



## **Inspection Report**

# **King's College The British School of Madrid Spain**

Date 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> October 2021  
Inspection number 20211026

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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 the 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 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, all teachers were observed by inspectors. School documentation and policies were analysed, and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised. Discussions were held with the senior staff, the leadership teams, a range of teachers, parents and groups of students. Two and a half school days were monitored.

The lead inspector was Dr Mark Evans. The team members in school were Charlene Carrett, Ciaran Cunningham Watson, Ian Plant, and John Stapley, with Siobhan Brady, working online.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The King's College, Madrid (King's College) meets all standards for British Schools Overseas.

### 3. Overall effectiveness of the school

The school offers an excellent British education that meets the needs of its students in a creative and often innovative manner. The quality of boarding provision is outstanding. The curriculum is rich and entirely suitable for the particular requirements of Spain. Teachers make excellent use of the wide range of resources available to them; students are highly engaged in their learning. Parents and students alike are very supportive of the school and the provision of education. The Covid-19 pandemic has been handled very well indeed.

Students' behaviour is excellent and they clearly relish being at school. As a result, they make excellent progress, becoming eager, confident speakers of the English language, and articulate learners: they gain excellent GCSE, GSE A level and IB Diploma examination results.

#### 3.1 What the school does well

The school has many strengths.

- The ethos of the school is very strong.
- It is driven by its mission 'to be at the forefront of British education internationally'.
- It is friendly and welcoming, whilst still expecting the best from all staff and pupils.
- The relationships between pupils and staff are outstanding. They are based in mutual respect.
- The school is committed to empowering both pupils and staff: the responsibilities given to pupils are significant and pupils meet the challenge.
- It is successful in meeting its aim to deliver a transformative learning experience to pupils, and nurturing individuals' talents.
- Not only is teaching very effective, but pupils themselves are empowered to seek new learning from one another or from external sources.
- The use of outdoor learning is excellent, throughout the school.
- Boarding provision is excellent, highly successful and a significant strength of the school.
- There is strong and effective support for pupils who do not speak English as a first language.

- Academic standards are very high.
- Whole school communication is very effective: policies support existing procedures or drive practice to new heights.
- The curriculum is rich and varied, which supports excellent learning.
- The British nature of the school is very evident, ensuring pupils that eventually study in the UK, are very well prepared.

## 3.2 Points for improvement

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

- improve the quality of teaching further, so that all lessons are as effective as the best ones, for example in terms of techniques used (like facilitation), or stretch and challenge for the most able pupils and the use of classroom displays to support and engage learners;
- further embed the culture of data analysis and application throughout the school;
- maintain the planning and implementation of facilities development, to enhance further the high quality of infrastructure provision.

## 4. The context of the school

Full name of school	King's College SL		
Address	Paseo de los Andes, 35; 28760; Tres Cantos		
Main telephone #	+91 803 4800		
Website	<a href="https://www.madrid-soto.kingscollegeschools.org/">https://www.madrid-soto.kingscollegeschools.org/</a>		
Email	info@kingscollege.es		
Principal	Mr Matthew Taylor		
Chair of board of governors	Mr Nicholas Wergan		
Age range	Currently 2-18 years, proposed 0-18 with new baby unit		
Number of students	Total = 1,444	Boys = 719	Girls = 725
Student numbers by age on date of entry	(0-2 years) 18	(3-5 years) 91	(6-11 years) 496
	(12-16 years) 670	(17-18 years) 168	(18+ years) 1
Total number of part-time students	0		

King's College, The British School of Madrid (King's College) is a coeducational, non-selective British curriculum school. Pupils join from 20 months of age onwards, at any point during the school year. Most pupils enter the youngest classes with little or no English and 60% of pupils at the end of Reception have not yet reached age related speaking goals. A majority of pupils gain access to the Russell Group Universities in the UK.

One extra class of pupils enters the school at Year 3, from the sister school, Kings Infants, Chamartín. The number of pupils on roll expands further in Year 10 (by approximately 10%) on the arrival of new applicants from local Spanish schools. The sixth form expands every year, as approximately sixty pupils join from the other sister school (in La Moraleja), going into Year 12 to study for A levels or the International Baccalaureate.

Secondary pupils may in some circumstances join at any point during the year, but a September start is usual. Pupils are rarely permitted to enter Years 12 - 13 mid-course: a special Year 11 one year induction course was set up in school in September 2019 for the benefit of mid GCSE transfer pupils, from non-British curriculum schools.

Most pupils speak English as an additional language. 89% of the current school roll are registered as having English as an additional language. The majority of King's College's pupils are Spanish but there are 62 different nationalities represented in school, most of whom do not speak English as their heritage language. Many of the pupils speak more than one heritage language at home. When celebrating international mindedness we acknowledged a school community of over 37 different languages being spoken.

King's College uses the Spanish cut-off dates for admission to school which means that a significant number of our pupils are up to 8 months younger than their counterparts in a British school. The Spanish school year begins on 1st January as opposed to 1st September in the UK.

The school follows a British based Curriculum leading to the widest range of IGCSEs and A Levels of any school in Spain and is the only BSO British school in Madrid to offer boarding facilities. The school introduced the IB Diploma Programme alongside A levels from September 2020, increasing the breadth of the educational offer for pupils. Students who progress to higher education in Spain most commonly attend private universities delivering degree courses in English and King's College supports these applications by offering the university access courses for Spain (*Parte Especificas*). Annually, a number of students join Ivy League universities and other top universities.

## 4.1 British nature of the school

King's College is palpably British in nature.

- It follows the National Curriculum for England from EYFS onwards.
- It offers GCSE, A-level and Cambridge Language English examinations, and the International Baccalaureate Diploma taught in English.
- Teachers (with the exception of language teachers) are English speakers and most teaching staff are qualified in the UK educational system.
- British values are evident throughout the school, in the personal development of students and through the King's College core values.
- There are UK school style assemblies from EYFS to Year 13, teacher and/or pupil led, and they cover a variety of themes ranging from British values to current global issues.
- Pupil voice is strongly encouraged, reflecting best British practice of democracy.
- There are democratic processes for positions of responsibility e.g. leadership and prefect elections; student council representatives are elected democratically.
- Social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) education is embedded in lessons throughout the curriculum, supporting British values and the understanding of others.
- In-service training for teachers, including safeguarding, follows British Schools Overseas (BSO) and Department for Education (DfE) guidelines.
- All employed staff that are in regulated activity are International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) checked before employment.
- UK Government education guidelines are followed, provided there is no direct conflict with Spanish law.
- Pupils go to a variety of different universities around the world, the vast majority of pupils study for degrees taught in English in countries such as the UK, Spain, Netherlands, USA, and Ireland.
- Termly music recitals and annual music productions, broaden the pupils' experience of British culture and traditions.
- Recent visitors from the UK include wellbeing coaches from UK; study skills instructors; coaching and mentoring (INSET); a UK experienced school improvement partner; support from a former OFSTED inspector in Secondary and Primary; alumni and parents who have studied at British universities and gone on to successful careers in the UK.
- Pupils have transferred successfully back into schools in the UK.
- Where appropriate, staff attend INSET in the UK: when possible, the school recruits directly from within the UK.
- A large range of optional activities (more than 50) are undertaken by pupils, ranging from sports to horse riding to chess.
- An educational enrichment programme takes place every Monday afternoon in the primary and secondary schools.
- A UK-style house programme encourages further enrichment, challenge and extension, and the opportunity for students to interact and develop social skills.

## 5. Standard 1

### The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided at King's College fully meets the requirements of the BSO Framework.

#### 5.1 Curriculum

The curriculum provided is excellent.

It provides for pupils aged 2 – 18 years old and meets both British and local requirements. The school plans on opening a Baby Centre which will extend the curriculum to children from 16 weeks old.

Curriculum policies and planning shows clear progression with significant amount of challenge. The curriculum on offer is broad, balanced and relevant with a significant emphasis on students personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) development. The school adapts quickly to the needs of the students. Pupils receive additional support for their studies, wellbeing and careers guidance. Transition points are seamless.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) classes have adopted the new UK curriculum guidance and it has been implemented successfully. It is used for the long-term planning; schemes of work have been adapted to allow for more opportunities to follow the children's interests. The new curriculum supports the school's focus on language development and the EYFS planning reflects this. In order to focus on the development of each child there has been a reduction in the evidence being gathered, as per UK guidance, to allow for more high quality interaction with the children. *Tapestry* is used to track the progress of children against the Early Learning Goals and allows for quick intervention if a child is not making progress. The continuous provision allows for ample opportunities for students to lead their own learning and discover the objectives planned for within the scheme of work.

In Primary, continuous provision remains part of the Year 1 curriculum which allows for a purposeful transition into the new Key Stage. Year 2 teachers adapt their curriculum to allow students to have a role play area within their classroom. From EYFS to Year 2, *Talk for Writing* is used to improve language and the phonics scheme is *Read Write Inc*, whilst *White Rose Maths* is used effectively from EYFS upwards. The curriculum within primary is creative and allows for cross curricula opportunities. Each term there is a topic which culminates at the end of term with a focus day allowing students to dress up and celebrate their learning. There are trips

planned to move the learning outside of the classroom now restrictions have lifted. In Year 3-4 *Talk for Writing* and *White Rose for Maths* continue to be used effectively to move learning forward. Students continue to be encouraged to seek out their own resources within the classroom and have book corners or themed areas to support their learning. In Year 5 and Year 6, in preparation for secondary school, the curriculum has been adapted to allow for more specialist subjects to be taught. Students are taught by their class teacher for either English or mathematics: however, they receive specialist lessons including drama, music and computing. This specialist teaching allows for opportunities such as Robotics to be taught, using Lego Education.

Due to the carefully planned transition from primary in to secondary the curriculum in Key Stage 3 focuses on moving the learning forward and having the learning skills required in preparation for Key Stage (KS)4. KS2 and KS3 join for school performances which further solidifies the connection between the two key stages. Due to the broad curriculum in KS3 the younger students within secondary can be taught by up to 20 different teachers. The curriculum allows students to experience an array of subjects and the long term planning ensures progress in both creative and academic subjects.

The school is accredited to carry out iGCSE/GCSE for Cambridge, AQA and Edexcel/Pearson. The options at GCSE have continued to grow and the uptake of creative subjects is beginning to improve. All students can access GCSE courses, including English and Maths, and those identified as SEN can opt for less subjects and Foundation Maths if required. Students identified with SEN are given the appropriate access arrangements. There are also opportunities for GCSEs to be completed within one year to allow for additional qualifications to be achieved. In order to comply with local regulations KS4 students also follow the curriculum for *lengua y literatura, and ciencias sociales*

Students are now able to opt for A Levels and/or International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD) in Sixth Form. This option is unique in the region and prepares students to continue their education in universities across the world. Due to many students now opting to stay in Spain, the school acted swiftly to adapt the curriculum to ensure these students have the required qualifications and credits. The school has invested in the recruitment of additional teaching staff to cover this part of the curriculum. The curriculum continues to prepare students to attend universities in the UK, such as Oxbridge. The careers advisor and the university fairs arranged by the school give students the support required to consider and plan for their future after leaving King's College.

PSHE is an integral part of the school and through detailed planning across all age groups students can learn about themselves, those around them and how to keep

themselves safe and happy. PSHE underpins the ethos of the school and gives students the foundation they need to be happy learners. The curriculum is developed using the National Association for PSHE and has a dedicated period within the timetable for all year groups. The new statutory Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education (RSE) has been embedded within the PSHE Curriculum and other departments, such as science, the school is fully compliant. RSE is also taught in both Spanish and English. External speakers have also been invited in to talk on subjects related to the PSHE and RSE Curriculum. Focus days and charity days also link to the curriculum to raise awareness. PSHE also incorporates e-safety and 'fake news' within their schemes of work to ensure students are also safe online.

The provision of extracurricular activities is a strength of the school. Students have access to an abundance of activities ranging from sport, music, drama, gaming to horse riding to name a few. New programmes continue to be introduced including stomp basketball, rap, hockey and rugby. There is a dedicated enrichment period in the week however students also take part in activities at break times and after school. The school has also developed an Outdoor Education Curriculum and there is a large number of students enrolled on the Duke of Edinburgh. External coaches, in addition to school staff, ensure that the quality of extra curricula activities is excellent. Students take part in local, national and international competitions. Almost all students take part in an extra curricula activity and additional transport is put in place to encourage students to attend after school. Students are asked about their preferences and many students lead activities including the very popular debating group. Student leadership opportunities are manifold, and include the house system, student council, charity committee and the *Inspired* 'Global Student Leadership' committee.

## 5.2 *Teaching and assessment*

The quality of teaching and assessment across the school is excellent: there is outstanding practice evident in classrooms at all levels.

The average age of pupils is lower across all Key Stages than in the UK sector, due to January-December admissions which places approximately a third of pupils in a year group above that which they would be in within the UK. Almost 90% of pupils are learning in their second or third language, and pupils aged 5-16 must follow compulsory Spanish curriculum subjects, alongside a full complement of English National Curriculum subjects.

With this context in mind, teaching throughout the school is well planned: it enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make excellent progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop new skills in the subjects taught. The best teachers exhibit excellent subject knowledge, challenge their pupils to work independently, beyond curriculum expectations and at a brisk and effective pace. For example, in a Year 7 mathematics lesson, an independent problem-solving activity engaged pupils right from the beginning of the lesson with the teacher supporting only when necessary.

In lessons where pupils made the most progress, there was excellent balance between teacher talk and collaborative pair or group work. For example, in a Year 8 drama lesson, the teacher embraced pupil creativity whilst skilfully questioning the pupils to elicit higher order thinking skills.

Teaching fosters in pupils excellent self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves. In pre-nursery, inside and outdoor learning led to excellent progress. The staff knew the children's individual needs and interests very well. This was evident by choice of the wide range of resources available in the classroom and by the personalised interactions and instructions that each child received. The children explored the different learning spaces independently and the staff supported their language development, also using gestures and prompts.

It is clear what the learning intentions are in most lessons, and they are blended well with the children's interests. In an EYFS lesson, for example, although the resources were based around Halloween, one child started to show an interest in dinosaurs. The teacher went into role and went on an adventure with the child in the huts outside. The child was observed during the morning demonstrating that he was struggling to settle in but when observed later in the day, he was highly engaged and engrossed in his learning. The children were sharing the resources, displaying that they were working beyond age expectation in personal and social development.

Another characteristic of the best lessons was the outstanding use of ICT to support learning. In a Year 4 lesson, the class was exploring a dragon's cave: the teacher was very well prepared with excellent resources, and the use of the interactive whiteboard complimented physical resources. When one girl turned and called to the teacher "Look, I've found a dragon's egg!", the class were encouraged even more to complete their activities.

Teaching almost always involves very well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time: nursery classes were observed during continuous provision, showing confidence and enthusiasm. Some children ate their breakfast, whilst others went straight into the continuous provision self-assuredly. The resources offered opportunities for the children to be inquisitive and independent in their learning. Each child had a personalised target that was linked to communications or personal development. In all lessons, the adults are deployed well and ensure that pupils make excellent progress.

Strong knowledge and enthusiastic teaching in many secondary lessons evoked a real sense of passion in pupils. Particularly strong examples of this were observed in English, geography and PE lessons. Most subjects showed excellent relationship, for example in science lessons, that led to strong engagement in their learning.

The best teachers exhibited excellent subject knowledge, challenging their pupils to work independently, beyond curriculum expectations and at an effective pace. In lessons where pupils made the most progress, there was excellent balance between teacher talk and collaborative pair or group work. For example, in a Year 8 drama lesson, the teacher embraced pupil creativity whilst skilfully questioning to elicit higher order thinking skills.

All staff, including teaching assistants show excellent understanding of the aptitudes, and needs of the pupils; many ensure that these and the pupils' prior attainments are taken into account in the planning of lessons. Use of data analysis is gradually becoming more impactful. All teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and understanding of the matters being taught. In one university preparation lesson for the most able pupils, the mathematics being taught was at a very high standard, and the pupils loved it.

Many lessons demonstrated characteristics of excellence. In a year 3 PSHE lesson, children were designing posters on risks and dangers. They were working in small groups and had many opportunities to discuss with their peers their thoughts and ideas. Pupils made excellent progress, as they did in a Year 6 English lesson, when very strong levels of engagement, collaboration and discussion in well-paced lesson,

led to outstanding learning. The use of a 'working wall' saved work for future lessons, too.

In the lessons that were slightly less successful, a few pupils could have been challenged more, when they had demonstrated that they had a sound understanding of the task in hand. They showed a willingness to explore further, however, the teacher sometimes moved onto the next group, which limited opportunities to extend the most able pupils' thinking further. Occasionally, the success of the lesson relied on the excellent behaviour of the class, rather than on engaging teaching. In these few lessons, slow preparation and sluggish pace led to well behaved but passive learners, who were not adequately engaged in the lesson. Sometimes the use of closed questioning restricted pupils from developing deeper answers to interesting topics.

A range of assessment opportunities are used to provide diagnostic information on next steps. Oral feedback and live marking in lessons is combined with more formal written feedback in exercise books and on online platforms, to allow pupils to celebrate success and also identify areas for development. Pupils are keen collaborative learners and enjoy peer-assessment: some is of the highest quality, and the resultant learning conversations are strong opportunities to develop academically and socially.

Formal department assessments are planned and the data from these assessments is analysed both at department and school level to ensure that regular assessment is taking place and is being used as a formative learning tool. CAT4 data is shared at the start of the year and staff use it to inform their choice of target level.

In Key Stage 3, students do not sit externally assessed examinations as in Key Stage 2, 4 or 5, but are assessed internally against the King's Levels. These align with the King's College expectations of where a student who is on track to reach a particular end of Key Stage 3 Level should be, by the end of Year 7, 8 or 9.

Students are assessed weekly in 'Cycle Tests' but, in the interests of student wellbeing, they do not have an 'exams week' until the end of Year 9. Then assessments are used to inform the teachers whether a student has reached their target grade or not. Analysis of each report cycle is used to identify students who require intervention, though this is not consistent across all teachers.

### 5.3 *Standards achieved by students*

Standards achieved by pupils are excellent.

The school has rigorous systems in place to monitor and track pupil's progress and attainment across all subjects. These systems, driven by middle and senior leadership, include analysis of data at the school, key stage, year group and class level. The school uses Cognitive Ability Testing (CAT4), historical data and teacher's expertise to help establish targets and support pupils.

The youngest children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum. On entry to EYFS, most pupils speak English as a second language. The school benefits from small class sizes in EYFS, enabling teachers to know individual pupils well and monitor their progress closely. Teachers have an excellent understanding of pupil's personal and social needs.

Pupils in Reception are formatively assessed and monitored by their teachers on a frequent basis using 17 Early Learning Goals. At the end of Reception, 75% of pupils reached age related goals in self-confidence and self-awareness. There are no comparisons with UK trends due to the Covid-19 pandemic, however, data was moderated with other schools in the Madrid region. In Key Stage 1, phonics and reading progress checks confirm that almost all pupils work in line with expectations.

GL Progress Tests, administered for Years 2 to 6 in June 2021, indicate that pupils meeting expected levels are significantly higher than UK averages in both English and mathematics. Notable progress is made by the English as an additional language (EAL) Focus Group. The Progress Test in Science (PTS) is administered in Year 6, with 95% of pupils reaching expected or higher levels of attainment.

In Key Stage 3, pupils are assessed in line with level descriptors and grades from 9-1. Across all year groups in Key Stage 3, pupils make excellent levels of progress. Specifically, 95% of pupils in Year 7, 87% of pupils in Year 8 and 91% of pupils in Year 9 reach or exceed their targets. Standards of attainment in Key Stage 3 prepare pupils very well for the next stage of their education.

Teachers set very high expectations in lessons across all year groups, fostering a culture in which pupils strive for academic excellence, grow in confidence and develop their independent learning skills. Consequently, levels of progress and attainment are excellent across all year groups. Pupils from Year 5 upwards are assessed weekly through cycle tests that capture key information about subject knowledge and skill acquisition. Data from cycle tests is used analytically to support those who require intervention. Systematic curriculum design and adaptation helps

deepen pupil's knowledge and understanding of the subject content taught across the school.

In 2021, pupils achieved the best results in the history of the school. At A Level, 30% of pupils scored A\* (compared to the national percentage of 18%), 60% A\*-A (compared to the national percentage of 45%) and 93% A\*-C. In International GCSEs, 28% of pupils achieved grade 9, 48% achieved 9-8 and 68% achieved 9-7. These results are well above national averages and were based upon Teacher Assessed Grades due to the cancellation of examinations. The school will receive its first set of IB Diploma results at the end of the 2021/2022 academic year.

High academic standards are driven inside the classroom and as part of the schools' wider curriculum processes. These include pupil progress meetings, support and challenge sessions and academic clinics. Standards of behaviour and attitude to learning are excellent across the school.

## 6. Standard 2

### Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development of students

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of students at King's College is outstanding: it is a key strength of the school.

The holistic education ensures all students are given the tools required to be happy, safe and conscientious members of society. The schools' ethos of 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' (EDI) is fully reflected in all aspects of the school.

Early Years and KS1 are given the opportunity to reflect and flexibilities within the timetable allow teachers in primary to bring children together for circle time if something arises. Mindfulness and Yoga are also included within the PSHE curriculum. Children are encouraged to talk about how they are feeling and they speak confidently about the school, "The school always wants us to be better". The student EDI committee led an assembly on 'Micro-aggression'. The committee members talked confidently about the subjects and gave clear examples of different forms of discrimination towards minority groups. The group also aim to tackle issues such as stereotyping and prejudice by raising awareness of these issues.

Students talk passionately about equality and are internationally minded. Yellow Day for Mental Health, LGBTQ+ and Women's International Day have all been celebrated and recognised in the school. As part of Black History Month it was observed across both Primary and Secondary students expressing themselves and their learning through poetry and dance.

Student leaders of the house system and the student council are democratically elected and student leadership across the school is extensive. Student leaders can confidently explain the process which led them to representing their peers. Students are keen to be involved within their houses and they are involved with house competitions, gaining house points and celebrating together at the end of the year. There are also Sports Leaders which give older students the opportunity to train younger year groups as part of the scheme. As part of the wider school network students are part of the Inspired Global Student Leadership committee. This committee brings student leaders from across the world to discuss environmental issues as part of Earth Day, Entrepreneurship, STEM, Wellbeing and Human Rights.

Every year the school community identifies 4 charities to raise money for and the student charity committee then lead the events to raise money. In 20/21 students raised over €15,000 for their chosen charities. Students talk passionately about supporting others and they are keen to continue their charity work. Displays around the school and donation stations clearly show the students and staffs dedication to their charity work.

Students said that they felt safe in school and knew who to talk to if they needed to. During a year 3 PSHE lesson, students confidently discussed how to look out for dangers and risks and articulated how to keep themselves safe. The behaviour of students is excellent. The relationships between the older and younger students shows the community within the school. Younger students said they looked up to the older students but that they were “not scared of them”. Students feel they are listened to by the school and when asked what they would do if they were to be the head teacher for the day the response was, “Nothing, because when we suggest something like extra activities, they already make it happen”.

The PSHE curriculum underpins the students’ understanding of themselves and the world around them. It is clear that leaders at all levels are supportive of improving students wellbeing and that this a priority. Students are given clear and supportive careers guidance when GCSE options are taking place through to applying for University. The GL PASS data reflects the positive nature of the school and shows that the students are positive learners. Leaders are aware of the challenges some students face in regard to their wellbeing and interventions are in place to ensure they receive the support they require.

The engagement with extracurricular activities shows how confident and resilient the students are at King’s College. They want to better themselves and are willing to try new activities. During break and lunch times students take part in a variety of activities and are fully committed during the sessions. Valuable life skills, sustainability and responsibility are learnt through gardening classes in the allotment and green house. Students plant seeds, take care of the crops and make their very own compost. Most of the students attend after school activities with the boarding students being particularly eager to join. Students take part in sports leagues which take place on a Saturday in competitions with local clubs and other schools.

Students are happy at school and staff encourage students to be themselves. Students are proud of their school with one student saying, “I feel so welcomed, empowered and involved”. The attendance of some students is affected by frequent absences due to additional holidays. The school is aware of the issues regarding attendance and punctuality of students and are putting plans in place to improve this.

## 7. Standard 3

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

The school fully meets the requirements of the standard, the regulatory requirements and cultural obligations of the host country and has an appropriate range of effective policies and procedures in place to promote the welfare, health and safety of students. An extensive range of policies and procedures are available via the school's website.

The school's arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are outstanding and ensure that all pupils, staff and visitors are well cared for. Relationships and student voice are strengths of the school. Students are happy and motivated young people who are evidently proud of their school and thrive. Both primary and secondary students report that they feel safe in the school and that teachers are concerned for their wellbeing. The behaviour of the students is exemplary and positive rewards are promoted throughout the school. Should behaviour not meet appropriate standards, suitable consequences are in place and steps are taken in line with the school's published policies. Strong links have been established with key local services and agencies. The school makes good use of iSAMS for reporting concerns and to support students. The number and nature of any safeguarding and incident reports is recorded and monitored. The school leaders meet regularly with senior staff such as designated safeguarding leads, health and safety officer and the site manager.

Attendance and punctuality is monitored closely and procedures are in place to follow up with any concerns. Timely alerts regarding absent students are sent to parents across the school should any absence not be reported.

The school has effective policies and procedures in place for safeguarding and child protection and risk assessments are in place for activities. All staff undergo regular safeguarding training and staff throughout the school are first aid trained. Arrangements for pupils who board at the school are thorough and meet all requirements. Boarders report that they are happy and there is a waiting list for students to join the boarding provision. Awareness of online safety and wellbeing is promoted throughout the school through the use of appropriate displays. Risk assessments are completed for all activities and appropriate actions are taken to ensure that identified risks are well-managed.

Students of all ages know who they can talk to and are confident that their concerns are listened to and they would be supported. 'Open door' policies are in operation throughout the school including that of the headmaster. Students are supportive of one another and academic peer mentoring support provision operates effectively. Student mental health has been a recent focus and students can independently access two in-school psychologists and the school counsellor, as well the school nurse.

The school site is secure and visitors' entry and access to the school's site is managed and monitored effectively by site staff and security. Traffic is managed effectively by key members of staff at both the beginning and end of the day. The school's compliance with fire regulations meets UK standards, emergency drills are held at least termly and fire equipment is routinely maintained. Potentially hazardous resources and chemicals are stored safely and securely and disposed of appropriately and specialist classrooms are locked when not in use. The swimming pool building is secure. Appropriate COVID-19 related measures are in place across the school site.

## 8. Standard 4

### *The suitability of the proprietor and staff*

The suitability of the proprietor and staff meets the standards required for BSO.

The school is part of the *Inspired Education* brand. Overall, school operation is effectively monitored and managed within a greater King's group of schools. The school has appropriate safeguarding and welfare policies, with all relevant policies and procedures in place.

The school leadership feels supported by governance and appreciate the autonomy they have, taking advantage of the collaborative opportunities that exist within the school group. All appropriate policies and procedures relating to Human Resources (HR) and Health and Safety (H&S) are in place and operate beyond local expectations of standards.

The school maintains effective emergency procedures and risk assessments. Incidents and accidents are logged and records are reviewed and updated appropriately. The school employs a full time school nurse and she keeps records of student visits and individual healthcare plans.

There is a professional approach to ensure staff recruitment and checking of staff is effective with no unsupervised volunteers. The school maintains stringent security and suitability checks on all staff and they receive safeguarding and health and safety training provided by the school. The school has clear and comprehensive procedures for external visitors, including risk assessments, and checks are made for any regular visitors.

## 9. Standard 5

### The premises and accommodation

King's College provides outstanding, inspiring and well-maintained learning environments for all students. Buildings can accommodate students and visitors with physical needs and disabilities.

Features of the school's buildings and premises support learning and contribute to the students' enjoyment to learn and spaces to play. There are sufficient specialist areas and communal areas to enable all aspects of curriculum delivery. Students have access to the sports hall, basketball courts, swimming pool, a gymnasium, Astro turf, movement room and stables for horse riding. The ICT suites, art, music and science laboratories are well resourced and serve the different needs of students.

A baby unit, offering places from 16 weeks of age has been built and carefully designed, ensuring the younger students can develop and thrive in a multisensory, homelike environment. There is adequate sleeping, feeding and learning spaces for students to learn, relax and feel safe. A ramp into the baby unit allows parents and students to enter the building safely. Nappy changing facilities and a separate kitchen ensures staff can cater for the students' dietary and care needs. This is positioned next to Pre-Nursery to support transition and to allow easy access for the students as they develop and require adapted facilities.

All outside spaces offer a unique way of building independence and a positive attitude towards learning, as students explore the natural world. The recently renovated EYFS and KS1 outdoor areas are exemplary. They offer an abundance of opportunities for open ended, explorative and independent learning. The outdoor areas support the development of gross motor skills and enhance physical activities as they include slides, climbing frames, mud kitchens, as well as a water and sand areas.

Premises and accommodation are maintained to a good standard so that the health, safety and welfare of students are ensured. A monthly Health and Safety report is compiled by the H&S Office and reviewed at the termly governance meeting. Classrooms are spacious for the number of students that are taught in them and are well resourced. All Early Years classrooms open out onto an outdoor area creating a sense of spaciousness and 'free-flow' into the outdoor learning.

There are sufficient, age-appropriate toilets, bathrooms and changing facilities with hot and cold water. From the age of 5, students have separate toilet and washing facilities. The hot water provided presents no risk of scalding. Water fountains are available across the school, not including the toileting areas. Separate changing accommodations and showers are available for physical education and swimming.

All areas, both internally and externally, are well lit and very close attention is paid to cleaning and hygiene. Air-conditioning is continuing to be fitted throughout the school and heating is available for the cooler months. Fire drills take place once a term and fire alarms are serviced and replaced when required. CCTV, lifts and hand sanitizers are all also regularly serviced.

The medical room meets the needs for short term care of sick or injured students. The room contains two beds and appropriate resources for examination and treatment.

## 10. Standard 6

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

The school meets the requirements of this standard. The provision of information for parents, carers and others is excellent.

Data from the biennial parent survey indicates that parents are very satisfied with the information they receive from the school. Technological communication tools such as *iSAMS*, *Tapestry*, and e-mails connect teachers with parents on a frequent basis. Parents of secondary school pupils receive information about their child's progress and attainment through two grade cards and one full report each academic year. In EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 these are issued three times per academic year. Appropriate e-mail and address details are provided to parents and other stakeholders, including those of the school governance, Inspired Education Group and key administrative personnel. Parent-teacher meetings are conducted regularly across the school.

Policies regarding admissions, behaviour, attendance and registration, assessment, fire risk management, child protection and safeguarding, bullying, homework and complaints are available on the school website. The admissions process, entry requirements and online open day schedule for potential applicants is easily accessible. A school prospectus is available in English, as well as up to date information about recent academic results. Greater insight to the wider King's and Inspired Education Group is also available from the school's website.

The school's newsletter, the '*Soto Weekly*', is uploaded to the website providing parents and other stakeholders with a range of information about various aspects of school life. The newsletter, driven by pupil involvement, provides excellent examples of curriculum and leadership opportunities, school celebrations, assessment information and safety tips. Additionally, key school leaders provide important updates within the newsletter. The school has clear and concise procedures for handling complaints at all levels. This information is transparent, detailing relevant timescales, and is available on the school website as well as from the main school office. Information and advice regarding careers and higher education for senior pupils is widely available and accessible. The school offers a range of events that are attended and supported by parents; however, these have been restricted during the Covid-19 pandemic.

A focus group of parents stated that communication between teachers and the parents is a significant strength and that they feel their children are very safe and happy at the school. Parents are highly appreciative of the work ethic of staff and highly commended the school of its organisation and delivery of teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. Parents have been involved and considered as a central part of a wellbeing project, emphasising the school leadership teams' focus on listening to all stakeholders

within the school community. This approach is welcomed by the parents who feel they are a fundamental part of school life.

Boarders at the school can contact their parents/carers and families where and when necessary, whilst understanding the clear procedures and guidance on pupils' use of mobile technology.

## 11. Standard 7

### The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school's procedure for handling complaints meets BSO standards.

A parent and guardian complaints procedure is in place detailing the steps that will be taken by the school in the event of a complaint being made. The policy outlines what will be done in the event of either an informal or formal complaint. This clearly states the stages of resolution to be followed and a simple overview of the process.

A response is provided by the school within 5 working days and details are logged on the school's MIS system and held within the complaints records. Records of complaints are kept confidential until legally required. The procedures allow the complainant a procedure to appeal and to raise their concern next with senior leaders in the school and if not resolved, then with the CEO and Chairman of the King's Group Board.

The school also has a student complaints policy. The policy encourages students to first talk to a preferred member of staff, their form tutor or their Head of Year. Students are also given the option to make a formal complaint. The formal complaint will be shared with the headteacher who will consider if the matter will be taken to panel. The policy also directs students to external agencies should they wish to talk to someone not associated with the school.

Parents are comfortable approaching the school and students said that if they had any concerns they felt safe sharing concerns with teachers or leaders. Both policies are accessible to parents and students on the school website.

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

The quality of leadership and management at King's College is excellent. The school is led by an effective and talented head teacher, who holds a central role in the delivery of education for the school and its sustained continuous improvement. Led by him, the SLT is a team of individual leaders in their fields who work collaboratively to provide a strong motivating force and direction for the whole school. Significant strategic planning exists in partnership between *Inspired Education* and King's group of schools. The school is able to draw on the guidance and support from this and the greater *Inspired* network. Staff feel that there has been increased alignment and growing consistency between the schools as a result. This leads to a strong sense of collegiality and effective working practices throughout the school.

Open and engaging communications exist between all levels of school leadership, from governance to students. The school's culture empowers and enables pupils and staff to succeed. Governance is actively involved with the school including carrying out regular learning walks and meeting groups of students. There is very good communication between middle and senior leaders. Middle leaders are very comfortable liaising with SLT; they feel that they are heard and make a significant contribution to continuous school development. Line managers encourage and are supportive of staff applications for professional learning and development, including pursuing leadership courses.

Staff are happy with development opportunities within the school and the larger King's network group. An example of this is an existing head of year who joined the school as a teaching assistant. Staff praised the professional learning and development programme from *Inspired Education* that is now available at King's. They particularly appreciate existing opportunities to collaborate and share best practice between schools in the region and beyond. This had a positive impact on recent developments, particularly when the school shifted to online learning. King's College were able to benefit from the experiences of the schools in the *Inspired* global network and as a result student learning was not interrupted.

Line managers are supportive of reducing staff workload and teachers are encouraged to prioritise rather than complete all expectations. A new staff wellbeing committee called 'Staff Matters' has been established and their first focus was to support new staff. The school has also added QR codes in the staff room to offer support and guidance for the new staff should this be required.

The school strongly encourages and enables student leadership, with notable examples being a democratically elected house leadership system, school council and a secondary co-curricular and enrichment committee. There is active involvement within the *Inspired*

global student committee. There is a tangible school culture of proactive pastoral care, with wellbeing at the forefront of everything that they do; there is a fundamental belief that happy students mean more successful learners. The development of students' independence and moral responsibility is actively promoted with stakeholders; student co-curricular and enrichment provision are notable examples. Boarding is at the heart of the school and provides a beacon of best practice for the encouragement of students' individual and group development. The school fosters strong links with families and they provide an important contribution to the school's vigorous nature. Overall, King's College is an active and thriving school community.

## 13. Standard 9 Boarding

The quality of boarding at King's College is outstanding. It is a key strength of the school.

### **Standard 1 – Statement of boarding principles and practice**

There is a comprehensive policy that covers boarding principles and practices, aims and plans for implementation. Staff, students and parents are aware of all aspects of the provision offered and boarding life.

### **Standard 2 – Boarders' induction and support**

House documentation is shared with boarders, parents and guardians in advance of joining the school. A full weekend induction programme is carried out prior to the commencement of the school year and parents are invited to attend. If a boarder needs extra support with settling in, conference calls are organised between staff and parents, prior to the students arrival.

### **Standard 3 – Boarders' health and wellbeing**

The school nurse visits the boarding house daily and monitors boarders' medical records appropriately. Resident staff are all trained first aiders. Provision is made for any necessary medical dental, optometric or any other necessary specialist services. Boarders have access to appropriate toilet and washing facilities.

### **Standard 4 – Contact with parents/carers**

The boarding staff have regular contact with parents and guardians, including a comprehensive weekly newsletter that gives regular updates on activities and future plans. Boarders are able to have free communication with parents and guardians through their own communication devices.

### **Standard 5 – Boarding accommodation**

Suitable sleeping accommodation is provided for all boarders. Risk assessments are made, maintained and reviewed regularly. The boarding house is appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, cleaned and maintained. Accommodation is suitably furnished and bedding is of a high standard. Boarders can personalise their accommodation and requests for improvements to house fabric and items are frequently granted. During our visit, boarders were proud of the tidiness of their rooms and one boarder with great satisfaction showed their artwork displayed in their room. The outdoor space offers opportunities for physical activities and recreational play.

### **Standard 6 – Safety of boarders**

The school adheres to stringent health and safety laws and they are clearly included in boarding specific policies and procedures. Risk assessments are comprehensive and

boarders' safety is of paramount importance to all staff. Security is rigorous, but the CCTV and patrolling of school, does not intrude on boarder's privacy.

#### **Standard 7 – Fire precautions and drills**

The school complies with regulations and best practice regarding fire safety standards. Regular fire drills are carried out, in the evening and after lights off, at least twice a term. All drills are logged in a central record.

#### **Standard 8 – Provision and preparation of food and drinks**

An in house chef and catering team ensure that boarders are provided with meals which are adequate in nutrition, quality, quantity, choice and variety. Staff are sensitive to those boarders with special dietary, medical or religious needs. Boarders are able to make requests for additions or improvements to the food and beverages available. Boarders have set meal times and have easy access to healthy snacks and drinks throughout the day.

#### **Standard 9 – Boarders' possessions**

Dedicated staff work in the boarding house to provide an adequate laundry and provision is made for the washing and drying of boarders' clothing and bedding. Boarders have sufficient space to store their possessions and have access to secure storage for valuable items. There is a clear policy on any search of boarders' possessions and it complies with local regulations.

#### **Standard 10 – Activities and free time**

A wide range of activities are provided for boarders outside teaching time in the evenings and at weekends. Age appropriate trips and visits are arranged and are staffed and managed effectively.

#### **Standard 11 – Child protection**

The school and all relevant staff ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare boarders.

#### **Standard 12 – Promoting positive behaviour and relationships**

There is a strong ethos of care and respect for all members of the boarding community. Written policies and procedures are in place to promote good behaviour and relationships. All policies comply with relevant legislation and have a positive impact on boarding life.

#### **Standard 13 – Management and development of boarding**

Management and development of boarding is a strength and the house leadership plays a key role in maintaining best practice and implementing future development in all areas. All relevant policies are in place and routinely reviewed and updated. Boarding is strongly supported by school governance and they monitor the effectiveness of

leadership and all areas of boarding provision. Staff receive appropriate training, as part of a continued drive to develop boarding provision.

**Standard 14 – Staff recruitment and checks on other adults**

All staff recruitment and checks on staff and other adults are in accordance with regulations. Visitors register on entry and exit and are supervised appropriately.

**Standard 15 – Staffing and supervision**

There are sufficient numbers of staff employed by the school to ensure the boarding house runs efficiently. Boarders do not have access to staff accommodation at any time. The staff maintain a proactive presence in the boarding house and the borders are well supported.

**Standard 16 – Equal opportunities**

There is a strong culture of inclusivity among the boarding community, which comes from a shared culture of respect for all members. Significant care and attention is taken to accommodate different needs.

**Standard 17 – Securing boarders' views**

Student voice is a significant strength of the boarding ethos at the school. Boarders are actively encouraged to contribute views to the operation of boarding provision. Weekly meetings are held with boarding staff and student leadership teams. There is fluid communication between all members of the community and this is reinforced by feedback to boarders on matters raised for discussion.

**Standard 18 – Complaints**

School leaders actively seek the views of boarders and the head of school has an open door policy for boarders specifically; he also meets with the boarding student leadership team on a weekly basis. Any complaints raised are followed up using appropriate channels and are centrally recorded.

**Standard 19 – Prefects**

There is an effective system that gives prefects specific roles and responsibilities. Roles are clearly defined and boarders are encouraged to apply for positions. Prefect roles and performances are reviewed regularly by staff and they are monitored by members of boarding staff. 'Boarder of the week' is celebrated and shared in the main entrance, with photos and blurbs.

**Standard 20 – Lodgings (long-stay)**

The school does not arrange any external lodgings for boarders.