

International Community School

4 York Terrace East, Regents Park, London, NW1 4PT

Inspection dates 29 April – 1 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management	Inadequate	4
Overall effectiveness of the boarding experience	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors do not have a good understanding of how to safeguard pupils.
- Leaders and governors are not checking that the school's safeguarding and health and safety policies are being acted upon.
- The school has not carried out an adequate assessment of the risks to primary school pupils from sharing the building with another organisation.
- The daily supervision of primary school pupils is not good enough to secure their safety.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make good progress, academically and personally. They benefit from a blend of good teaching and interesting lessons.
- Boarders are happy, well cared for and enjoy their experience. All staff understand their needs.
- Pupils behave well. They look after each other and have a strong community identity.
- Adults work closely with one another. They ensure that pupils learning English, pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities can get the most out of lessons.
- There are good systems for checking up on the progress pupils are making and the quality of teaching. The information is used effectively to improve the school.

Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for boarding schools

- The school requires improvement and must take action to meet schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.
- The school meets the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day’s notice. At the request of the Department for Education the inspection assessed the school's implementation of its action plan to address the regulations that failed at the emergency inspection in December 2013.
- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, seven of which were observed jointly with either the Principal of the primary school or the head of student support services.
- Inspectors took account of 33 responses to the online Parent View survey, as well as written communications from parents and carers. An inspector had discussions with a group of six parents and carers from the parent council. Inspectors also considered the 64 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors talked with three groups of pupils as well as with individual pupils during their lessons and in the residence. They heard pupils read. Inspectors spent two hours looking at work in pupils’ books, in addition to the books seen in lessons.
- Inspectors held discussions with members of the school’s leadership team, safeguarding team and governors. The inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including documents relating to pupils’ attainment and progress, child protection and safeguarding, the school’s curriculum, the management of teachers’ performance and the school’s action plan.

Inspection team

Jonathan Palk, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Usman Mapara

Additional Inspector

Raymond Prentice

Additional Inspector

Sharon Lewis

Social Care Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The International Community School opened in 1979 and is a non-selective school offering education for pupils aged three to 18. It is situated on two sites in Central London for primary and secondary provision respectively. There are currently 245 pupils on roll, including 16 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The primary school shares its space with a self-funding organisation called International Students House, which provides residential accommodation for British and overseas students aged over 18.
- A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Pupils, many of whom are foreign nationals resident in London, follow a curriculum based around the International Baccalaureate. An important aspect of the school's ethos is the off-site learning. This programme aims to support pupils' learning through local and international trips.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities supported through school action is typical of the majority of schools nationally. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Seven pupils have a statement. These are for behaviour and communication needs associated with autism.
- The school offers boarding accommodation for up to 12 boarders. At the time of the inspection four boarders were residing at the school. The boarding accommodation is provided off campus in a large town house. The boarding provision is due to close at the end of June 2014.
- The last inspection of the school and boarding was carried out 9 and 10 December 2013. It was an emergency inspection at the request of the Department for Education.
- The two proprietors and a Director of Education constitute the governing body of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management of safeguarding by:
 - ensuring clarity of roles and accountabilities for all aspects of safeguarding
 - implementing a rigorous programme for checking that policies and procedures are fit for purpose and are implemented
 - liaising effectively with the proprietors of International Students House over matters related to the shared use of the premises at 4 York Terrace East so that pupils safety is not compromised.
- An external review of governance is highly recommended to be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.
- **The school must meet the following independent school standards.**
 - Make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school having regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State. (paragraph 7)
 - Implement fully the written health and safety policy in order to comply with legislation. (paragraph 11)
 - Ensure that pupils are supervised properly through appropriate deployment of school staff. (paragraph 15)
 - Ensure that the school's accommodation and facilities are maintained to a sufficient standard to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils, as far as is reasonably practical. (paragraph 23C)

Inspection judgements

Achievement of pupils

Good

- Pupils in the Nursery and Reception class make good progress from their starting points. They go on to reach a good level of development when compared to national expectations. There is a good balance of pupil-initiated and adult-led activities. Instruction in learning to read, practise handwriting and writing is effective.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language make rapid progress. There is an effective combination of close tracking of their reading and writing skills combined with regular attention to correct oracy and grammar in lessons. All lessons focus on linguistic skills through good quality discussions. This helps improve pupils' confidence in spoken language.
- Pupils of all ages are keen readers. The library is carefully stocked to provide reference materials appropriate to the topics and themes being studied. Pupils enjoy reading both contemporary and classic fiction.
- Pupils' computing skills are above expectations. Pupils use these skills well to aid their research and critical thinking skills.
- Pupils' attainment compares well with that of pupils in other schools following the International Baccalaureate programme at both secondary and primary phase. More-able pupils are making good progress in mathematics and science because the work encourages deeper thinking and builds rapidly on their secure skills. They are enthusiastic, enjoy the practical lessons and persevere keenly with demanding work.
- Teachers are highly knowledgeable of the coursework criteria. They quickly get to assess where pupils' strengths and gaps lie and adjust the demands they place on pupils accordingly. This ensures very little time is lost for those pupils joining the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities make good progress. Many make outstanding progress in the short time they are at the school. They benefit from close cooperation between the specialist support staff and class teachers. The accurate and detailed assessments of what they can do are used to plan their next steps. Adjustments in the curriculum ensure that they have time to develop life skills and strengthen linguistic skills.
- Pupils studying for the diploma course do well. Most go on to secure their first choice university. The additional English language classes, with a focus on technical language and expert teaching, broaden their knowledge and skills.

Quality of teaching

Good

- Teaching is good; some is outstanding. There is a good rapport between adults and pupils. This encourages high-quality discussions, well focused on the learning. Questions invariably put the onus back on to pupils to think more and challenge themselves. Pupils enjoy their learning, regularly bouncing ideas off each other.
- Across the school assessing individual progress is very thorough. Good lesson planning, based on this information, ensures that the expectations remain clear throughout the lesson. Small class sizes and a high level of adult presence in lessons ensure there is progressive support for learners as and when they need it.
- The teachers have a good knowledge of the expectations of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Activities both in and outside the classroom are well planned to meet each pupils' needs. They carry out a thorough analysis of pupils' progress and use the information well to plan activities that motivate and inspire.
- Information on pupils' skills before joining school is often in short supply. The close working between pupils and adults in lessons means that discussions quickly focus in on and pick up misunderstandings.
- Marking is well received by pupils. Comments are evaluative and raise expectations for the pupils

further. Pupils are well aware of the grades they are capable of achieving and work towards these in most lessons. More-able pupils are inclined to coast when the mixed-ability group work demands less of their skills and knowledge.

- Developing critical skills as well as using and applying skills have a strong emphasis throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to work practically and think out problems.
- There is consistency in the approach to teaching pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities. This is beneficial for those pupils with autism. Resources, such as picture clues, word cards and manipulative equipment, aid their thinking and helps them to express their ideas.
- The teaching of English as an additional language is lively. The specialist knowledge of adults working in the classrooms helps reduce pupils' dependence on adults to do the work for them. Pupils are prepared well for lessons, either by renewing previous vocabulary or introducing the new ideas that they will meet in the lesson. This removes anxiety and helps the pupils play a full part in the lesson.
- There is a strong understanding of each boarder's individual needs which contributes to their academic and personal progress
- High-quality teaching, good challenge, small classes and effective one-to-one support ensure those on diploma courses learn well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Inadequate

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is inadequate in one part of the school. The action to minimise risks to pupils from adults not known to the pupils who use rooms in the building are ineffective. Supervision arrangements at play time are not sufficient to prevent pupils from potential hazards. As a consequence a number of regulations relating to the welfare, health and safety of pupils are not met.
- Managers are aware of the risks involved with the location and access to one classroom, and now have adequate plans in place to rectify this.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are calm, focused and confident in lessons. They consider behaviour is 'generally good'. They know the boundaries and that the adults will not tolerate any form of bullying. Pupils say they do not experience any bullying. An adult deals with any incidents of name-calling or unintentional physical contact swiftly.
- Pupils feel safe; they are confident sharing their concerns with adults. They understand procedures and routines. Since the last inspection pupils are made aware of the risks associated with trips and understand these well
- Pupils have a good understanding of road safety and good awareness of how to stay safe when using the internet. Pupils in the Nursery and Reception class told the inspector that when they go outside, 'we need to have a partner and tell a teacher'.
- Pupils have a good awareness of risks to themselves. They told inspectors that they knew when they felt unsafe, for example when gates are left open or residents are observed on the verandas overlooking the playground.
- Pupils have a strong sense of themselves and an inner confidence that matures as they move through the school. In part this is due to the emphasis given to personal, social and citizenship education. It also comes from the way lessons are structured to encourage cooperation.
- Pupils work well with each other and their teachers in school and when boarding. They have strong and developing awareness of the values of working collaboratively. Occasional over confidence may get the better of them, but a combination of teachers' high expectations and their sensitivity to their peers helps them re-establish good behaviour.
- Parents and carers of pupils in the primary school play an important role in helping those newly arrived at the school develop strong friendships, for example organising days out and family activities at weekends and during holidays. This work is supported well by school leaders. It has a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment of school.

- Attendance was average last year. The pattern is one of improvement.

Leadership and management**Inadequate**

- Despite a considerable injection of safeguarding training for all staff the depth of understanding about what constitute good policies and procedures remains shallow. There are too many gaps either in policies or in carrying out agreed procedures to ensure that the risks to pupils at the school are minimised.
- Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are not challenging each other to check they have got the procedures right. Consequently there has been considerable slippage in ensuring that all policies relating to keeping children and young people safe in the school are rigorously followed.
- Governors have taken appropriate action to address the shortcomings and regulatory failings identified at the last inspection of the school and boarding. There are good links with relevant child protection professionals and staff receive a wide range of safeguarding training. The appropriate checks on staff are made, safer recruitment procedures are now practised and there is a much tighter approach taken to ensuring trips are safely managed.
- Governors have not implemented a strict timescale for when they are going to check that policies are being implemented, or questioned staff adequately that all risks are being accounted for.
- The lax attitude to risk management at the site at 4 York Terrace has given rise to some inadequate security arrangements at the school. The policy is weak and does not adequately reflect the responsibilities of either party for prioritising the pupils' safety.
- The child protection policy covers essential information and staff know how to manage allegations effectively. The risk management system appropriately covers fire safety and activities.
- There are many positive aspects to leadership and management in the school. For example, a wide range of information from teachers on pupils' work, including their reading skills, is being collected and checked through tests and external examinations. School leaders use this information to challenge teachers' expectations of pupils' work. It also ensures additional support is timely and effective.
- The school is tracking closely the performance of its pupils compared with the performance of pupils in other schools internationally. This is helping set demanding targets for individual pupils. The secondary school is more advanced in this respect than the primary school.
- Leaders carry out formal and informal lesson observations and give clear feedback to teachers. When teaching is less than good, feedback to staff is uncompromising.
- Managers use the performance management arrangements well to confront underperformance by teachers and as a result, teachers know what is required of them to improve and by when. Managers provide appropriate support for teachers to get better through training adapted for individual teachers.
- The leadership and management of the boarding provision are good. Boarding staff demonstrate an enthusiastic passion for their role. There is a competent understanding and implementation of the national minimum standards, and recommendations from the last emergency inspection have been fully met. Robust quality assurance and monitoring arrangements promote the best outcomes for boarders.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There is a particularly strong promotion of equality and diversity. Pupils thrive within an environment that promotes their well-being and values their uniqueness. A rich range of cultural experiences strengthens pupils' views of themselves and understanding of British values.
- There is extensive extra-curricular provision that supports personal development. Many students take part in activities in sport, the arts and drama at international and community levels.
- There is outstanding management of the support for the teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities from a knowledgeable head of student support. The extensive training offered to teachers and assistants, through a network of conferences and experts in the field, contributes to the good quality of the support they offer in lessons. The

continuous tracking of the pupils' progress and careful monitoring of the effectiveness of therapists ensure that behaviour management plans and individual education plans help staff to meet the pupils' needs very well.

Outcomes for boarders	Good
Quality of boarding provision and care	Good
Boarders' safety	Good
Leadership and management of the boarding provision	Good

- Outcomes for boarders are good. They benefit from well-organised, safe provision and receive good care from adults. The school and boarding staff share the same expectations of boarders and work together well.
- The residence has a relaxed family atmosphere that enables boarders to establish quickly positive relationships with each other. They develop good social skills through their boarding experience. They learn to compromise and get on well with others from different backgrounds.
- The boarding experience contributes well to their personal growth and attitude to school. Boarders have made good progress in developing their independence, self-esteem and emotional resilience. Managers have increased the number of support staff within boarding since the last inspection. This ensures staff supervising boarders outside of teaching time are sufficient in number, training and experience.
- Boarders make a positive contribution to their boarding community and help to influence changes. Boarders participate in an exciting range of extra-curricular activities. They enjoy going out for meals, to the cinema, shopping and on a variety of excursions. They can also invite friends over to the boarding house.
- The quality of the boarding provision and care is good. Boarders benefit from an effective pastoral care system. New boarders are given a buddy. This helps them settle in quickly.
- Food is plentiful and of a high quality. There is a good amount of choice and boarders are able to help themselves to snacks and drinks. Special diets are well catered for.
- Boarders enjoy playing football, squash and badminton. The school's healthcare arrangements promote their physical, emotional and psychological health well. A valued asset is the school counsellor and psychotherapist to help them resolve issues of a personal nature.
- The boarding accommodation has robust safeguarding and risk management arrangements. These include educating boarders on personal safety. There are regular health and safety checks and certificates verify the safety of the building.
- Staff promote positive behaviour strategies and there are no behaviour management or bullying issues. The school has a clear complaints procedure. Boarders regularly raise concerns at their house meetings. They are also able to make suggestions to improve further the quality of boarding.
- Boarders' and parental feedback regarding the boarding provision is very positive. The residence handbook, school handbooks and website provide parents and others with comprehensive information about the school, its ethos and organisation.

What inspection judgements mean

School and boarding	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053.

Grade characteristics for the judgements made on the school's boarding can be viewed in the *Evaluation schedule for the inspection of boarding and residential provision in schools* which is also available on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110096.

School details

Unique reference number	101171
Social care unique reference number	SC474187
Inspection number	442983
DfE registration number	213/6304

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school. The inspection of boarding provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

Type of school	Independent all-age
School status	Independent boarding
Age range of pupils	3–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	248
Number of part time pupils	0
Number of boarders on roll	4
Proprietor	Mr B A Toettcher and Mrs E A Toettcher
Chair	-
Head of school	Stuart Pollard (primary) Rose Threlfall (secondary)
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2014
Annual fees (day pupils)	£15,850 – £21,250
Annual fees (boarders)	Upon application
Telephone number	020 7935 1206
Email address	secondary@ics.uk.net

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

