



**British School  
Overseas**  
Inspected by Penta International

**Inspection report**

**British International  
School of Ljubljana**

**Slovenia**

Date 15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021  
Inspection number 20210315

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## 1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

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

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

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

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

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

During the inspection visit, over 30 lessons (or parts of lessons) were observed, as well as a series of learning walks. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, and a range of teachers, parents and students. The inspection lasted three days.

The lead inspector, present in the school for the whole inspection, was Dr Mark Evans. The team member was Colin Dyson, who worked remotely.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The British International School of Ljubljana meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

### 3. Overall effectiveness of the school

The British International School of Ljubljana (BISL) is an outstanding school. It is held in high regard by the local community.

With strong, thoughtful leadership, the school has maintained a sharp focus on continuous improvement since the last BSO inspection. The school has actioned all the previous recommendations very effectively. There is an evident emphasis on the quality of the students' learning experiences and outcomes. As a result of a carefully planned curriculum and skilfully delivered lessons and activities, students make excellent progress. From an already strong situation in 2017, further improvements have been the result of committed teamwork and robust collaboration within the school. The learning environment, including the excellent outdoor facilities, provides a safe and stimulating setting. Parents are highly supportive of the school. Students are very well cared for and nurtured, and their behaviour is excellent.

#### 3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including the following:

- The students, who are happy, confident, friendly, well-behaved, enthusiastic learners.
- The leadership provided by the principal, ably supported by his senior leadership team, who share a united vision of high quality for the school.
- Highly effective and proactive involvement by the proprietor of the school, in the strategic development of the school.
- The commitment of staff to providing the best possible experiences for students, which ensures rapid progress.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength, both of the curriculum and in teaching. The school is effective in enabling all students to develop their personal skills and qualities.
- Students are confident, thoughtful, well behaved, treat others with respect and have well developed social skills.
- The standard of spoken English is high: students make excellent progress, thanks to a well-coordinated and coherent policy for students who speak English as an additional language (EAL) which is a very high proportion, and to a notable whole school approach to the teaching of the language.
- The whole school community, teaching, non-teaching, administration and ancillary staff work as a team to promote high quality care for all students.



- The opportunities provided for students to direct their own learning, through a rich curriculum and a stimulating learning environment.
- The levels of care and attention provided to students, which ensure their physical, academic, social and emotional needs are catered for.
- The opportunities provided for students to interact, collaborate and learn with their peers.
- The use of technology to support students' learning, which is outstanding.

### 3.2 Points for improvement

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

- As soon as pandemic restrictions allow, develop further PE, music and afterschool activities for all students.
- Further develop student leadership opportunities and the impact of 'student voice' throughout the whole school.
- Provide even more professional development opportunities for middle leaders and aspiring leaders

## 4. The context of the school

Full name of School	British International School of Ljubljana		
Address	Cesta 24. junija 92, 1231 Ljubljana-Črnuče, Slovenia		
Telephone Number/s	+386 40 486 548 (reception) +386 40 618 356 (admissions)		
Website Address	<a href="https://britishschool.si">https://britishschool.si</a>		
Key Email Address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@britishschool.si">enquiries@britishschool.si</a>		
Headteacher/Principal	Paul Walton		
Chair of Board of Governors/Proprietor	Michael Clack, Orbital Education		
Age Range	2 – 18 years		
Number of Students	<i>Total: 253</i>	<i>Boys: 128</i>	<i>Girls: 123</i>
Student Numbers by Age	<i>0-2 Years: 2</i>	<i>3-5 Years: 31</i>	<i>6-11 Years: 115</i>
	<i>12-16 Years: 81</i>	<i>17-18 Years: 22</i>	<i>18+ Years: 2</i>
Total Number of Part-Time Students	1 ( <i>in EYFS</i> )		

BISL was founded in 2008 by British educator Jeremy Hibbins to offer a British-style, English-speaking educational alternative to state education in a country where private education and schools offering alternative curricula were at that time unknown. It became part of Orbital Education Group 6 years ago, making it part of a global family of British-style international schools. The school now has about 260 students aged from 3 to 18 years, of whom 32% are Slovene and the others represent more than 40 countries, including the UK. BISL is the only school in Slovenia that requires the wearing of a uniform.



## 4.1 British nature of the school

The British nature of the school is evident in a number of ways.

The school has created an award-winning (Education and Training Awards 2020) curriculum, based on the National Curriculum for England. The curriculum is fused with international themes and a thematic approach for the students in the primary school.

The Early Years curriculum follows a 'free flow' approach, inspired by research-based learning stations and the opportunity of outdoor learning in the school's woodland area. The students also enjoy specialist lessons for PE, creative arts and languages. Discrete lessons for phonics and numeracy are included.

Beyond Key Stage 3, secondary students prepare for GCSE and IGCSE examinations in Year 11 and GCE AS and A-Level examinations in the sixth form. All subjects, except Slovene and other languages, are taught in English. The teachers and assistants are mostly native speakers of English or are fluently bilingual.

The language of instruction and conversation is English. English provision across the school includes all teachers, the English language team and the English as an additional language (EAL) teachers.

Similar to UK schools, the academic programme is enriched by a range of educational, cultural and personal development trips, and by curricular and extracurricular activities, including the arts, curriculum-related clubs, sports and outdoor pursuits, skills, service and leadership. Further activities are available within the school's after-hours programmes: BISL Music School, sports activities and a full activity programme including academic clubs. These are understandably somewhat limited at present, due to the pandemic.

Staff complete a teacher induction programme to join BISL, engage in CPD and in online courses to ensure that all are experienced and continue to develop their own pedagogical practice. The principal holds the British NPQH qualification. Textbooks and learning resources to support the curriculum are predominantly published in or sourced from the UK. Additionally, curricular and extra-curricular links to the UK are exemplified through the current affairs focus of *First News* and *BBC School Report*.

BISL is an active partner in 'British House' with the British Embassy, British Council, British-Slovene Chamber of Commerce and *Mednarodno priznanje za mlade* (MEPI). Regular face-to-face and online meetings are arranged to ensure that best practice, support for events and ideas to collaborate are shared. Traditional British events are marked, such as poppies before Remembrance Sunday and staff participation at the Ambassador's Queen's Birthday Party. The school has received royal visits by the Queen, and by Prince Edward and the Countess of Wessex.



## 5. Standard 1

### The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided is outstanding. The school fully meets the standards for BSO.

#### 5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum provided by the school is outstanding.

Curriculum planning is highly effective. The curriculum has been built around the strong vision, mission and values of the school that drives a holistic approach to the development of each student as an individual. This further enables all staff including teachers and specialists to contribute to its development, from preschool all the way through to the sixth form. Planning follows the school's curriculum policy. BISL recently implemented extensive monitoring of the curriculum, through teachers, middle leaders and senior staff, to ensure it is relevant to students' needs, and provides challenge.

The school follows the national curriculum for England adapted to reflect the needs and abilities of the children in the school. The primary school has implemented a personalised version of the International Primary Curriculum to further enhance the planned learning for all students.

The curriculum in the early years is successfully underpinned by the aims and goals of the UK early years and foundation stage (EYFS) guidance. The Early Years Pillars of Practice reflect the desire to create a curriculum that provides enhanced learning. Teachers base early experiences around their mantra 'Child Led Learning, Cultural Capital, Free Flow, Sustained Shared Thinking and Creativity'.

Across Key Stages 1 and 2, the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is age-appropriate, modified to reflect the history and culture of Slovenia. Throughout the school, the curriculum is enhanced for local context through the inclusion of the Slovene language. Physical education and performing arts are taught by specialist staff with the aim of broadening the students interactions with a range of adults, subjects, and skills. French language is introduced from Year 3.

There is a strong focus on the development of language skills that is highly appropriate in meeting students' needs. Detailed data analysis enables the senior leaders to make informed decisions about changes to the curriculum and new approaches to planning. The school improvement plan highlights the priority given to curriculum development by subject leaders, middle leaders and senior staff. Broader learning for all students is further enhanced through a good range of extracurricular clubs and activities, including the Duke of Edinburgh



International award (through MEPI), a range of performance art subjects, sports activities, and creative arts activities.

Prior to the Covid pandemic restrictions, several trips and visits were typically offered both locally and internationally to enhance the broader curriculum. The restrictions placed on schools currently prevent these from taking place. However, parents report that the school had worked hard to ensure the on-line curriculum inspired and motivated their children. Evidence from surveys clearly demonstrate that the vast majority of parents feel the curriculum is highly successful in motivating their children to achieve excellence.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

Teaching and assessment are excellent.

Teachers at BISL demonstrate a thorough understanding of the criteria for effective learning: they ensure that the curriculum and its delivery are inspiring. Students learn through a variety of rich, varied, and imaginative experiences: all show high levels of engagement. Teachers know their classes well and this is evidenced in their learning portfolios and *Tapestry* tracking, that enables teachers to tailor the lessons appropriately. Great teaching enables students to acquire skills and abilities in a wide range of learning areas.

The use of *Canvas*, an on-line learning platform, has enhanced the opportunities for all students. Parents spoke of the highly positive impact of this new resource. Teachers and students felt it enhanced the learning for all. The school view this innovation as having a highly effective impact and will continue to develop its capabilities.

Teachers use a wide range of teaching techniques: group work, individual work, class learning were all seen being used very effectively. For example, in one lesson in EYFS, the teacher was able to support high attainment of two boys who were learning about the English and Slovene way to write 'Where is the white mouse?'; in a Years 5 and 6 Slovene lesson, clever use of groups ensured all students were supported at an appropriate level by their peers. One Year 9 mathematics lesson included a period where pairs of students worked together: the teacher knew exactly how long to let them struggle and *fail* to find an answer to the problem, before she gave them a clue: the resultant discussions were outstanding.

Lessons are well-planned, clear and focussed. They inspire and motivate students. In the best lessons, students don't want the period to end. For example in a Year 9 music lesson, the students were absolutely engrossed in their composition of a soundtrack for a computer game: the resultant music was excellent. Similarly, in a Year 4 roleplay about evolution, based on a children's book ('*Fox*' by M. Wild and R. Brooks), students were so captivated that the teacher had to allow the activity to run for extra time.

Many of the best lessons involved outstanding use of digital technology – both by the teacher and by the students - to support learning. A Year 1 English lesson on exclamation marks, a Year 8 PE lesson and a Year 6 topic work lesson on the way that the lives of people in one country effect the lives of people in other countries, all showed how information and communication technology can support learning, without it becoming an end in itself or a distraction – it was an appropriate and effective learning tool.

Both internally and externally validated data is used to monitor individual student's progress. As the school is non-selective there is appropriate continuous special



educational needs provision and English as an additional language provision. Across the school both learning support departments and EAL departments work closely with class teachers and subject teachers to enable students with a range of learning needs to successfully access the curriculum. A Years 8 and 9 EAL lesson demonstrated excellent support for the students. The needs of the higher ability learner are met through lesson planning and delivery including an effective range of challenge activities.

As the students move through the key stages, they become increasingly proficient in speaking English with the aim that they will become highly proficient to enable them to access higher and further education at high quality universities across the world.

The school's PSHE programme supports the personal development and well-being of all students effectively. Students engage in a range of thoughtful assemblies that challenge and question key topics relevant to their lives, these include discussing their aspirations and values.

## 5.3 Standards achieved by students

The standards achieved by students at BISL are excellent. An outstanding curriculum, excellent teaching and high-quality attention to students' care lead to high standards across the school.

The school's rigorous monitoring shows that over time, students make excellent progress, consistently above UK national and many international standards.

The youngest children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and are continuously formatively assessed and monitored by their teachers. Successful ongoing assessments effectively monitors children's progress, and this is tracked thoroughly. As a result, additional support can be provided to ensure each child is able to make good or better progress. Learning is organised by topics and teachers successfully deliver a wide range of related indoor and outdoor activities to develop students communication, numeracy and social skills. There are a good range of activities and role play opportunities that encourage creativity and physical activity. This focus on developing each learner ensures children achieve well. Assessment data demonstrates that many students in reception classes make good progress in literacy and numeracy. By the end of the EYFS students are able to write simple sentences, word lists, labels and use phonetic knowledge to correctly spell simple words. The skills learned in the EYFS prepare the students well for the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum.

The early years facilities enable effective use of free flow learning which benefits many of the youngest children, providing an opportunity for them to learn about the world whilst acquiring many different skills. The curriculum is supported by effective teaching which fosters independence, that encourages students to create their own rules and a safe place where they can explore as independent learners. This enables the youngest children to develop a good level of confidence.

Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, students continue to make strong progress. Sometimes, the attainment demonstrated is well above that expected: a Year 4 performing arts lesson for example, had students transcribing at or above grade 1 Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) level.

The majority of students are second language English speakers and are very effectively supported by EAL teachers. There is also a strong department that supports students who have special educational needs (SEN). The careful focus on individual progress ensures appropriate levels of support are always available. The school is 'data rich' with a broad range of assessments used across all phases. Staff review the data regularly to track progress effectively. Senior and middle leaders ensure that the range of data is fit for purpose and use a range of moderation techniques when scrutinising results.



Data indicates that students at the school are consistently achieving significant high standards:

	Students meeting or above UK expectations			
	Year 2	Year 6	Year 9	Year 10
English	65%	73%	94%	86%
Mathematics	73%	72%	76%	87%

Evidence from students' work clearly demonstrates that the vast majority make highly significant progress in their acquisition of English language from EYFS to the end of Key Stage 2. These results underline the high achievement levels overall, particularly more than 90% of students are second language English learners.

Students continue to make strong progress across the secondary years. The school has developed a range of transition activities and opportunities to ensure they transfer easily and with confidence into the secondary section. The school sets high expectations for all its students. As well as comparing attainment levels with the UK, they evaluate students' achievements compared to other top performing international schools. This comparative data highlights the high level of achievement reached by the student body as well as the outstanding quality of their spoken English.

Through effective monitoring and analysis of achievement data, the school is able to identify any trends and further opportunities for developing the teaching and learning. Students interviewed in the secondary school felt the use of shared academic data had a significant impact on helping them raise their achievement levels across all subjects. Exam results for IGCSE for 2020 show that 100% of students achieved an A - C grade, significantly above UK national levels and in many subjects all students achieved A\* - A.

A significant achievement was that 100% of students achieved an A - C grade in both English Language and English Literature and 66% of grades in all subjects at IGCSE were A\*- A grades. A-Level examination results highlight the positive achievements of the oldest students. In chemistry, economics, English literature, psychology, physics and French, all students achieved an A\*- A. The excellent progress across the whole school leads to high levels of attainment. The A-Level results show that 29% of students attained the highest A\* grade and 63% attained A\*- A. Both sets of results highlight the strong progress in attainment over time.

Data analysis for students with special educational needs indicates that student progress is good. The impact of the special needs provision is highly effective in supporting students to achieve very well. Results on achievement demonstrates the high level of progress made by nearly all students. The students' attitude to learning have a strong, positive impact on their progress. They are proud of their achievements and of the school.



## 6. Standard 2 Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development of students

BISL's provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The impact it has on students' personal development is a key strength of the school.

Students are encouraged every day to be responsible, caring and empathetic human beings with regular reference to the school's vision, mission and values. These are displayed around the school and are referred to regularly with students and families. Assemblies, form times and the citizenship programme reflect challenge, empathy, respect and excellence daily. The students are regularly reminded to honour and demonstrate these values in everything that they do. In one excellent Year 13 assembly, there were very strong views apparent from students, which led to lively and thoughtful discussions, but always in a respectful manner.

The positive behaviour policy reflects the BISL (and British values): all individuals at school are expected to demonstrate these. The PSHE and Citizenship programmes have been revised three times in three years, to ensure that these values and more are shared, taught and discussed. These themes are also explored during assemblies and form times with tutors.

Spiritual development is excellent. Self-esteem and self-confidence are fostered through interactions between staff and students, in lessons, in the playground – students also reported this pre-Covid-19 on extra-curricular activities or school trips. Students are regularly given opportunities to get involved in different projects, performances, and encouraged to 'try new things', in order to develop as rounded individuals. Enrichment days have been organised for students as a result of the compulsory distance learning to give students additional opportunities to interact with their peers and teaching in school.

Students regularly take part in presenting to parents or their peers, in the classroom or during the school assemblies. They also take part in various performances in the school and in public theatres, such as the Winter Show, the Dance Show, the BISL Music show and the end of the year BISL Show, all of which celebrate the students' talents and creativity. Self-confidence and esteem are demonstrated by the students' readiness to take part in performances and presentations, without fear of embarrassment or failure. In one excellent Year 2 music lesson using tuned percussion tubes (known as 'boomwhackers'), it was evident that the students were not at all self-conscious and very happy seeking to create a perfect version of '*I'm a Believer*' by Neil Diamond.

Self-knowledge and self-reflection are encouraged in lessons through self- and peer-assessment, setting personal targets, sharing of ideas and collaborative working. Students' achievements are celebrated in many different ways, including displaying their work in school, on subject-based Instagram and other social media. Outstanding contributions or behaviours are rewarded as 'star of the week' in primary and achievement certificates in secondary.



Moral development is excellent. Some students are given opportunities to develop respect for others and exercise leadership skills through involvement with the primary and secondary student councils, representing students across the school, from early years to the 6th form. The impact of the student councils is not as well monitored as it could be. Further student leadership roles across the school include the head boy and head girl leading parts of assemblies, together with prefects supporting different areas of the school. House captains are responsible for collecting the house points, presenting house winners and designing house certificates to celebrate the winner at the end of each term. Students are encouraged to organise competitions and events themselves, to promote team-spirit and collaboration. Nevertheless, it would be possible to develop even more student leadership opportunities, especially in the primary school.

Social development is excellent. The school encourages students to reflect on their behaviour and to think about the choices they make and how these affect themselves and people around them. Students are given opportunities to reflect and take responsibility for their actions, and are supported in resolving conflicts in a positive manner. The behaviour tracker system is used in both primary and secondary to monitor students. It enables staff to support individual student needs in addressing their behaviour, guide them to reflect and make positive choices as 'good citizens'.

Older students regularly take part in activities with younger groups, including sharing reading activities, supporting in lessons, and those from exam classes leading student-viewpoint explanations of the examination courses to those who are about to choose their options. BISL students run crafts and sports activities for adults with disabilities as part of Ljubljana's 'Play with Me' festival.

In circle time, assemblies, PSHE and citizenship lessons and around the school, students are encouraged to be principled and honest individuals who show concern for others, appreciating cultural and spiritual diversity. Issues such as peer pressure, bullying behaviour and drug abuse are also addressed in lessons: there is a strong emphasis on academic honesty throughout the school.

Students were involved in generating school rules in 2018, such as the expectations in the science laboratories and the playground rules in primary. Students also sign a contract for using safely and responsibly their iPads in school to support learning. The contract includes moral codes about online behaviour and showing mutual respect at all times. The school and the students report that this has been particularly effective during the distance learning period, when students are working from home via virtual meeting applications, with their peers and teachers.

Cultural development is excellent. With a diverse community of students, staff and parents from more than 40 different nationalities, BISL embraces different cultures and beliefs through celebration assemblies and events such as 'International day', the 'European day of languages' project and Slovene public holidays, which are incorporated into the school year

calendar. The primary student council encourages students to think important school and community issues. Recently, they focussed on racism and their own dreams for the future, based on Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' speech. They prepared the information slides for the virtual assembly. Different celebrations are held throughout the school year, including *Pust*, one of the most important cultural festival in Slovenia, and *Prešeren* day marking the anniversary of the death of the Slovene national poet. Students and staff participate in the celebrations, together with parents, who support events through the parent teacher association (PTA).



## 7. Standard 3

### The welfare, health and safety of the students

The provision for welfare, health and safety is outstanding.

BISL places an appropriately high priority on ensuring that the education and wellbeing of all students are at the heart of any school policies, strategies and initiatives which are developed. Students are well supported and guided due to a consistent and caring approach by all members of staff. The students feel safe and valued as individuals. Parents identify the safe and caring environment as a significant strength of the school.

Students across all key stages are happy young people, proud of their school and thriving on the rich variety of learning experiences that it provides. In EYFS and the primary school, teachers quickly developed a thorough understanding of each child and this contributes to the nurturing of a homely environment. Relationships between teachers and form tutors provides a strong pastoral support structure. Students in Years 12 and 13 are given a high level of personal care and academic coaching due to the quality of relationships established through the school and the smaller size of nearly all classes.

Students are well supervised by staff at all times. As students move around the school, they are monitored carefully. Student leaders are rostered to assist teachers during the transitions at break times. At the end of the day, the systems in place mean that all students are dismissed safely. Regular attendance checks throughout the day ensure that all students are accounted for at all times. The attendance is checked in the morning, after lunchtime and at the end of the day for secondary. Attendance at the school is good and during the period of Covid restrictions attendance remained high during online learning. (95%+) Daily monitoring of attendance allows for rapid follow up with parents, if needed. Teachers are active in ensuring the punctual arrival and departure of all students.

The robust and well-understood anti-bullying policy is applied appropriately, on the few occasions it is needed. In general, students respect and adhere to it. If bullying does occur, it dealt with swiftly and affected students are supported to find a solution to the problem. Parents may be involved as appropriate.

The school has an appropriate and rigorously implemented approach to the safeguarding of all children. All staff, board members and external suppliers are trained in safeguarding; regular updates and refresher courses are attended. Rigorous recruitment checks are carried out including police checks for local staff and DBS for UK expatriate staff. All staff within the school have undertaken the relevant safeguard training and senior staff and appropriate board members have undertaken higher level training. Visitors to the school are rigorously monitored and wear badges while in the school. There is a link governor for safeguarding and appropriately designated members of staff. Links with the school board are regular and provide a high level of effective support.

A designated team has overall responsibility for health and safety within the school campus. Regular risk assessments are carried out throughout the school and for any external activities. Those with responsibility ensure risk assessments are in place for activities and trips as well as practical subjects such as science, PE and outdoor learning environments. Staff are trained to deliver first aid as required; rooms are equipped with appropriate first aid boxes. The school site is kept very clean and is well maintained. Fire drills and lockdowns are conducted regularly, and evacuation procedures are evident in all rooms. An extensive remodelling and building programme is being undertaken to further develop BISL facilities.



## 8. *Standard 4* The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The suitability of the proprietors of the school and the staff appointed is excellent.

BISL is a part of a Group of schools owned and managed by Orbital Education Ltd., a school management company based in Manchester, UK. Safeguarding and child protection are embedded priorities at the Orbital Education Group and are comprehensively discussed, reviewed and monitored across schools. The regional head of schools is also a safeguarding lead BSO inspector and accreditor for the Council of International Schools (CIS). Visits of the proprietors to BISL are accompanied by safeguarding clearances. All members of the Board receive annual training and undergo safer recruitment checks.

Teachers at BISL are fully qualified and there is a high teaching staff:student ratio (1:5). This certainly supports excellent academic results. The number of qualified teaching staff matches the curriculum provided. Teaching staff are experienced in the provision of age-appropriate education and support, and recruitment is planned in advance with due diligence.

The recruitment process at BISL is rigorous, starting with an initial interview, followed by a comprehensive checking procedure, finishing with a successful induction process. Prior to confirmation of any appointment, an extensive check of the applicant's identity, medical competence for the post, right to work in Slovenia, previous employment history, character and professional references and criminal history. All research tools are used, including the internet and social media. A minimum of two references are required, one of which must be the most recent employer. All references are checked in writing and followed up with a phone call in order to obtain any further sensitive information on the candidate.

If a candidate is being appointed from the UK or has recent UK-based employment history, a certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service (previously known as CRB) or ACRO/International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC). All the checks are completed before appointment. A comprehensive single central register (SCR) is updated regularly and checked thoroughly by the principal and regional head of schools. The SCR includes current staff and supply staff, as well as the leavers dating back to the last inspection and beyond.

The school does not use volunteer help, but do have agency workers on site (catering services, cleaning services): the agencies are contractually bound to confirm that their workers do not have criminal records. The school still ask to see police certificates from all the agency workers on site and check them on site.

There is a strong sense of teamwork at BISL. On a recent staff survey, one person suggested that 'All employees within my school work well together, and there is a strong sense of team': this was confirmed by the inspectors.



## 9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The quality of school premises is excellent.

The school provides students with high quality learning environments which are well maintained. Fittings and furniture are carefully chosen to be age appropriate. Displays throughout the school clearly demonstrate and celebrate learning, and other educational experiences. High levels of care and maintenance are clearly evident. The physical environment is clean, fresh and safe.

The school exceeds the legislative requirements for the provision of washrooms/student as set out in the Requirements for the Construction of Primary Schools in the Republic of Slovenia (May 2007). There is one set of male washrooms and one set of female washrooms to be used by adults (staff and visitors) only, all other washrooms are for student use only. There are separate student washrooms for boys and girls throughout the school.

Schools in Slovenia are not required to have a school nurse on site. There are however qualified first aiders amongst the BISL staff. There are first aid kits in each classroom, and first aid boxes are available on the corridor of the ground and first floors. The PE department have their own first aid box at the local sports centre that the school uses. There is a dedicated first aid bag for trip leaders to take with them on residential outings. During the pandemic, a digital thermometer gun is available and used daily for all, on site.

The health and safety committee meet once a term to discuss any areas for concern regarding the health and safety of students and staff on site. Since the building is a pre-1967 structure, it is deemed in local law to comply with building permit regulations, including local acceptable readiness for natural disasters such as earthquakes or floods. The occupancy permit is valid and current. The building is fit for purpose and appropriately maintained regularly with utmost regard to the health and safety of the students and staff. The school has a health and safety officer who follows the requirements of state legislation and the school's health and safety policy. Access to areas where chemicals are stored is limited to authorised staff only and the keys to areas in which the cleaning chemicals are stored are locked in a key cabinet at Reception.

The school has excellent security arrangements in place; these are checked by the US Embassy regional security officer security team annually. An on-site security guard ensures that access to school premises is restricted during school hours. The building and playground area are secured by fences, with access to the school only through the front door (supervised by the security guard) at all times. Parents and visitors must sign in with the security guard upon entry, wear their visitor's lanyard throughout their presence in the building, and sign out upon departure. Entry through the internal doors is manually controlled by reception staff.



Since 2017, the playground area has been developed further with a basketball court-sized sports surface in the main playground with basketball hoops, and several four-square areas; additional seating provision and shaded areas; a swing set, climbing frame, slides, spring rider, see saw, large sand pit and a playhouse. The fixed play equipment in the playground have safety certificates as age appropriate.

In the summer of 2018, the school acquired the use of and cleared the woodland area, allowing for further opportunities for recreation and outdoor learning, including a shaded seating area.

## 10. Standard 6

### The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information provided by the school to parents, prospective parents and its wider community is excellent.

The school's mission and vision are clearly shared on the school's website as well as displayed around the school. Details of the principal's name, the board chairman's contact details, the school's address and appropriate telephone numbers are provided on the website, too. As required, there are particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admission, discipline and exclusions, and particulars of educational and welfare provision and safeguarding details. These key policies are reviewed regularly by both the senior leaders and the school board.

Parents suggested that they chose the school especially for its English system of education, not for its exam results: but the results and subsequent university placement were commended. They report that the school was like a family, embracing, welcoming and inclusive. The principal has ensured that parents felt confident to approach the school. Appointments with individual teachers were easily available: staff welcome parental feedback. One parent stated that "Lots of opportunities for us as parents to contact teachers, and swift correspondence with the leadership is very assuring".

The parents suggest that home-school communication is highly effective. In addition to letters, the school uses email, text and the website to keep parents informed. Parents felt the website provided all the essential curriculum information and this was further supported by weekly emails sent out by teachers. A dedicated e-safety page is also updated regularly: online safety workshops are provided. The school regularly share news, events and videos on the school's social media platforms and currently have over 2,000 followers. The website provided particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding year, including the results of public examinations. This could provide an opportunity to further celebrate the high achievements of the students.

The school holds annual parent and student surveys to gauge the satisfaction of parents with the provision at school. Results of these are published on the school website and newsletters. At the start of each academic year, parents receive a primary and/or secondary handbook which includes information on daily routines, key contacts, communication, curriculum, homework, reporting, after school provision, health and safety, and uniforms.

Parent interviews are held 3 times during the academic year to discuss students' individual progress. Reports are sent out twice during and once at the end of the school year. Parents receive a paper copy, and the reports are available electronically.



## 11. Standard 7

### The school's procedure for handling complaints

Complaints are uncommon at BISL, but the school has effective procedures in place that meet both local requirements and reflect best practice in the UK. They more than meet the BSO standard.

The formal written complaints procedure is transparent, open and effective. It takes into account local laws and regulations. The procedure is clear and aims to ensure all complaints are dealt with at the appropriate level: it is publicly available on the school's website, and copies of the policy are also available in print from the school office.

Parents are also made aware of the 'concerns and complaints' policy during the 'Meet the Teachers' evening. A Slovene translation is also available. The policy is reviewed annually by both the senior leadership team and the school board.

The policy lays out the:

- expectations and responsibilities of those involved
- informal and formal procedures to be followed
- procedures for appealing against decisions
- involvement of Orbital Education to resolve any appeals

The procedure sets out clear timescales for the management of any complaint. Written records detail the process regarding individual complaints and a high level of confidentiality is observed. Records are also maintained relating to individual complaints and these are kept confidential except where local legal requirements permit access. The school maintains a thorough record of all concerns or complaints raised. There are no identified trends in the nature of the concerns.

Parents interviewed, understood the complaints procedures clearly and felt confident with the way the school would deal with any concerns.

## 12. Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the school by the board, the principal and other school leaders is outstanding.

The principal is inspirational, with a clear vision and the capacity to create teams to continue to move the school forward. He has already created a leadership team that shares a common culture of high expectations. From an already strong starting point, the school has made excellent progress, by working as a team.

With the senior leaders, the principal provides clarity and a cohesive educational direction: this focuses on the students' achievements and personal development. This highly effective leadership team has fully addressed all the recommendations from the previous inspection report. The senior leadership team meets several times a week to plan strategically, monitor progress and coordinate operational, day-to-day matters.

A highly effective system of self-evaluation has been implemented that is successful in ensuring that the school's strengths and opportunities for further development are recognised and acted upon. The self-evaluation form prepared for the BSO inspection was outstanding.

The development of middle leaders has provided a further opportunity to involve staff in ensuring the quality of provision at the school is outstanding. More could be done to ensure that all aspiring middle and senior leaders are closely involved in this process. A complete range of effective policies and guidance documents is implemented fully and monitored: this ensures a high level of consistent, high quality practice is embedded across BISL.

There are highly positive relationships between the school leadership team and the school's governing body. The governors are successful in securing, supporting and developing sufficient high-quality staff and ensuring their suitability to work with children. The school is supported by the board, as well as being held to account.

The EAL team provides a high level of support that has a consistent focus on improving achievements for all students. The strong leadership of this team ensures excellent impact.

Parents and teachers believe that the school is well led, and also that school leaders and staff are approachable and open to discussions and solutions. Regular school surveys indicate that parents are highly satisfied with their school.

Staff have clear job descriptions, and the middle and senior leadership structure is well understood. The annual staff review, and development programme allow line managers to review and reflect on their roles and responsibilities. The school leadership team values the



contribution made by all staff in ensuring each student is given the opportunity to succeed. Both teaching and non-teaching staff are recognised as valued members of the school team. Teachers new to the school are involved in carefully planned induction activities. Additional support is provided during the year as required and appropriate. A full range of opportunities are provided for staff to attend relevant professional development opportunities. Staff welcomed these opportunities and felt they contributed to their continued professional development and encouragement to be effective practitioners.

Strategic planning for the future is realistic, rigorous and challenging. Working in partnership with the school board, the development plan is closely allied to the school's aims.

