

# International School of London

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	313/6063
Unique Reference Number	102550
Inspection number	318150
Inspection dates	27-28 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Neville Grenyer AI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

## Information about the school

The International School of London, founded in Camden in 1972, is an independent, co-educational day school for primary and secondary pupils. The school offers an international curriculum through the three International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes, leading to the IB Diploma. It serves the needs of the international community in London, and aims to maximise the achievement of its pupils throughout the curriculum, and in their personal and social development. Drawing on the rich variety of cultures present in the school, it aims to develop in each pupil a global outlook which seeks to understand and appreciate the attitudes and values of others. Within the school community, all are valued and treated equally. There are currently 320 pupils on roll, aged from 3 to 18. The school is fully accredited by the Council of International Schools and is an IB World School.

## Evaluation of the school

The International School of London provides a good quality of education and care and achieves its stated aims very well. The good curriculum is a major strength of the school, as is the good teaching, which supports pupils' very positive attitudes and good progress. These ensure that pupils learn through their second language while also preserving their skills and continuing their mother tongue learning at appropriate levels. The school has an outstanding transition system which enables pupils with a multiplicity of different mother tongue languages to enter the school smoothly and to leave as part of a system of international education. The community and services programme is outstanding in its promotion of understanding between nations and cultures.

## Quality of education

The school's curriculum, based on the IB programmes, is good, and covers a wide range of interesting activities and experiences. It is planned well to meet the needs of the school's international students through the prescribed programme for primary and middle years, and the diploma programme for ages 16-18.

The Foundation Stage curriculum builds up systematically and enjoyably on children's skills and knowledge through play and investigation. The primary curriculum is inquiry driven, well structured, and mostly taught in the pupils' second language.

Pupils are given opportunities to make choices and decisions with confidence and flexibility. Good attention is paid to developing basic skills and making the curriculum more creative and enjoyable through carefully planned links between subjects; for example, pupils learn about healthy living through science and physical education. The secondary curriculum is very sophisticated, and is taught through the IB programmes mostly also in the pupils' second language, apart from the essential mother tongue classes that help keep pupils' skills and expertise in these languages up to standard. An information and communication technology (ICT) suite, and the use of the electronic boards in some classrooms, enhance learning in most subjects. The Diploma programme followed by 16-18 year-olds helps them to develop their own particular interests and skills in depth. A good programme of work promotes pupils' personal, social and health education.

Pupils enjoy and value the satisfactory range of after-school clubs such as football, cycling, ballet, drama and chess. Many parents would like the provision of visits and clubs extended further. Good use is made of the local amenities at, for example, Brentford Leisure Centre, Acton Sports Club and Gunnersbury Park. Other activities, such as the residential trip and a good number of educational visits enliven pupils' learning. Additionally, the individual music tuition on offer further broadens pupils' experiences successfully. Provision for pupils acquiring English as a second language (ESL) is good. There is an extensive mother tongue language programme that supports pupils' adaptation to English and to London.

The quality of teaching is good and results in good progress in learning. Lessons are well planned and are taught by effective teachers with appropriate and often impressive expertise. The supply teachers observed were well briefed in relation to the pupils' needs. Pupils enjoy their learning, and particularly at secondary level, appreciate the need for practice and for sometimes gruelling hard work. Pupils often display an academic maturity in their work, in mathematics and science for example, while they are still gaining a corresponding social maturity in their presentations. Role play is often very well conducted in class and even in science laboratories, assisted by good drama skills obtained lower down the school. There is good and often subtle adaptation of work to meet individual needs both in class work and in the homework set. The quality of individual projects seen is very high, ranging from high quality constructivist style work in art through to an informed appreciation of Art Nouveau architecture in Brussels.

The school has a good and effective policy on assessment, with clear definition of aims and objectives and use of assessment instruments from a range of options including exhibitions, public speaking, short and long essays, peer assessment, and self assessment as well as routine tests and homework. The school's ESL assessment policy has been recently improved to include a suitable range of approaches.

## Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly through the health and social education programme and the community and service activities. The vast majority of pupils attend well and enjoy their education at the school. Their behaviour is good. Pupils make a positive contribution; they enjoy their education and are prepared to work very hard to match the standards of their peers. A Year 12 lesson on the theory of knowledge enabled pupils to explore and to question the basis of knowledge sensibly.

Primary aged pupils' health and social education receives valuable contributions from the community and social programme, features of which include establishing close links with another primary school, charity work in class and the energetic activity to raise awareness of world problems. Drug education and alcohol education are also provided carefully to pupils.

The community and service activities programme runs from Years 7 to 11 and incorporates the school's 'Buddy system' for all new arrivals, helping new pupils to settle. It also includes the school council, which provides an important forum for pupils to develop an understanding of democracy and public institutions and services as well as to have an elected voice for their views to be made known. While most pupils were very supportive of its work, a few expressed their dissatisfaction and felt their views are not always heard. Pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being through many and varied activities. These include the international show, where all pupils make presentations celebrating and sharing their own culture with all the others, strengthening the clear cultural and racial harmony evident in the school. There is a spring fair, a photography activity, an international food festival, and a project on the recycling of paper. Pupils are designing and painting a new mural for the common room; other pupils run a school newspaper, a school disco, a winter dance and charity clubs. They have contributed stories to the Transition Book, published to help new entrants and leavers. There is a wide range of charity fund- and awareness-raising, currently ranging from buying chickens for Tibetan farmers to the Save the Children Fund.

## Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. The middle school health and social education curriculum has good links to the primary programme and offers good opportunities to address such issues across the curriculum. All the required care policies and procedures are in place and are implemented effectively. There is a good health and safety policy, revised in July 2007, and all departments have produced a health and safety review. There are clear procedures in the case of accidents and in relation to medical records and to first aid. The school has a clear new anti-bullying policy and an appropriate new behaviour policy. There are clear policies and procedures for school visits and child protection.

The completion and recording of required procedures such as fire practices, fire risk assessment and marking the registers, take place in line with the regulations.

The school has an accessibility plan to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002 as part of its strategic plan.

## Suitability of the proprietor and staff

Despite considerable turnover of staff in recent years, all staff, including supply teachers, have been checked against List 99, and Criminal Records Bureau checks have been carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with pupils. They have worked very hard to ensure that they have a single central record, in line with recent regulatory requirements.

## School's premises and accommodation

The school premises and accommodation are satisfactory. The primary-aged pupils are mostly taught in the annexe, which contains teaching rooms, separated from the main building by the church. Most of the secondary teaching is in the main building, which was purpose-built and is in a good state of repair. It has a useful hall and stage, three good specialist science laboratories, and there is a good, purpose-built ICT room. The building is attractive, and the rooms are well provided with display and resources. The annexe has a small hard-surfaced playground, and the main school a larger one at the front of the school. Provision is not enough to cater for the whole school at a time, so playtimes are staggered.

## Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents is satisfactory. The attractive prospectus matches the regulatory requirements, and there is a well-maintained website. Parents of children in all departments receive two reports on their progress in each subject taught each year. These provide satisfactory information and there are formal parents' meetings each term, but some parents feel that they would like more opportunity to discuss their children's progress with school staff. There is a regular newsletter from the very active Parent Teacher Association. Parents' meetings such as the one about the curriculum, held during the inspection, keep parents well informed. They receive a copy of the Parent and Student Handbook which refers to the required policies; these are also being posted on the school's website.

## Procedures for handling complaints

The school's arrangements for handling informal and formal complaints meet all of the requirements. The school has not received any formal written complaints in the last year.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005.

### What the school could do to improve further

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

- take measures to ensure greater stability in staffing
- develop the website and intranet further in order to help communication with parents and with prospective parents, and thus increase their understanding of the school.

## School details

Name of school	International School of London		
DCSF number	313/6063		
Unique reference number	102550		
Type of school	International Wide Age Range		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1972		
Age range of pupils	3-18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 175	Girls: 145	Total: 320
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 2	Girls: 4	Total: 6
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£12,400-£17,000		
Address of school	139 Gunnersbury Avenue London W3 8LG		
Telephone number	0208 992 5823		
Fax number	0208 993 7012		
Email address	mail@islondon.com		
Headteacher	Mr A Makarem		
Proprietor	Mr N Makarem		
Reporting inspector	Neville Grenyer AI		
Dates of inspection	27-28 September 2007		