



**British School  
Overseas**  
Inspected by Penta International

# **Inspection report**

## **Al Khor International School Doha, Qatar**

Date  
Inspection number

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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 pupils; 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 pupils and pupils' 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, 85 full- or part- lessons were observed by inspectors. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, a range of teachers, representatives of the Education Office, parents and groups of students. Three school days were monitored.

The lead inspector was Colin Dyson. The team members were John Cranfield, Darren Gale Carlo Murphy, Alan Smith and Alison Stevens.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

## 3. Overall effectiveness of the school

Overall, the school provides a satisfactory quality of education. The school has articulated its core ambition to be 'one of the leading schools in the Middle East' and is currently in a process of restructuring and resourcing to fulfil this ambition.

Sections of the school have high expectations of their students and they respond by making good or better progress in their lessons and external examinations.

The school is successful in enabling nearly all students to develop their personal skills and qualities; nearly all students are well behaved and treat others with respect.

The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory or better: the school has the potential to ensure this is consistent across all teachers and all classes. The effective use of clear planning and high expectations enhances teaching and learning. The need to plan lessons that give all students more opportunities to develop their independent learning skills is recognised and understood by the leadership team.

The school takes seriously the views of its parents, staff and students, commissioning annual surveys by Keele University Centre for Successful Schools. The quantity and quality of parental discussion about student progress is a strength.

Effective systems of student tracking are being implemented to enhance further the opportunities to support students' attainment levels.

### 3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths. They include:

- The holding company has a clear strategic plan for the future direction of the school.
- The process of dialogue and consultation that the school embarked upon, leading to a rapid change agenda, aimed at achieving world class standards and enabling all stakeholders to embrace the vision.
- There are examples of highly effective practice in many key areas.
- The most successful lessons were clearly planned and delivered, demonstrating secure and enthusiastic subject knowledge. A brisk pace and confident use of appropriate technology engage students in their learning.
- In the best lessons, teachers use a range of questioning skills, differentiation, and appropriate challenge. In addition, they provided opportunities for students to develop as independent learners.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities provide students with the opportunity to develop their interests.
- Appropriate policies and procedures regarding the health, safety and well-being of students are in place.
- The school provides a safe and secure learning environment.
- There are good quality accommodation and resources.
- The school is open and transparent when dealing with parents.
- The school has made valuable in-roads in attracting and retaining high quality staff.
- Staff welfare is an identified priority by all staff .
- There is a commitment from the school to meet the needs of parents.
- The effective support of non-teaching staff to support the smooth running of the school.

## 3.2 Points for improvement

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

- Decide which aspects of 'world class status' to focus on, and how these will be measured and monitored, for the benefit of all stakeholders.
- Once priorities are established, ensure all staff understand their roles and are held to account for their work, through effective performance management systems.
- Set and achieve more challenging learning outcomes for all students.
- Ensure continual professional development is provided to equip all teachers with the knowledge and skills to deliver outstanding lessons.

## 4. The context of the school

Al Khor International School (AKIS) is a co-educational international school for 4-18 year olds. There are 3,400 students currently on roll. The school is owned by the world's two largest producers of liquefied gas – RasGas and Qatargas and managed by the Education Department of RasGas. The company provides free schooling for the children of their employees, comprising 90% of the school population. Other places are offered to non-sponsored, mostly Qatari children who pay fees. Most students live in the local community, although a few travel from Doha.

The school is undergoing considerable change. Formerly separate British and Indian schools have become part of a single larger school, with management taken in-house. Within the British curriculum, separate junior, middle and senior schools have become primary and secondary structures within a single school. A vast majority of senior managers and many of the middle managers are new to post this year. A new headmaster was appointed in September 2012.

The school delivers two distinct curriculums: a British curriculum to 1,450 primary and 1,000 senior students and an Indian CBSE curriculum to 950 students. The children of Indian employees receive places within the CBSE curriculum stream; all other nationalities are given places within the British curriculum stream. The largest national groups are Malaysian, Indonesian, Pakistani and Qatari. Fewer than 5% of students within the British curriculum speak English as a first language.

The school is managed and overseen by the Senior Leadership team, comprising the Headmaster, Head of British Secondary, Head of British Primary, Head of Student Affairs and Head of CBSE.

Pastorally, the entire school is divided into 6 houses with vertical tutor groups in the secondary section. Academically, the school is divided into three faculties: Maths and Technology, Science and PE, and Arts and Humanities with a member of staff responsible for the sixth form.

**The main challenges perceived by the school include the following:**

- Developing the quality of written and spoken English of the vast majority of students who are acquiring the language and do not speak it at home.
- Managing the growth in student numbers that has occurred over the last decade when the school has grown tenfold, and into the future, when the school is expected to grow another 30%.
- Occasional difficulties obtaining work permits and visas for specialist language teachers.

## 4.1 British nature of the school

The school securely reflects a British nature. All students follow the National Curriculum of England and Wales. In the primary school, students complete Foundation Stage, Key Stages 1 and 2. In the secondary school, Key Stage 3 is followed by IGCSEs at Key Stage 4 and AS and A Levels at Key Stage 5.

Four of the five members of the senior leadership team have UK teaching experience. The majority of the teaching staff are graduates of British Universities and hold PGCEs.

The school's target recruitment market is the UK.

The school is structured on a British model. A new whole-school House System has recently been implemented. The school culture is identifiably British, including both the old and new school uniforms. The resources and schemes used to deliver the curriculum are British and reflect both the curriculum and culture found in the UK.

The school has strong links with the British exam boards, training organisations and Cambridge University.

AKIS has agreed a three year staff development and action research project with Cambridge University School of Education.

Membership of the British Schools of the Middle East supports the school in keeping up with educational developments within the United Kingdom. The school is an active member of the association, hosting the BSME under 15 games in February this year, and the under-13 games in 2011.

## 5. *Standard 1*

### The quality of education provided by the school

Al Khor International School meets the standards set out by the Department for Education for England, for British schools overseas. It provides its students with an effective level of education that is improving further under the new senior leaders.

The school teaches the National Curriculum for England together with Arabic language, Islamic studies and Islamic history. As a result, it provides a range of experiences that develop students' knowledge, skills and understanding.

The school is developing its use of tests and examinations commonly found in schools in England to assess students' achievements and check their progress. The range of data, the comparisons made with other schools and the way it is used by teachers, is beginning to have a more significant impact on learning achievements.

Children in the Foundation classes get a good start to their education. They all arrive at school speaking languages other than English, but the quality of the education they receive means they make good progress in learning to speak English: their achievements are still below the UK average at the start of Year 1. Children's social and personal development is very good: they are respectful of each other and their teachers, and enjoy their learning.

Students in the primary and secondary sections continue to make progress: however this is not yet consistent across all years.

The school is successful in helping students to develop their personal skills and qualities. Nearly all students are thoughtful, well behaved, treat others with respect and have good social skills.

The accommodation and resourcing levels make a very strong contribution to students' achievements and to their positive attitudes.

Leadership and management are having an immediate impact across the school and identify clear areas for improvement. The headmaster's and education manager's focus on raising achievement is having a clear impact on improvement right across the school. This gives the school a clear direction which is shared fully with everyone from the holding company as board of governors to the support staff. This has created the drive to become a 'World Class' school.

As a result of the recent vision of the new headmaster and the completion of a detailed self-evaluation, the school has a clear understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and this evidence is being used to shape school developments.

## 5.1 Curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory with some areas of strength. The school is currently undergoing a full and comprehensive review based on student need and the analysis of data.

The curriculum across the whole school is broad and balanced. Time allocations to subjects and the allocation of subjects are in line with National Curriculum (NC) requirements and the country's obligations. The curriculum is generously resourced in order to deliver on its aims. There are some instances however, where long delays in procurement of resources have delayed curriculum initiatives.

The curriculum is complemented and enhanced by educational visits, themed days, and cross curricular links. Extra-curricular offered cover a wide range of topics and are popular. Provision for students with special education needs (SEN) and those who are gifted and/or talented is developing.

Children in the Early Years and Key Stage 1 enjoy a rich and varied curriculum. In the Foundation Stage, teachers and teaching assistants plan in partnership to a common format. This helps to establish a happy and secure learning environment. Children explore and experience activities that help them to develop as independent learners. Their work is displayed and obviously valued. Learning activities are used to inspire curiosity, promote excitement and develop their interests.

Students are able to benefit from a range of academic and practical subjects. There are planned opportunities for differentiation though, in the main, such opportunities are based on outcome.

The curriculum at Key Stage 4 and 5 has undergone a period of extensive consultation with students, staff and parents. Previous curriculum provision was perceived as being insufficient to support the school in achieving its ambitious aims. As a consequence of the review, changes were made to language provision at Key Stages 3 and 4, with changes in examination boards at Key Stages 4 and 5. The school is currently investigating more vocational qualifications at Key Stage 5. It is too early to judge the impact of such changes.

Teaching of English as an Additional Language (EAL) has been given a higher profile with the recruitment of a new senior member of staff to manage provision throughout the school. There are planned, purposeful interventions and targeted teacher support. These enable students to access the curriculum more readily, and support them to make at least the expected amount of progress.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

Overall the effectiveness of learning and teaching is satisfactory, with some areas of strength.

In most lessons, teaching is secure and learners make progress linked to learning outcomes. In the Early Years and Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching and learning were good: teaching was well informed, confident, engaging and precise. Activities were planned to meet the needs of nearly all students. However, there is currently no whole school learning and teaching policy, which leads to too many inconsistencies. In many lessons, electronic white boards were effectively used to motivate and enhance student learning.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, teaching is secure in nearly all lessons. However, there are issues around consistency of practice, which hamper raising of standards further. Sometimes lesson planning was inadequate, the teacher spoke too much and the learning tasks did not match the lesson objectives or outcomes. In the better lessons, learning outcomes were made explicit and work planned to meet the needs of all students. This was seen for example, in a Year 4 lesson on estimation and a Year 3 lesson on plotting a story. Only in a few lessons, did teachers make reference to prior learning. Modeling of pupils' work was under used in most classrooms. There is evidence of some effective use of assessment for learning (AFL) techniques, where students were aware of their target levels and next steps for improvement. Good practice in this was observed in a Year 5 numeracy lesson and a Year 4 literacy lesson.

In Key Stage 3, the quality of teaching and learning was inconsistent across the key stage and within departments. For example in an unsatisfactory Year 7 science lesson, the poor behaviour of a significant minority of students had a negative impact on the learning of all. Conversely in a good Year 8 science lesson, the teacher motivated and enthused the students through the use of a well-planned practical activity on electromagnetism.

At Key Stage 4, the quality of teaching and learning was better overall. The best lessons were characterised by high expectations, pace and energy. In these, students were stimulated by active involvement in their learning and enthusiastic teachers. Students were eager to learn, and teachers provided appropriate levels of challenge. Effective questioning techniques facilitated higher order thinking skills. There was a good level of interaction between the teacher and students. Contributions were valued and praised. Teachers promoted independent learning. Learning was enhanced through paired activities and group work. In an effective Year 11 mathematics lesson on geometry, students were challenged and encouraged to reflect on their thinking. In a good Year 10 science lesson on 'Biodiesel', the use of a variety of teaching styles ensured that nearly all students made good progress. Too many lessons, however, were only just satisfactory.

Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning extend into Key Stage 5. In a good Year 12 chemistry lesson on 'Elements and their Reactivity', the teacher

supported students engaged in independent learning effectively. In lessons where activities were mainly teacher-led or which did not sufficiently challenge students, learning was less effective. For example, in a Year 12 mathematics lesson on 'Acceleration' and an AS lesson on 'Globalisation', learners were reluctant to engage in lesson activities.

Nearly all students behave well and listen attentively. They often work positively together. For example, in a Year 7 science lesson, students were able to work collaboratively to create an annotated mind map, to help them revise key words. Instances of off-task behaviour are generally dealt with promptly and effectively.

Effective use of assessment for learning techniques to enhance learning - effective questioning, starter activities, use of the plenary to assess learning - was seen in some lessons across the Key Stages but was not consistent. Although there were some examples of guidance given to students about how to progress to the next level, this was sporadic. Parents and students are given summative information about progress and levels or grades through established reporting procedures. Formative feedback and on-going assessment are less well established.

## 5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

Standards achieved are satisfactory, but there is wide variation. This lack of consistency leads to achievement that is just satisfactory, to good. The school has already recognised this, and is working to raise standards to that of the best.

Over 95% of students arrive at school as EAL learners. Lesson observations and assessment data indicate that given their starting point, good progress is made by nearly all students during Early Years and Key Stage 1. However, this is not maintained consistently across Key Stage 2. Although there is some evidence of the use of targets to challenge students, this has yet to be embraced by all. At the end of Key Stage 2, 45% of students at AKIS achieved a level 4 or above in English compared to the UK national average of 85%. The figures for reading, maths and science for AKIS pupils are 52%, 50% and 71% compared UK figures of 87%, 84% and 87% respectively. At Key Stage 3, only a third of the cohort are working at or above their expected level in English, but by the end of the Key Stage in mathematics and science, most students are working at or above their expected level.

All students begin their iGCSE courses in mathematics and science during Year 9. The more able students take their final examinations at the end of Year 10. Analysis of Key Stage 4 mock exam results indicates that progress is largely in line with expectation. In 2012, 62% of students achieved 5 A\*-C grades in all subjects compared to 78.6% in the UK, although this figure was slightly over the University of Durham Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEMS) prediction. 57% of AKIS students achieved 5 A\*-C grades including English and Maths, compared to the UK average of 58.3%. This figure was 15% higher than the CEMS prediction. Whilst 24.6% of AKIS students achieved A\* in Maths compared to 5.2% in the UK, only 9% of students achieved an A\* in chemistry, compared to 22% in the UK.

All subject leaders are required to complete an iGCSE results analysis and encouraged to make general comments, draw conclusions and suggest appropriate actions. The resulting report is sent to senior management for comment. However, the process is new and has yet to have significant impact.

## 6. *Standard 2*

### The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. Across the school, students are generally respectful towards teachers and to each other. In the Early Years and Key Stage 1, they participate eagerly in question and answer sessions. A focus group of Key Stage 2 pupils clearly enjoyed the practical elements of investigation and learning. They are proud of their school. In many of the Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 lessons observed, students were keen to learn although much of their learning was dominated by the teacher. There were few opportunities for students to manage their own learning.

A whole school behaviour policy is currently under review with the use of Students Information Management System (SIMS) to track positive and negative behaviour. Behaviour is good or better in lessons and around the school. Students interviewed across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 stated that they felt safe and secure. In the few unsatisfactory lessons observed, inappropriate behaviour was a response to weak teaching. Students became uninterested and demotivated. They did not listen and made less progress.

Nearly all students take an active interest in school life through participation in choirs, concerts, sporting activities and assemblies. Many opportunities are provided for students to use their initiative and demonstrate responsibility, for example voting for house captains and supporting them in their role. They generally enjoy positive relationships with their teachers and each other. Most listen attentively to their teachers and to their fellow students. There was evidence of mutual respect and a concern for the values and beliefs of others, throughout the school. The vertical tutoring system provides opportunities for student leadership. In addition, the house system is encouraging the formation of loyalty groups. Older students mentor younger members of their tutor group.

Care and concern for others extends beyond the school: last year students raised a substantial amount of money for charity. Students are friendly and welcoming to visitors: they are very happy to talk about their school, their work and their interests.

Attendance is approximately 90%. Primary school registers first thing in the morning whilst secondary students are registered at the start of every lesson. Lateness to school or lessons are logged in SIMS and followed up by form tutors and house tutors. The school has identified punctuality as an issue to work on.

## 7. *Standard 3*

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

The welfare, health and safety of students are satisfactory. There is a determined focus within school to guide and support the students at AKIS with the introduction of a vertical tutor and house system in the secondary school. This will start in the primary school next term. A 'Behaviour for Learning' policy is currently in draft for secondary students. A programme for social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) is in place in primary, and is secure.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is discreetly taught in secondary, as befits the local context, and is complemented by a PE curriculum which focuses on life skills. Units within the science curriculum promote healthy lifestyles. In addition, a range of after-school activities provides good opportunities for physical exercise.

Drinking water is widely available: it is permitted and promoted in lessons. The school has a well-trained and experienced nurse. She does not at present contribute to the SEAL and PSHE lessons, which is a missed opportunity. There is a cycle of annual health checks for all Year 1 children through the community Health centre every year. Parents are kept well informed of any injuries their child sustains at school. Effective communication procedures using the Students Information Management System (SIMS) to ensure that all staff are fully aware of students' medical conditions. Food checks are undertaken at snack times in primary and healthy eating is taught throughout the primary school.

Risk assessments are carried out prior to out of school visits, but the current trips policy focuses on safety and risk assessment: there is not a focus on educational benefit and impact on learning. Duty staff are clearly seen through the use of high visibility jackets.

Evacuation procedures for fire are in place and logged. Entry into the community and into school is regulated by guards and electronically operated gates. All visitors are required to wear a visible identity pass.

Transportation is available, but movement, behaviour and litter on buses are issues.

Student interaction in classrooms, at break times and in shared areas is good throughout the school. There is evidence of vandalism, especially with regard to lockers. Inclusion and a respect for diversity are significant strengths of the school. Observation of lessons and informal interactions between students throughout the school demonstrate a high level of mutual respect.

There is no full time careers advisor presently in school. This limits the amount of support that is available.

A system of prefects is in place in the primary school to assist with break duty, and to act as buddies. In discussion with the accreditors, students felt that the role of the student council in the secondary school was under-developed.

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

The suitability of the proprietor and staff is good. The holding company undertakes the management of school policies and procedures through the Educational Office to ensure the school meets the safety, care and guidance requirements for all students. Their responsibilities include the effective monitoring of policy implementation to ensure all local requirements are met.

The safe recruitment and checking of all staff is carried out by the school's Central Operations and Services team. Prior to the confirmation of staff appointments, appropriate checks are carried out to confirm their identity, medical fitness, right to work in Qatar and previous employment history. At least two character references are taken up, as well qualifications and professional references.

The school maintains a list of all staff and volunteers who currently work in the school. This shows when they started and stopped working in the school.

Staffing levels are more than adequate for the successful delivery of the curriculum. All staff have qualifications appropriate to their role; some staff have further teaching qualifications that enhance school development.

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

Overall, the quality of the premises and accommodation is good. However, whilst the new primary school building is finished to a high standard, the secondary school décor is looking tired and dated. Some damaged lockers have protruding metalwork.

In general, the school provides a stimulating learning environment with displays of students' work in many classrooms and public areas. In the best learning environments, displays are a good balance between teaching resources and students' work.

The outstanding facilities support a wide range of sporting activities. These include a large indoor swimming pool and two outdoor pools, two large sports halls, a world class climbing wall, a 300 metre running track and outdoor pitches and tracks. High quality specialist facilities for science, PE, art and the performing arts, design technology and food, libraries, multi-purpose halls, early years spaces and recreation areas enhance delivery of the curriculum.

ICT is well resourced. An Apple Mac suite enhances the learning of students at Key Stage 5. Each class has an interactive whiteboard. The school however has identified some variation in how new technologies are being used to support student and staff learning.

## 10. Standard 6

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

The school's provision of information for parents, carers and others is good. Its partnership with parents, other schools and the community is a strength.

Owned and managed by the main gas companies in Qatar, the school is automatically an integral part of the community. Parents are valued partners in the school's decision making process. A particular strength of this school is its open and transparent approach to dealing with the problems it faces. Parents are invited to an open question-and-answer session held each week. Teachers are also invited to attend and most do.

The Education Office ensures employees views as parents are seriously sought and considered by the school. The board also receives thorough reports from the headmaster and senior staff through the Education Office. Frequent open forums are held to ensure the views and concerns of all stakeholders are known.

Reports are compiled and sent home twice a year in Key Stage 1 and 2 and three times a year in Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. Issues of concern can be raised at parents' evenings and/or one to one meetings with subject teachers. A focus group of parents were more than happy with the contact they receive from school, and rarely experienced problems in making appointments to see specific members of staff. The new house system, when fully embedded, should provide a more structured framework for tracking and monitoring of student progress.

Teachers are confident when dealing with parents and find them supportive. The vast majority seem pleased with the positive impact parents have on their child's learning. One teacher commented on how easy it was to both contact and follow up with parents at this school. Parents are seen as active and valued stakeholders in the learning community.

One parent commented on how proud he was that his children were able to receive a British style education in such a well-resourced environment. Another parent stressed how rigorous some of the teachers were in monitoring their child's progress. A recent Keele University satisfaction survey suggests the majority of parents are becoming happier with the school's communication methods and level of parental involvement.

Formal links with other schools are being developed. Participation in and hosting of the recent British schools in the Middle East games has reinforced this. The school actively promotes and supports a wide range of charitable causes. These include crises in Nepal, Burma and work with the Red Crescent campaign.

Participation at local events such as The Doha Debates and Model United Nations has helped establish and build the school's profile in the local community. Historically, it has developed strong links with Qatar University and some of the Qatar foundation universities. More recently it has established a link with Doha College and other local schools. There is collaboration across the school, with joint activities for CBSE and British curriculum staff and students, including first aid training and charity events.

## 11. Standard 7

### The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school provides clear information about complaints, and the procedures are in line with local Ministry requirements. As a result, the school meets the standard satisfactorily. The Education Office operates an 'Open Door' policy to ensure all parents have easy access to senior staff. Nearly all parents surveyed felt confident dealing with any issues they had.

The holding company also represents employees who are parents of children at the school to ensure all stakeholders are represented and supported.

## 12. Standard 8

### The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable.

### 13. *Standard 9* Leadership and management of the school

Leadership and management meet the standard required. The School has recently reviewed and expressed its vision to provide a world-class education for the children of RasGas and QatarGas employees. It is in a unique position of being directed by a single education body led by the Educational Manager's Office. This office provides overall governance, based on the aims and visions of the holding companies. Through it, parents' views are represented, being employees of the holding company. The office fulfils its role of supporting and strengthening the senior leadership team, and has an in-depth understanding of the school and the learning outcomes.

RasGas has provided clear strategic vision and astute planning to enable the school to develop as a single school with two curriculums that acts as a focal point for the Al Khor community. Qatargas and RasGas also ensure the school is well supported financially and provide a high level of resourcing.

RasGas also undertakes the management of school policies and procedures through the Education Department, to ensure the school meets the safety, care and guidance requirements for all students. There is a Central Operations and Systems team whose responsibilities include the safe recruitment and checking of all staff and the effective monitoring of policy implementation to ensure all local requirements are met.

Under the guidance of the headmaster, the school has been through a period of self-review, reflection and confirmation of its vision and mission. An integral part of the process has been the desire to involve all stakeholders through open and frequent forums. Due to a significant change in personnel, the school has had to reaffirm its development path. The school's self-evaluation process has enabled them to identify and begin to address several key areas that impact on success. The school has identified three key areas for development: monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the curriculum and teaching; performance of the school relative to other schools; and the satisfaction of students and their parents.

Through the ambitious vision for the school, the headmaster and senior leadership team have begun to raise expectations of what every student and teacher can achieve. Evaluation-based improvement plans have led to the review of some key policies and procedures, but this is still at an early stage.

The headteacher has identified the rigorous implementation of a well-focused improvement plan, based on an effective self-evaluation, as the driving force enabling the school to achieve its vision. This has been his priority during the six months he has been in post.

As part of the changes, the role of middle leaders has been evaluated, and new systems to support and monitor students have been implemented. The new organization structures have been rolled out in the secondary school with some favourable support from staff. The next phase

is the introduction of the system into the primary school. The school recognizes the need for extensive explanation, support and guidance if staff are to manage this change successfully.

A recently introduced whole school performance management system establishes a process of target setting and monitoring of outcomes for all staff. There has not been sufficient time to assess whether the process is sufficiently rigorous to meet the anticipated goals. Middle leaders clearly articulated the need for professional development opportunities, if they are to hold others to account.

Middle leaders are developing an understanding of their roles and responsibilities, but this is not yet consistent. This has led to some staff feeling insecure and unsure of their involvement. The school is working towards raising the quality of expectations and is ambitious for the outcomes of all students. It is establishing a clearer ethos that promotes positive attitudes and good personal development. Communication systems are being developed to ensure all stakeholders are informed and supported.