



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS

INSPECTION REPORT ON EDRON ACADEMY

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Edron Academy

Full Name of School	Edron Academy
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Interim Head	Mr Eamonn Mullally
Chair of Governors	Señor Ernesto Piedras
Age Range	1 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	1068
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (530 boys; 538 girls)
Numbers by Age	1-5: 203 11-18: 509 6-11: 356
Inspection Dates	22 Sep 2014 to 25 Sep 2014

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI Schedule* for the inspection of British schools overseas and takes place over four days. The school has not previously had an ISI inspection.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools in England and overseas. As such, ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the relevant Standards for British Schools Overseas and the *ISI Framework* requirements. ISI is also the agency responsible for the inspection of schools in membership of the Associations of the Independent Schools Council (ISC). Accordingly, ISI inspections of British schools overseas are required to:

- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education and of the care for their welfare;
- provide objective and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and build on 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;
- report to the DfE the extent to which schools comply with the published Standards for British Schools Overseas;
- where applicable, assure ISC Associations that their member schools maintain the quality of provision expected.

ISI inspection is for the benefit of the pupils in the schools and through public reporting makes the information available to parents, governments and the wider community.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. The major difference is that schools in England must comply with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, which do not apply with legal validity to schools outside the United Kingdom. However, the inspection of overseas schools takes account where possible of compliance with any local requirements and it judges the extent to which the schools comply with the British Government's Standards for British Schools Overseas. The range of these Standards is 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 for parents, carers and others.
7. The school's procedures for handling complaints.
8. The quality of provision for boarding.
9. Leadership and management of the school.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features

- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The Edron Academy (El Colegio Británico) is a non-profit making institution founded in Mexico City in 1963 by Welsh and Canadian nationals. In 1985, the school moved from San Angel to its present site in a residential area close to the forested hills of Desierto de los Leones. At the same time, it achieved its bi-cultural status through incorporation with the Mexican education authority, with lessons being taught in both English and Spanish. In 1995, Edron became an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School. The success of the school is monitored by the Assembly, a worldwide group of individuals with past connections to the school, which appoints a board of governors to oversee the school's day-to-day life.
- 1.2 The school aims to recognise pupils as individuals and develop their potential as global citizens in an environment where they feel safe, valued and secure. It aspires to develop in pupils respect, a secure sense of self and a desire to be the best that they can be, both academically and personally. The school seeks to ensure that pupils are prepared to be internationally minded, creative, self-assured future leaders and role models. It aims to inculcate a life-long love of learning and to ensure that pupils understand the environmental impact of their actions.
- 1.3 The school has three sections that have separate heads who are afforded significant day-to-day responsibility for their own organisation and management, under the overall control of the academy's head. At the time of the inspection, the school provided education for 1068 pupils (530 boys and 538 girls), of whom 203 between the ages of 1 and 6 were in the Kinder section, 356 were in Primary, comprising Years 2 to 6, and 509 were in Secondary, for Years 7 to 13. The school has identified 135 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 63 are provided with additional support for their learning. Nearly all pupils are Mexican, and fewer than 30 do not come from Mexico or other neighbouring Spanish-speaking countries, most of these being British or American. Almost all pupils, therefore, have English as an additional language (EAL). The ability profile of pupils is similar to the UK national average, and slightly above this from Year 10, with a broad range of abilities represented throughout the school.
- 1.4 English National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in providing a broad and stimulating bi-cultural and bi-lingual education for its pupils. It fulfils its aim to develop internationally minded, global citizens achieving high academic and personal standards. The quality of pupils' achievements throughout the school is good, and is excellent in the Kinder section. Secondary pupils perform well in International GCSE (IGCSE) examinations and the IB Diploma. Their attitudes to work and study and their learning skills are excellent. Pupils, especially those with SEND, make good progress over time and, for some, it is excellent. The progress made by pupils of all ages in improving their mastery of the English language is particularly strong. Pupils enjoy considerable success in their extra-curricular activities, especially in a range of sports and debating. These achievements are influenced significantly by the broad, and balanced curriculum taught in both English and Spanish, and by the good teaching. Occasionally, teaching lacks pace and does not always challenge the most able consistently. Marking varies in quality between and within subjects, and this has an impact on the amount of learning and progress of the pupils.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils, from the very youngest to the oldest, is excellent and they display high levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. By the time they leave the school, pupils exhibit exceptional personal qualities. Pupils' behaviour is generally excellent. The contribution of pastoral support and guidance is strong, and arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare, health, safety and well-being are excellent. Relationships amongst pupils and with staff and the mutual respect fostered are a particular strength. The oldest pupils derive particular benefit, both personally and academically, from the IB Diploma programme and provide valued support for those younger than themselves.
- 2.3 Governors provide strong support for the school and are committed to its success, although strategic priorities to achieve this are not yet sharply identified. The success of the school owes much to the effective leadership and management at all levels, the shared commitment of staff and the productive partnership the school has formed with its parents.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas

(The range of the Standards for British Schools Overseas is given in the Preface)

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Standards for British Schools Overseas.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Develop further curricular opportunities to provide additional challenge for the most able pupils.
 2. Improve the quality of less effective teaching and assessment so that all pupils have consistent opportunities to extend their learning and progress.
 3. Involve governors and school leaders in identifying key strategic priorities to guide the school's future development.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills

- 3.1 The achievement of pupils is good. Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims to develop each pupil's potential and to encourage life-long learning. They achieve success in a wide range of subjects and activities, as appropriate to their ages and abilities. Learning skills and pupils' attitudes to their work are excellent. In their questionnaire responses, the great majority of pupils indicated that they are making good academic progress.
- 3.2 Children's achievement in Kinder is excellent. From the earliest age, they develop particularly strong speaking and listening skills. The youngest children recognise letters and count to ten and beyond with increasing confidence. In Year 1, they identify more complex words and letter sounds, and recognise and discuss the number of sides and vertices in a variety of shapes. Pupils meet and exceed the high expectations of staff. Pupils in Primary achieve well. They also develop good speaking skills and use English confidently and appropriately. They listen and respond with respect to the opinions of others. Pupils read and write fluently and learn a wide variety of skills, gaining good subject knowledge. They become highly articulate, having readily assimilated English language skills from an early age. Pupils transfer their good mathematical skills to other subjects and use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently. Children in Kinder show resilience in seeing through tasks to the end. In both sections, pupils show good levels of independence in organising themselves and the tasks set, and in co-operating with each other. Younger pupils particularly enjoy active involvement and the opportunity to think for themselves. Pupils develop appropriate competence in creative areas such as art, drama and music.
- 3.3 In Secondary, pupils show good subject knowledge, understanding and skills. Their written and spoken English show greater fluency and sophistication as they progress through the school. They use their numerical skill in a variety of applications. They are competent in the use of ICT, although this is not consistently developed or reinforced in lessons. The creative writing ability of Spanish speakers is demonstrated more significantly in English than in their native language. Pupils display a good level of independence in their work and thinking. Older and more able pupils show strong analytical and reasoning skills. They are able to put forward opinions and points of view backed up by evidence.
- 3.4 Pupils of different ages achieve a good level of success in out-of-class activities and in the extra-curricular programme, which has a strong impact on their personal development. Pupils in Primary represented the school in a local writing contest and received awards and recognition. Pupils have entered and won competitions outside school, including gymnastics, swimming, wake boarding and karate. In Secondary, success in a range of sports has been notable, especially girls' football. Debating has been a consistent strength within the school, and pupils regularly achieve international representation and recognition.
- 3.5 In Primary, pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against a fixed English national norm but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be at least in line with English national age-related expectations. In Secondary, the following analysis uses international data for the years 2011 to 2013, the most recent three-year period for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in IGCSE examinations have been broadly similar to worldwide

norms and, in several subjects, results have improved over this three-year period. Nearly all pupils achieved at least five A* to C grades in 2014. Results in the IB Diploma have been similar to the worldwide average, with results improving from 2011 to 2013. In 2014, the IB Diploma pass rate was 98%.

- 3.6 This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make good progress relative to the average for pupils of similar ability, particularly so in view of the very high proportion of pupils with EAL. This judgement is confirmed by the pupils' performance in lessons and in their responses to written tasks and interviews. Pupils in Kinder develop at a rate in advance of their years, particularly in Spanish and English, where their language skills develop rapidly year by year. Pupils with SEND make a high rate of progress, as a result of the strong and effective support they receive, and demonstrated by the improvement in their language skills and their success in meeting specific targets for achievement. Pupils of all ages make particularly good progress in developing their command of written and spoken English. The achievement of the most able pupils is good, but limited additional provision to extend their learning and thinking sometimes limits the progress they make.
- 3.7 Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate an excellent attitude to their work. They show enthusiasm and a genuine desire to do well, and develop good collaborative learning and teamwork. Pupils are keen to help each other when needed. They show initiative and take responsibility for improving their learning.

3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)

- 3.8 The quality of curricular provision is good. The design and implementation of the curriculum support strongly the aims and vision of the school, and make an effective contribution to pupils' achievements. Pupils throughout the school are taught in English, in combination with the mandatory Mexican curriculum, delivered in Spanish. The inclusion of the IB Diploma for Years 12 and 13 further enhances the distinctive bi-lingual and bi-cultural experience for all pupils.
- 3.9 The Kinder curriculum is excellent. It enables children to be immersed immediately in speaking, listening and then writing in English. It follows the English early years programme, with an emphasis on learning through constructive play within a secure, stimulating and supportive framework.
- 3.10 The curriculum in Primary integrates both the Mexican and the English National Curriculum, and provides a broad and balanced programme with some excellent features. The majority of lessons are conducted in English, enabling pupils to become fluent and articulate in the language. Literacy and numeracy are given particular emphasis in all year groups. From an early age, pupils frequently work in groups according to ability to meet their differing needs. Specialist teaching is provided in ICT, music, physical education and Year 6 art. The outdoor areas are a key learning resource for gardening and environmental studies and also provide opportunities for vigorous play and exercise. However, pupils' opportunities for developing creative and performance skills in drama and music are limited by resources and premises.
- 3.11 Secondary pupils' learning needs and aspirations are well met by the current curriculum. The school's aim to provide a genuinely international education is achieved well. In lower years, a varied programme blends the core subjects with creative arts, humanities and languages. Alongside compulsory aspects of the

Mexican curriculum, delivered in Spanish, all pupils study a minimum of ten IGCSE subjects, and choose from a good range of optional subjects alongside the compulsory elements of mathematics, English, Spanish, global perspectives and science. Pupils may choose to study all three separate sciences. Setting by ability occurs in mathematics. The needs of the most able mathematicians are met by an accelerated programme.

- 3.12 A wide selection of 25 options exists within the IB Diploma programme for pupils in Years 12 and 13. The creativity, action and service (CAS) component reinforces the school's aims and contributes greatly to the pupils' personal development and their sense of responsibility for others. Many beneficial community service links have been forged with orphanages, nurseries and care homes. Pupils greatly value the diploma qualification, which they recognise equips them well for higher education in any country, including Mexico.
- 3.13 A very small minority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were critical of the school's provision for pupils with specific educational needs. With respect to pupils with SEND, inspection evidence does not support these views. Such pupils are provided for very successfully. Efficient systems created by the additional support needs department identify pupils who may benefit from academic or emotional support. Individual needs statements and education plans identify their learning preferences and set appropriate targets for them. Specialist tuition and appropriate classroom strategies contribute to the good progress that they make. The curriculum is, in most respects, highly suitable for all ages, abilities and needs, although provision for the most able pupils is underdeveloped. Inspection evidence therefore lends some support to the views of parents expressed in response to the questionnaire. Initiatives for meeting the needs of these pupils vary across subject areas in their quality and effectiveness. There is no formal curriculum provision for pupils who arrive in the school and are not adequately fluent in English or Spanish.
- 3.14 The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programmes within Primary and Secondary are comprehensive and provide the pupils with an appropriate and effective structure for developing their understanding, values and well-being. The content of the programmes across Years 7 to 10 includes relevant and sensitive areas of study, such as drugs and relationships, which enhance the pupils' personal development. The syllabus designed for Years 11 to 13, taught during tutor times, is more fragmented and less effective. Pupils within Years 12 and 13 have good access to sound careers advice and benefit greatly from increasing links with higher education institutions.
- 3.15 The provision for extra-curricular activities across the school is satisfactory. Sporting opportunities presently make up the majority of options available, although performing arts are becoming increasingly popular. A small minority of parents expressed a concern in their responses to the questionnaire over the range and number of activities available in the previous academic year, and inspection evidence supported this view. However, the school has recently responded very positively to this by increasing the provision across all sections in a variety of ways. Debating is a particular strength in the secondary programme. The number of trips and visits is limited because of local regulations.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The quality of teaching is good. Teaching strongly supports the school's aims and makes a strong contribution to pupils' achievements. Teaching is excellent within the Kinder section and, whilst much is excellent in both Primary and Secondary, the full range of quality was seen during the inspection. Teachers have an excellent knowledge of their pupils and have established very supportive relationships with them.
- 3.17 In Kinder and Primary, class teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge. A variety of teaching methods is employed in all subjects. Pupils are highly motivated and stimulated by enthusiastic and dynamic teaching. Planning is effective in meeting the needs of most pupils, including those with SEND. Good use is made of technology, outdoor areas and other resources. Most lessons are lively and well paced with good progression in skill and the development of concepts, and this is particularly the case in Kinder. From the earliest years, pupils are provided with excellent opportunities to think critically and engage in independent learning. In Kinder and the best lessons in Primary, consistent challenge and high expectations are evident. For example, pupils in English were asked to write extended sentences to describe their feelings at a level well above that normally expected for their year group. Specialist English teaching enhances all subject areas.
- 3.18 In Secondary, most teaching is adapted well to suit pupils' learning needs. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Teaching is generally well prepared and lively, and involves the pupils actively. Appropriate and varied teaching techniques and technology enrich the learning experience for pupils. The teaching motivates pupils to participate with enthusiasm and enjoyment in class, as, for example, in a history lesson where they voted to become Roman consuls. The teaching generally has high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and pupils are challenged to think for themselves. In an English lesson, for example, pupils studying Golding's *Lord of the Flies* were challenged to consider both the theory of evolution and the psychological hierarchy of human needs. Independent learning is strongly encouraged, especially at IB level, and teaching frequently inspires pupils to carry out research and independent project work. The teaching of English is a strength of the school and all subject teachers are aware of this aspect of their role.
- 3.19 In Primary and Secondary, where teaching is less effective, it lacks sufficient challenge, particularly for the more able, and encouragement to think independently. Such lessons often lack pace, and opportunities for learning are limited as pupils' ambition and curiosity are not sufficiently stimulated. As a result, their attention and interest wane and their progress slows. Throughout the school, the most able pupils are not consistently identified and challenged, and the school lacks a clear and thoroughly planned framework that meets their needs fully.
- 3.20 The overall quality of assessment in Primary is good. Self- and peer-assessment is developing well throughout. Pupils assess their own progress against learning objectives specific to a lesson or topic of work, validated by a partner, and each sets a target for improvement. However, such approaches and day-to-day marking of pupils' work are not yet consistently used across all year groups and subject areas. In Secondary, clear and detailed marking and assessment policies have recently been introduced, but these are not always consistently implemented, and the quality of marking is variable within and between subjects and year groups. The best examples give pupils comprehensive information on their attainment, with clear targets for future improvement, but this is not always the case.

- 3.21 The school has established an effective means of monitoring and recording pupils' progress. Assessment information enables staff to identify particular needs, influence lesson planning and provide specific support. This effective system also enables leadership teams to identify areas for specific development in the curriculum.
- 3.22 Teaching provision for pupils with SEND is excellent. Teachers are well informed about the needs of such pupils and are given strategies to support them which they use in the classroom.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

- 4.1 The personal development of the pupils is excellent. From Kinder onwards, pupils demonstrate strong spiritual, social, moral and cultural awareness. The school fulfils its aim to provide an environment in which pupils flourish and succeed in a culture of respect, developing a secure sense of self-awareness and self-confidence. By the time they leave the school, pupils exhibit exceptional personal qualities.
- 4.2 Pupils develop excellent spiritual awareness. They are highly self-aware and the majority possess a maturity and self-confidence which surpasses their years. Their personal qualities are rich and well rounded, benefiting from an innate sense of spirituality which permeates the school. Respect and tolerance are evident in the manner in which pupils listen to and accept the opinions of others. Primary pupils regularly reflect on wonders of life beyond the immediate and tangible; for example, pupils were fascinated when learning about gravity and bone structure. Older pupils made reference to their sense of amazement at the metaphysical aspects of existence explored through the revelations of particle physics.
- 4.3 Pupils show particularly strong moral development. Their sense of right and wrong is strongly evident within the school. Pupils develop values of responsibility, respect, honesty, trust and fairness which form the bedrock of the school community, and they demonstrate them through events such as anti-bullying and respect weeks. School rules are respected and upheld, and the behaviour and support of older pupils towards those younger demonstrate their understanding of the feelings of others and a well-developed sense of empathy. Pupils gain an understanding of ethical issues and moral dilemmas through a range of subjects. They enhance their understanding of tolerance, respect, human rights and freedom of expression through the popular debating society.
- 4.4 Pupils exhibit excellent social awareness. The behaviour of pupils in Kinder is outstanding as they share and play together. Pupils of all ages are kind, considerate and supportive of each other. They demonstrate responsibility and leadership qualities on the eco-committee and the student council, as house captains or as 'English stars', who support linguistic development in the primary classes. Senior pupils act as social and academic mentors to younger pupils, to the benefit of both. Primary pupils enjoy their roles as 'playground pals' and young secondary pupils speak highly of positive relationships with their senior counterparts. Pupils show great emotional maturity in recognition of the inequitable distribution of material possessions across the world, and they responded generously to support the victims of a recent natural disaster. Pupils in Years 12 and 13 volunteer to work in a local orphanage through the CAS programme, while younger pupils also engage with this project, through donations and making games.
- 4.5 Pupils show high levels of cultural awareness and develop into internationally minded global citizens, in fulfilment of the school's aims. Their strong appreciation of cultural diversity is enriched by the range of nationalities and faiths represented in the school community. Pupils feel an affinity to Britain and are proud to be associated with it. They take an interest in news from the UK: many spoke knowledgeably about the recent Scottish referendum, and felt privileged to meet a high profile British politician on a recent visit to Mexico City. They speak very positively of the benefits of a bi-lingual and bi-cultural educational experience. Pupils broaden their cultural appreciation in lessons, as exemplified by older pupils'

study of Shakespeare, written in Cuban dialect and used as an example of the linguistic development of modern Spanish.

4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety

- 4.6 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety, including pastoral care, is excellent. Highly effective and well-planned arrangements, throughout all sections, promote the welfare, health and safety of the pupils, in accordance with the school's aims to develop an environment where pupils feel safe, valued and secure. The arrangements make an excellent contribution to pupils' personal development.
- 4.7 The strong pastoral system is overseen by committed pastoral leaders who monitor closely the well-being of all pupils. Excellent support and guidance are provided by tutors and form teachers. As a result, pupils feel safe and well supported in the school environment. The quality of relationships amongst pupils and with staff is excellent and mutual respect is clearly evident. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and care for them as individuals. Pupils understand that they can seek advice or help from any member of staff should they encounter a difficulty. The pupil mentoring and 'buddy' systems are extremely effective and enable pupils to support each other. In Secondary, the vertical tutor groups create excellent opportunities for younger pupils to be mentored and befriended by those older. However, this system poses challenges, including careful planning, for addressing sensitive issues such as drugs and relationships when the age range in tutor groups is so wide.
- 4.8 A small minority of pupils in Secondary expressed in questionnaire responses that insufficient attention is paid to their views and opinions, although discussion with pupils showed that their ideas and opinions are sought and listened to throughout the school. Inspectors found that formal channels of communication, such as the student council and regular pupil surveys, work effectively to elicit pupils' views. Pupils reported that the student council has secured improvements in areas such as toilets, the gym and the school kiosk.
- 4.9 The school's behaviour policy in Primary and Kinder, and the published code of conduct in Secondary are clearly understood by pupils and reinforce expectations and values. In questionnaire responses, a minority of secondary pupils felt that rewards and sanctions are not administered fairly and that they are not treated equally. Inspection evidence did not support these views. Discussions with pupils and staff, and inspection of records indicate that rewards and sanctions are generally proportionate and consistent. Success is celebrated across the school through a comprehensive rewards system, the culmination of which is the coveted 'House Day Out' for the winning house in Secondary.
- 4.10 The school implements an effective anti-bullying policy. In Secondary, an anti-bullying committee run by pupils in Years 12 and 13 provides an additional layer of support for pupils. A very small number of parents and pupils commented in response to the questionnaires that the school has not always dealt with bullying behaviour effectively in the past. Inspection of school records and discussions with staff showed that the school has recently improved its awareness and stance on such behaviour and the effectiveness of its response. Pupils confirm that currently bullying is rare, but should it occur they have confidence that it will be treated seriously and dealt with appropriately.
- 4.11 Excellent provision is made for safeguarding pupils' welfare. The school has been extremely thorough in setting up arrangements for child protection and the training of

teaching and non-teaching staff. The school has awareness of emotional health issues such as self-harm and eating disorders, and staff know what to look out for and how to respond. Communication amongst designated staff is frequent. In the absence of formal safeguarding agencies in Mexico, the school has developed thorough procedures for supporting and protecting children with identified welfare needs. Pupils are made aware of internet safety and cyber-bullying through tutor time and assemblies.

- 4.12 The school takes thorough precautions to keep pupils safe, including careful planning of trips. Risk assessments are carried out for various areas of the school. Excellent arrangements are provided for pupils who are unwell. The medical rooms are well equipped and a full-time nurse and doctor are always available. The school promotes healthy eating and the importance of exercise, and encourages parental support for this. Such issues are addressed in the PSHE and sports programmes.
- 4.13 Appropriate fire prevention and earthquake procedures are efficiently organised, and evacuation records are suitably kept. Admission and attendance registers are thoroughly maintained and appropriately stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good. Governors provide strong support for the work of the school and are fully committed to promoting and achieving its mission and aims. Many aspects of governance are strong, although the identification of clear strategic priorities and formal systems for monitoring the implementation of policies are not yet fully developed.
- 5.2 The governing board makes very effective use of the experience and expertise of its members and, through its monthly meetings and committee structure, achieves a good oversight and understanding of the school's successes and needs. Financial planning is prudent and affords the necessary resources and personnel to enable the school to provide a stimulating education and achieve good success for its pupils. Governors are ambitious for the school's future development but, as yet, this is not enshrined in a specific plan to identify clear priorities for improvement that will enable the school to implement a sharply focused development plan.
- 5.3 The good standard of governance is based on a thorough knowledge of the workings of the school and an understanding of its challenges. The board keeps in close touch with the school's senior leadership and receives regular reports in advance of its meetings. The work of the sub-committees provides further insight into the school's work, although they do not all provide formal written feedback on their discussions. Governors are aware of the views and opinions of parents through their twice-yearly meetings with the parents' associations.
- 5.4 The board is well aware of the need to comply with local requirements and regulations, and discharges these responsibilities effectively, using external consultants for advice when needed. Governors are well informed about health and safety issues. Currently, no formal systems exist for the board as a whole to approve key school policies and their implementation, or to review the efficiency of the school's procedures to safeguard the welfare of pupils.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is good. Leaders and managers at all levels have successfully created a stimulating and effective bi-lingual and bi-cultural educational environment where pupils feel valued as individuals and achieve success. Pupils are strongly aspirational and have a clear desire to be the best they can, a key aim of the school.
- 5.6 In all three sections, the senior leadership is effective in carrying out its responsibilities for maintaining high standards, in defining and implementing academic and pastoral policies, and in safeguarding pupils' welfare. Phase co-ordinators, heads of houses and academic leaders work well together across all sections of the school and take responsibility for the work of their academic and pastoral teams. The three leadership teams form an effective partnership, and a well-planned system of regular meetings ensures a good level of communication and a strong awareness of issues affecting each section.
- 5.7 The school is entering a period where greater continuity, stability and cohesion are becoming more evident. Much has been achieved in the last two years: many

excellent systems are being introduced, and good practice is developing and being shared in many aspects of the school's provision.

- 5.8 The ethos of the school is strongly established, and staff are fully supportive of the school's vision and aims. They share the leadership's ambition to achieve high standards for pupils and to see the school constantly improve. A strong sense of purpose is evident amongst the teaching and non-teaching staff. This has been successfully communicated to the pupils, who consider that the school has their best interests at the forefront of its life and work. The values and aims of the school and the qualities promoted through the learner profile are well displayed throughout, ensuring that staff and pupils are aware of expectations and strive to meet them.
- 5.9 A strengthening culture of self-evaluation and reflection, based on a strong drive to improve standards, particularly in teaching and learning, has been established. Curriculum and pastoral leaders across all sections are highly committed to assessing the effectiveness of their provision and practice. However, the improvement targets identified do not always link together in support of broad whole-school priorities, and are not always clearly identified and shared. As a result, the overall school development plan is not sufficiently sharply focused. Systems for sharing good practice, monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, and tracking pupils' progress are reaping benefits although not yet fully embedded into the school's educational practice.
- 5.10 A thorough and comprehensive staff review and development process has been created, with a strong focus on continuous learning. The school shows its commitment to staff development through investment in the training of staff. All new staff benefit from an extensive induction programme on arrival and all necessary training is given to promote the welfare, health and safety of the pupils, including child protection. The recruitment process is thorough and carefully managed, and ensures that the required background checks, including both Mexican and UK police and criminal records checks, are carried out for both staff and governors.

5.(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians

- 5.11 The quality of links with parents is good. Clear lines of communication, outlined in the three parent handbooks, support the school's aims and reinforce its intention to forge productive partnerships with its parents. The great majority of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire were highly satisfied with the education provided by the school. They were particularly positive about the level of progress made by their children, their progress in learning English, the promotion of worthwhile values and the communication with the school. A small minority were concerned about the limited range of extra-curricular activities, the quality of support for pupils with SEND and arrangements for governance. Inspection evidence did not support these views. The appointment of two staff members to co-ordinate extra-curricular activities and the enhancement of the range of activities on offer show the school to be actively addressing this concern. Pupils needing help with their learning are very well supported and frequently make excellent progress. Although contact between parents and governors is not frequent, they hold meetings with parents twice each year and enable parents to ask questions about the school.
- 5.12 Parents have many opportunities to be involved in school life, for example in contributing to the Edron Fayre, in the risk assessment of school camps, in the running of the gardening club, and by attending assemblies and contributing to autobiographical work in Primary. The three parents' associations meet the leadership each month, providing a clear route of communication. Parents'

concerns and complaints are dealt with thoroughly and sensitively, and efficient records are kept.

- 5.13 Information provided for parents is good and includes weekly letters from each head of section and termly editions of *Edron at a Glance*. The imminent launch of further electronic communication methods shows an active approach to sharing information. The annual 'How good is our Edron?' survey provides a strong pathway for parents to express their views. Year group meetings in Primary promote the home-school partnership. Annual parent consultation meetings provide effective opportunities for parents and teachers to discuss pupils' progress. Reports are sent home once each year, and are supplemented by the bi-monthly reports required by the Mexican authorities. Reports have limited comments on progress in Secondary, providing some justification for the concerns expressed by a small minority of parents in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire that they are not satisfied with the information given on the progress made by their children.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and staff, and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors and one other governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Timothy Holgate	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Valerie Clark	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Mr Andrew Bailey	Junior Team Inspector (Head of School, COBIS school, Canary Islands)
Mrs Franciska Bayliss	Junior Team Inspector (Former Head, ISA school)
Ms Monica Davies	Junior Team Inspector (Executive Assistant to Principal, COBIS school, The Netherlands)
Mr Charles Ellison	Senior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, COBIS school, Spain)
Mrs Joy Gatenby	Junior Team Inspector (Former Head, GSA school)
Mr Peter de Voil	Senior Team Inspector (Former Head, HMC/COBIS school, Czech Republic)
Miss Julie Walker	Senior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, COBIS school, Italy)
Mr Andrew Williams	Senior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school, UK)