment to healthy living. PSHE programmes promote healthy eating and healthy living, and awareness of mental health issues.

Strong support is provided for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and any pupils facing problems or difficulties. Staff are alert to any pupil who might need support. This is provided effectively through the work of teachers, learning support and guidance staff, with external support when necessary.

The school's safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are comprehensive and applied rigorously. They conform fully to UK practices and requirements as well as those of Thailand. All staff are trained annually in safeguarding, including those joining the school at times other than the start of the academic year

The school's risk assessment procedures are thorough and applied diligently and any concerns addressed quickly. The school site is secure. Entry is controlled by security guards, and the site is suitably monitored by surveillance cameras. All transport arrangements and off-site visits are subject to meticulous planning and thorough risk assessments. Fire safety arrangements are at least as stringent as those in the UK and meet Thai requirements. Fire drills take place regularly. The school has a thorough and well-rehearsed lockdown procedure in case of severe weather or intrusion.

Standard 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets all the requirements of the standard. Recruitment procedures are of a high standard, ensuring the suitability of staff to work with children. All the required checks are in place and confirm the employed staff are not barred from regulated activity relating to children, in accordance with the safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2006. All checks relating to the right to work in Thailand, the person's identity and medical fitness are in place prior to confirming an appointment and issuing visas and work permits. Locally recruited staff are thoroughly police checked. Thorough checks are also in place for the proprietor and board of directors. The school keeps a comprehensive record of all staff who currently work in the school, the checks carried out and the date of commencement of work within the school.

Standard 5. The premises and accommodation

The school meets the requirements of the standard. The school has good levels of staffing. Teaching staff are all specialists with suitable qualifications and experience for their roles. Resources are used efficiently so as to meet the needs of all pupils. The overall impact on learning is positive.

The site is safe and secure, and standards of hygiene are high, because of the work of the support staff, who are diligent and well trained. Air conditioning and soundproofing are almost always effective. Separate designated buildings for each phase of the school mean that resources such as science laboratories are specialised. Some facilities, such as the gymnasium and canteen, are shared by all students, so the school still has integrity and coherence, and pupils find transition between phases easier.

Recent developments to the facilities include a dedicated sixth-form centre for academic work and informal gathering; and specialist areas for sport and music to sit alongside those for science and art. The swimming pool has been refurbished to promote further sporting prowess and healthy lifestyles. The new floor for the gymnasium and improved drainage on the sports field are already having a strong impact on outcomes for pupils. The accommodation enhances the experience for the pupils and supports their learning in a highly effective manner.

There are primary and secondary libraries, which are fresh and welcoming spaces, appropriately stocked and staffed. Almost all classrooms are equipped with suitable modern technology. Classrooms are generally in good decorative order and well maintained. They provide plenty of space and light and have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Class sizes are small,

ensuring that each individual has an opportunity to be heard and to receive appropriate attention as they learn.

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

The school meets the requirements of the standard. A range of communication systems keep parents fully informed about their child's education and all that is happening in the school. These include newsletters, emails, text messaging, social media and parent and carer information meetings. Translation into Thai is provided for most letters and certainly for important information that needs sharing with parents. Parents greatly value the sensitive balance the school provides between East and West. Thai culture and values are strongly respected within an English curriculum school that promotes British standards and expectations. The school's website is comprehensive and provides a range of easily accessible information concerning all aspects of school life. This includes basic information, contact details, admissions processes, policies, examination results, events calendar and news.

Parents receive regular and detailed reports as well as formal and informal updates about their child's academic and personal progress. Formal reports are sent to parents termly and there are regular parent-teacher consultations across the school year. In both cases, targets to help pupils make their next steps in their learning are shared and discussed. This allows parents, teachers and students to work together and enable further improvement. Parents have readily available access to teachers and can arrange additional meetings to discuss their child as needed. Additionally, parents of children in the early years have access to information about their child's progress through an online system.

The school has run workshops on specialist topics such as keeping children safe on the internet. Parents, especially those of primary pupils, can attend regular curriculum mornings which focus on learning within a particular subject. These help parents to support homework and learning at home in partnership with the school. Workshops are attended well and welcomed by parents. Continual informal dialogue with parents helps the school to improve what they do and enables prompt intervention where necessary.

Parents say they are well informed about all that is happening in the school, and the progress their children are making. They report that the school and staff are open, very accessible and that the school responds very effectively to all reasonable requests for information and any concerns they may have. They feel that they are listened to and that their views are taken into account. As a result, they feel part of the school community and say that the school works well in partnership with parents to help their child's education.

Standard 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints

The school meets all the requirements of the standard. The complaints policy is available to parents on the school's website. Formal procedures for complaint are set out in stages. In the policy it is clearly stated when the next review of the policy will take place. Parents are aware of the complaints policy and confirm that procedures are clear. Most issues are dealt with swiftly and informally by class teachers or phase leaders. If parents are not satisfied with the informal response, then it is treated as a formal complaint and dealt with by the review panel. There have been no such complaints.

Standard 8. Leadership and management of the school

The school meets the requirements of the standard. The quality of leadership and management is good overall. The principal, who has been in post for four years, provides clear direction in line with the schools' vision. Along with his leadership team, the principal creates a positive learning environment in which pupils of all ages are encouraged to strive for excellence in their academic studies and equally their personal lives, on a journey to becoming effective and compassionate citizens and leaders.

The board of governors, along with the principal, set the strategic vision for the school. The board works in cooperation with and empowers the principal. Together they operate with the best interests of the pupils central to their decision making. The board has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It has clear financial policies. The governors ensure that the school operates legally and that safeguarding procedures are effective. It helps the school to operate with equality and without discrimination. The responsibilities of the board and the school's leadership are well understood and work effectively.

The school's recruitment procedures are successful, appointing mostly UK-trained and competent teachers and leaders. The recruitment of skilled staff for key positions and the retention of capable teachers has been instrumental in the development of the school and the rise in student achievements. The senior leadership team continues to strengthen with the recent additions of experienced heads of secondary and post-16. The early years is currently, and temporarily led by the lower primary leader. This is very challenging and unrealistic in the long term. The school recognises the need to recruit a specialist for the early years in order to raise standards.

The quality of middle leaders is variable and strengthening. Some curriculum coordinators are new, their roles not fully developed and their impact not yet measurable. Not all middle leaders are fully trained in the analysis of assessment data and this occasionally impacts on the accuracy of some elements of the school's self-evaluation and review.

Senior leaders meet regularly as part of their commitment to and drive towards excellence. Positive relationships between leaders set a tone for the school and help to create a harmonious working atmosphere where teams work well together. Regular lesson observations and management of staff performance is effective. The Principal and his team have a realistic and mostly accurate view of the school. This is because self-evaluation is based on increasingly thorough analysis of a growing range of standardised data and the process takes into account the views of all stakeholders.

Self-evaluation informs whole-school improvement planning which results in the identification of professional development need and the good progress the school continues to make. Together school leadership have brought about many changes that teachers, parents and students positively comment on and appreciate. All leaders, at every level, communicate ambition and drive for improvement. They inspire staff and pupils and provide good role models. They clearly demonstrate further capacity to improve.

The school's leadership team fulfil their responsibilities in ensuring the standards for British schools overseas are consistently met. As an inclusive school, St Stephens international school promotes equality, tackles discrimination and embraces diversity, which contributes to the caring atmosphere where pupils are happy and successful.

Early Years Provision

The small early years provision caters for children from two to five years. Approximately 10% of the overall school population is located in the early years. The facilities include well-maintained and spacious classrooms with access to outdoor provision. There is also a large indoor air-conditioned play area and specialist music and dance studio. Resources to support learning are of good quality and help to motivate and engage young learners. Staffing is generous, and a high ratio of adults ensures that children are cared for and supported very well. The early years provision meets the UK independent school standards.

The curriculum follows the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children's progress is tracked in all areas of development against the early learning goals. Significant emphasis is placed on children's personal development. Consequently, most children grow in confidence, become increasingly independent and behave beautifully. Curriculum delivery and the quality of teaching are effective in ensuring that most children make at least expected progress. Consequently, children enter Year 1 at the expected levels, except in their reading and writing which are below standards typical for pupils of their age.

Overall leadership and management of the early years is adequate. Partnerships with parents are positive and levels of communication high. Appropriate management ensures that the early years is run smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Leadership to inspire higher expectations, more rapid progress and higher outcomes is restricted by the current structuring of leadership in this phase of the school.

Sixth form provision

The sixth form caters for a growing number of Year 12 and 13 pupils seeking to study for Cambridge International Examinations at Advanced level (A Level). Pupils are expected to take four subjects at the Advanced Subsidiary level in Year 12, and to continue with any three of them onto A Level in Year 13. Historically, Thai nationals had the option to enter Thai universities without completing Year 13. For such a small cohort the choice of courses available for pupils to follow is generous and improving.

Excellent pastoral support is led by the experienced head of sixth form and a team of effective form tutors. The strong team and the friendly atmosphere they create results in a happy sixth form community. Pupils meet with their tutor twice a day for registration, one to one mentoring and form activities. Pupils demonstrate maturity, self-regulated behaviour and excellent personal and social skills.

Pupils are guided well through the important decisions they make regarding higher education, careers and subject options. They are also well supported through any personal issues that might arise and enjoy participating in termly social outings and an end of term meal. Regular assessments and progress tracking ensure that pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve. Most pupils' development of English and mathematical skills are above and well above expected levels.

The high-quality post-16 provision ensures that pupils' outcomes are at least good and often outstanding when compared to UK and world averages. Most pupils go on to secure university places of their choosing often in the UK, but also in Thailand and worldwide.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

St. Stephen's International School fully meets the requirements for British Schools Overseas.

What the school could do to improve further

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

1. Raise expectations and increase children's' progress in the early years.
2. Develop the roles of middle leaders and hold them accountable for raising pupils' achievements.
3. Ensure greater accuracy in the analysis of data so that:
 - a. teachers modify learning to more closely to meet the needs of all pupils and provide greater challenge, especially for high achievers
 - b. leaders can self-evaluate more precisely and more rapidly identify aspects of pupils' achievement requiring further improvement.

Summary of inspection judgements

Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		<input type="checkbox"/>		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		<input type="checkbox"/>		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		<input type="checkbox"/>		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		<input type="checkbox"/>		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	<input type="checkbox"/>			
The behaviour of pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>			
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Leadership and management

Overall effectiveness of leadership and management		<input type="checkbox"/>		
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The quality of provision for boarding

	n/a			
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School details

Name of school	St. Stephen's International School
Type of school	Independent, privately owned, co-educational
Date school opened	April 1998
Age range of pupils	2 - 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	430
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	n/a
Annual fees (day pupils)	Nursery 326,350 Baht – Year 13 572,450 Baht
Annual fees (boarders)	n/a
Address of school	998 Viphavadi Rangsit Road Lad Yao Chatuchak Bangkok 10900
Telephone number	+66 (0) 2513 02070
Email address	info@sis.edu
Headteacher	Mr John Rolfe
Proprietor	Hands Management Company Limited

GLOSSARY

Achievement – Progress made by a pupil taking his/her individual circumstances and starting point into account.

Accreditation – The system whereby a school or similar organisation is assessed against agreed standards and if deemed as having achieved the standards required is provided with some form of official certification or recognition.

Accreditation Board – The body responsible for the strategic direction, operation and conduct of the accreditation service provided by Education Development Trust

Assessment – The process of finding out how well pupils have learnt what they have been taught. It is a continuous process that occurs throughout the school year, using a variety of forms for different purposes.

Attainment – The level pupils reach, usually measured by reference to benchmarks, such as test and examination results.

British Schools Overseas Inspection (BSO) – Inspection framework and standards defined by the DfE for British schools overseas to opt to be inspected against.

Education Development Trust – Formerly CfBT Education Trust, we are one of the world's leading not-for-profit education companies providing a range of education services in the UK and internationally.

Central Support Team – Personnel based in Education Development Trust Head Office who are responsible for the administration of the various educational services provided to international schools.

Combined or Joint Visit – a BSO Inspection visit combined with an ISQM accreditation or re-accreditation visit conducted (or DSIB inspection in Dubai) at the request of the school. This will be carried out concurrently with reference to both frameworks and sets of standards. Some of the standards against which the school will be inspected are common, but some of the BSO standards relate to the British nature of the school.

Cycle of Inspection – The period of three years between BSO inspection visits.

Curriculum – The educational programmes or courses of study taught by a school including subjects and activities inside and outside the classroom, as well as extra-curricular enrichment programmes.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) – All private schools in Dubai are required by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority to be inspected by the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB). A joint DSIB/BSO inspection may be requested through the KHDA's strategic partner Education Development Trust.

Leadership – Leadership at any level (for example principals/headteachers, governors, board members, team/subject leaders) involves setting direction, empowering staff to work effectively, creating a suitable environment for learning, and setting an example to others. It entails different skills from management.

Learning – Pupils’ gains in knowledge, skills and understanding.

Management – The practical business of running a school, department or aspect of a school’s work in an efficient and useful way.

Ofsted – The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills is the non-ministerial government department of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Schools in England and is responsible for school inspections in England.

Progress – The gains in learning made between two points in time. A pupil can be described as having made insufficient progress, satisfactory, good, or outstanding progress in relation to his/her starting point.

School self-evaluation – The identification by the staff of a school of its strengths and weaknesses across the key aspects of its performance. Effective self-evaluation focuses specifically on the impact of the school’s work on the outcomes for pupils.

Standards –

- (1) The levels of knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils and a school demonstrates at a particular point in time.
- (2) The evaluation requirements to be used in the inspection of British Schools Overseas.

Teaching – All activities undertaken by the teacher aimed at enhancing pupils’ learning.

With 40 years' experience of delivering education services worldwide Education Development Trust exists solely to provide education for public benefit.

Teaching and learning are the essence of what we do and we have more than 2,500 staff around the world designing and delivering services. Education Development Trust staff support educational reform, teach, advise, research and train. As one of the top 30 charities in the UK, we work for and with individuals and communities in order to help them reach their potential

Education Development Trust has built a reputation for providing high quality educational support and inspection services to national organisations such as Ofsted, the Teacher Training Agency and to schools in the north of England. Our main aim is to improve schools through high quality school inspections. We have strong values and a clear vision to deliver a world class inspection service that will directly contribute to improving the quality of teaching, learning and care of all children and young people in settings, schools and colleges.

Education Development Trust first delivered inspections on behalf of Ofsted in 1993. Since then we have developed our experience and expertise in the field of school evaluation and improvement to become one of the UK's first major providers of inspection services.

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