



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

British Schools Overseas

Inspection Report

Children's International School - Lagos

November 2022

Contents

Contents	2
School's Details	3
1. Background Information	4
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
2. Inspection of Standards for British Schools Overseas	5
Preface	5
Key findings	6
Part 1 – Quality of education provided	6
Part 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	7
Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	7
Part 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	7
Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	8
Part 6 – Provision of information	8
Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	8
Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	9
Part 9 – Minimum Standards for Boarding	9
3. Inspection Evidence	10

School's Details

School	Children's International School			
Address	Plot 8 Amore Street Lekki Phase 1 Lagos			
Telephone number	+234 9038 485 768			
Email address	info@cislagos.org			
Headteacher	Mr Stewart King			
Proprietor	Mrs Chukwumah			
Age range	2 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	768			
	Day pupils	728	Boarders	40
	EYFS	51	Juniors	375
	Seniors	328	Sixth Form	14
Inspection dates	7 to 8 November 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 The Children’s International School (CIS) opened in 2003 as a privately owned, English-speaking international primary day school for pupils. The school is non-selective up to Year 6 and academically selective from Year 7 upwards. The school relocated to the Lekki region of Lagos in September 2013 allowing expansion of numbers into a senior school. A new boarding house was opened in January 2020 and a sixth form college (Chadsworth) was opened in September 2020. The school has specialist teaching rooms for information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology (DT), music, art, science and performing arts. The school has access to sports facilities, including all weather pitches, a swimming pool and indoor hall. The school is overseen in terms of strategic direction and governance by an advisory board which works in collaboration with the proprietor who has overall ownership of the school.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to enable pupils to receive a breadth and quality of education that ensures that pupils develop the academic understanding, independence of thought, confidence and sense of social responsibility that allow them to flourish together with their global peers in an ever-changing and more-challenging world.

About the pupils

- 1.3 The majority of pupils come from professional families living in or close to the Lekki area of Lagos. The pupils represent a wide range of nationalities with the majority being from Nigeria. Standardized test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average for those pupils taking the same tests. The school has identified 32 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, all of whom receive help from the school through individual lessons and in-class support. Five pupils currently receive support for English as an additional language (EAL) in the junior school. The school has identified 63 pupils as being the most able in the school’s population for whom the curriculum is modified. Enrichment opportunities are provided for them and for 45 other pupils because of their special talents in sport and the creative arts.

2. Inspection of Standards for British Schools Overseas

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting independent schools in England and overseas.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the Standards for British Schools Overseas (BSO). It also takes account, where relevant, of compliance with any local requirements. Schools may opt for an inspection of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include: an exhaustive health and safety audit; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures; an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law; in-depth consideration of the extent to which the school meets the requirements of local law and custom.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas. The standards represent minimum requirements, and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. In order to gain BSO accreditation, a school is required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report. If a school does not meet all of the standards, it may elect to be re-inspected once it has taken the required actions in order to gain BSO accreditation.

Headline judgements against the Standards for British Schools Overseas indicate that the standards have been 'met' or 'not met' for accreditation.

Accreditation as a British school overseas lasts for three years. The school's previous inspection was in November 2015.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets all of the Standards for British Schools Overseas and the Minimum Standards for Boarding except those which it is precluded from meeting because of the host country's legislation. The requirements of the host country take precedence and no action points are, therefore, specified.**

Part 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1, 2(1)(a) and (b), 2(2)(a) to 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(e) to 2(2)(i), 3(a) to (e), and 4] are met, but that relating to paragraph 2(2)(d)(ii) (encouraging respect for other people) is not met because it is precluded by the country's legislation.**
- 2.3 The school curriculum is well-balanced and provides pupils from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to the sixth form with appropriate experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. Pupils are enabled to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills and a good understanding of English. Each department is required to produce its own schemes of work along with a curriculum map which details appropriate short-, medium- and long-term subject planning. Policies, plans and schemes of work for all subjects appropriately take account of the ages, aptitudes and needs of the pupils, including those with SEND, who are monitored by the SEND coordinator. Subject planning reflects teachers' awareness of the needs of pupils and their prior learning. The school currently has a small number of pupils who require, and receive, support for English as an additional language (EAL) in the junior school. Pupils in the EYFS and junior school study English and French and senior school pupils are able to study English, French and Spanish. A wide range of extra-curricular activities provide opportunities in sport, the performing and creative arts and adventurous activities. Pupils are well prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life beyond school, underpinned by an understanding of fundamental British and Nigerian values, which closely reflect the fundamental values of the school. On leaving the school, pupils undertake university courses throughout Europe, Canada and the USA and within Nigeria.
- 2.4 The teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress, a view endorsed by the vast majority of parents and pupils in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires. Additional support, provided by the intervention team, is provided for the small number of pupils who join the school with SEND. In most lessons, throughout the school, the teaching is well-planned, including challenge for the most able, employing effective teaching methods, using a variety of resources, including newly installed interactive teaching boards. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and understanding, with effective behaviour management, and they know their pupils well. The curriculum is unable, without constraint, to encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to protected characteristics such as gender reassignment, civil partnership and same-sex unions as they are not recognised in Nigerian law and the promotion of any such related issues is precluded by the country's legislation. The curriculum is otherwise based on the English National Curriculum. The school has a well-developed mental health awareness programme which is supported by a school counsellors located in the junior and senior schools. A small minority of pupils said that not all teachers are helpful if they have problems with their work and that teachers' comments do not help them to improve their work. Discussion with pupils and scrutiny of a variety of pupils' work confirmed that most teachers regularly mark pupils work and that, in most cases, a clear indication is given as to how pupils can improve further.
- 2.5 Pupils' performance is measured through a variety of ways including termly online assessments benchmarked to the UK standards. Data show that most children at the school make good progress and that levels of attainment are above average when compared to schools in the UK and those using the same assessment standards. EYFS assessment and monitoring show similar levels of progress. A small number of parents and pupils in their response to the questionnaires expressed concerns about

the careers provision in the senior school. Discussion with pupils in the senior school did not concur with this view and pupils indicated that, from Year 9 onwards, careers education is incorporated into the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme and that they can access an online careers' service, and the school's careers counsellor is always available for further advice. Boarding pupils have access to their own secure sports and recreation facilities within the boarding complex and are also able to access the school swimming pool and playing fields with appropriate security and supervision. The accommodation for boarding pupils allows for access to common room social spaces with small kitchenettes in the male and female sections of the boarding house. Boarders have a suitable programme of weekend activities and, post covid, there is a gradual opening up of off-site activities. Trips out include cinema, theatre and exhibition visits, as well as visits to activity parks, all of which are carefully controlled to ensure the safety of the pupils.

Part 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.6 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5(a) and (b)(i)-(v) and (vii)] is met, but that in paragraph 5(b)(vi) (encouraging respect for other people) is not met because it is precluded by the country's legislation.**
- 2.7 The school promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It promotes principles which enable pupils to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and confidence; distinguish right from wrong; accept responsibility for their behaviour; contribute to the lives of others; and gain knowledge and respect for their eventual adult responsibilities as Nigerian or UK citizens. Further, it encourages tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions and a balanced presentation of political views and preclusion of partisan political views. Older pupils develop an appreciation of worldwide values through their participation in international events such as the climate action project, for which the school gained a School of Excellence Award in 2022 and through their participation in the World School Games held in Dubai in 2022. The school encourages respect for other people with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in the UK Equality Act 2010, except where precluded by the country's legislation, in particular those which respect individual rights of sexual orientation. In discussion with pupils, across all age groups, they confirmed that they are encouraged to contribute views on the operation of the school and are able to raise concerns and complaints and were able to indicate changes that had been made in response to their concerns. Pupils' voice is a strength of the school and pupils in discussion were positive about their involvement with pupil council meetings, house captain and prefect meetings as a means of ensuring that their views are taken into account.
- 2.8 Pupils feel that the school promotes high levels of mutual respect and support between each other, and this was evident from pupil discussions. Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of their role in helping those less fortunate than themselves and in discussion mentioned their visits with the 'VOLT' (volunteers club) to a number of local orphanages to offer assistance. The citizenship programme within PSHE allows pupils to gain knowledge of and respect for public institutions in England as well as those in Nigeria, and pupils take a keen interest in internal elections in Lagos and throughout Nigeria. A particular strength is the extra-curricular programme including the activities of spiritual clubs such as the 'Cool Club'. Boarding pupils have opportunities to take on responsibilities as prefects, dining hall supervisors and receive appropriate training to do so. In addition, regular surveys are conducted, including a recent food survey to allow the boarding pupils to make suggestions on house improvements.

Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16] are met.**
- 2.10 Appropriate arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school, and such arrangements take account of Nigerian law and have regard to guidance in the United

Kingdom. The school ensures that staff training, including that for the advisory board and proprietor, enables pupils to be listened to and provided with early help. The particular vulnerability of those with SEND is acknowledged, and allowances are made for them. The school has designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) who are assisted by deputies (DDSLs), which cover both the senior and junior school and the EYFS, all of whom have an up-to-date level of training for their roles. All teaching and auxiliary staff, receive annual training appropriate to their roles from the DSL, supplemented by regular on-line training. There is an appropriate safeguarding governor in place, and the school follows Lagos state child protection regulations which have been recently introduced. All new staff receive appropriate induction training which includes the school's safeguarding policy, information about the identity and role of the DSLs, the staff code of conduct, whistleblowing procedures and acceptable use of technologies. Pupils receive suitable guidance relating to issues that might affect their welfare, health and safety through the PSHE programme, assemblies and form time.

- 2.11 In response to the questionnaire, a small minority of pupils said they do not feel safe in school and that they would not initially talk to a member of staff if they were worried or concerned. Discussion with pupils unanimously indicated that they do feel safe at school and that they would be able to select a range of teachers that they would be happy to talk to about concerns. The pastoral team is aware of the responses, and the school's senior leaders acknowledged that the return to school post pandemic may in part account for a number of negative responses. Additionally, some pupils are inclined to discuss any concerns or worries initially with their parents before raising them with the school as a matter of cultural precedence. The senior leaders have undertaken to investigate these issues and address them further. Procedures to promote good behaviour are well known and understood by pupils and are implemented effectively by staff. A suitable system of rewards celebrates pupils' success, efforts and achievements, and appropriate sanctions are applied if the need arises. Discussions with pupils indicated that the implementation of the behaviour policy is fair and appropriately monitored. Rewards in the form of house points are keenly contested, and the annual prize-giving day focuses on the successes of all age groups across the school. Records are kept of the small number of behavioural incidents that occur, and these are monitored effectively in order to identify any trends. Bullying, including cyber-bullying, is prevented as far as is reasonably practical.
- 2.12 The school complies with relevant health and safety laws and fire safety standards including those which apply in Nigerian law. Record keeping is thorough and shows that there is an effective overview of health and safety procedures. Fire drills are carried out regularly for all sections of the school, including boarding, and are suitably recorded. The Lagos fire service conducts annual checks of the school campus. There is a suitable system for the provision and maintenance of emergency routes and exits and an effective maintenance programme for fire detectors, alarms and extinguishers. Pupils of all ages are appropriately supervised throughout the school day and on school trips, for which extra security is provided. The premises are maintained to a suitable level of safety Hygiene and admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained. The school has appropriate policies for first aid and their effective implementation. A small minority of pupils in response to the questionnaire stated that first aid treatment is not always prompt, however discussions with pupils and records showed that pupils who are ill or injured are almost always treated in a timely and appropriate manner. The school has an arrangement with a nearby local hospital to provide emergency assistance to pupils and staff when required, and a school nurse is always in attendance during the school day. A suitable programme of appropriate risk assessments has been drawn up for all areas of the school and any related activities pupils undertake. There is a constant security guard presence on the school site, including for the boarding complex, to ensure that the school campus is a secure and safe environment for both pupils and staff.

Part 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.13 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

- 2.14 The school carries out the required checks on staff, proprietors and any other adults working at the school to ensure suitability to work with children, in line with Nigerian local requirements and guidance issued to schools in the UK. All expatriate staff are required to obtain an appropriate visa to work in Nigeria which results in the issue of a right to work green card once suitable checks are completed. In addition, all UK nationals are checked through the disclosure and barring service (DBS), which includes a barred list check, as well as through the international child protection certificate (ICPC) checks. All Nigerian staff are required to be in possession of a national identity card, and a bank verification number check is carried out on all employees. A suitable single central register of appointments is maintained which details the recruitment checks undertaken. Staff files include all of the required documentation, they are well maintained and reflect good practice in recruiting all categories of staff.

Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.15 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

- 2.16 Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for pupils of all ages. There is appropriate changing accommodation for all pupils. A medical room, with toilet facility, is located within the school site, staffed by two nurses, which caters for the needs of pupils who are ill or injured. The boarding pupils have separate and appropriate medical provision. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety requirements, including those required by Nigerian law. The advisory board takes a keen interest in the maintenance of the school campus and conducts regular visits to ensure that suitable standards are maintained. Tours of the campus confirmed that the school buildings are clean and well maintained. Acoustic conditions and both internal and external lighting are suitable. The provision of drinking water is suitable as water dispenser units are available throughout the school site. Good provision of outdoor spaces are available for physical education, including a swimming pool, indoor halls and suitable playing fields. In addition, there is a range of outdoor age-appropriate play areas, including a number of suitable shaded areas to protect pupils from the sun. Junior school pupils and the EYFS children have their own separate play areas.

Part 6 – Provision of information

2.17 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

- 2.18 All of the required information to comply with the standard is provided or made available to current parents and parents of prospective pupils, including boarding parents. The contact details for the school, the principal, section heads and the proprietor, and a statement of the school's aims and ethos are published on the school's website. Policies and particulars of arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions; provision for pupils with SEND and any with EAL; the procedure for complaints; the curriculum; arrangements to promote good behaviour and to prevent bullying; health and safety and the school's provision for first aid are also made available on the school's website. The school's policy on safeguarding pupils is published as required on the school's website. The school provides a written report on each pupil's progress twice a year, and attainment and effort grades are made available to parents on a half-termly basis. In addition, parental meetings for all year groups are held each year to allow parents to discuss their children's progress.

Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.19 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

- 2.20 The school's complaints procedure is available on the school's website. It provides for concerns and complaints to be considered on an informal basis; a formal procedure for complaints to be made in writing both to the principal and to the director; a hearing before a panel, which includes an

independent member, should parents remain dissatisfied and allows for them to be accompanied; for the panel to make findings and recommendations; and for a confidential record to be kept of the findings, including action taken by the school, whether or not the complaint is upheld. The vast majority of parents replying to the questionnaire said that they receive timely and helpful responses to their questions, concerns or complaints, and the school's records indicate prompt responses to any concerns or complaints received, almost all of which are resolved informally.

Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.21 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

2.22 The leadership and management of the school, including members of the advisory board and director, demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities so that the BSO standards are met consistently, and the well-being of the pupils is promoted. Members of the advisory board are regular visitors to the school, and the director meets with the principal of the school on a bi-weekly basis. The principal has responsibility for line management of the heads of each school section in order to maintain consistency of delivery of standards across all age groups. In addition, the advisory board has individual members who have an appropriate overview of safeguarding, health and safety and staff recruitment, and all board members are required to undertake regular training. This arrangement ensures that there is effective oversight and monitoring of the school's policies and procedures, including an annual review of safeguarding procedures. The school is well resourced to support the curriculum, and pupils' welfare is given a high priority alongside academic achievement. The director actively monitors all areas of the school and offers effective and appropriate challenge to the school's senior management team. Senior leaders are well informed and have a clear understanding, as do the school staff, of how to safeguard children and promote their well-being.

Part 9 – Minimum Standards for Boarding

2.23 The Minimum Standards for Boarding [standards 1 – 20] are met.

2.24 The school director and the leadership monitor the delivery of boarding and welfare provision in the school effectively. There is clear management and leadership of the practice and development of boarding in the school, which covers both the small number of junior pupils and the larger number of senior pupils who live in the boarding house. The boarding house is essentially one building divided into identical male and female sections. The school follows and maintains all relevant policies, and logs of issues are maintained and monitored weekly by the school's leadership so that the school can take immediate action as appropriate.

2.25 There is a suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice which is available to parents and staff and is known to boarders and is seen to work in practice. There is a satisfactory arrangement for boarders' induction, and there is a range of adults to whom boarders can turn for support. Boarders can contact their parents or families in private, and the school facilitates this when necessary. Boarders' possessions are kept safe, and positive behaviour is actively promoted through the school's rules and an appropriate reward system. The school ensures that male and female boarders have equal opportunities, and both are represented on boarding forums.

2.26 Boarders' health and wellbeing and safety are actively promoted and there are suitable arrangements for the accommodation of boarders who are unwell in the boarding house sick bay. Boarders can also access the day school sick bay on the main school site. The proprietor and leadership ensure that the school continues to meet the standards relating to compliance with health and safety laws and fire precautions, including those required by Nigerian law. Suitable staff recruitment checks, appropriate staffing levels and supervision and training are all in place. Boarders' accommodation is suitable for living and sleeping, and pupils have access to a wide range of sporting and other facilities in the main school. In addition, there is an appropriate range of activities for boarders outside teaching times.

including over the weekend. However, off-site visits are only just starting up again as they were necessarily restricted during the covid period. The boarding house has the benefit of its own recreational facilities which can be accessed directly within the secure boarding campus, which is for the sole use of boarding pupils.

- 2.27 Boarders have access to a good range and choice of safe recreational and social areas both indoors and outdoors, and there are safe areas in school where they can be alone if they wish. Accommodation for senior and junior school pupils is a mixture of shared and individual rooms, depending on the age of the pupils, with older pupils mostly having single rooms. The boarding house is a relatively new build and is suitably ventilated, furnished, and maintained. There is suitable provision for food and drink outside mealtimes in the common room kitchenettes. Prefects are suitably trained to assist with duties. Boarders can express their views through a number of boarding house forums and are encouraged to speak to their boarding house parents or school pastoral staff should they have any concerns or worries. During visits to the boarding house, the pupils were very positive about the benefits of boarding and were complimentary about the standard of pastoral care they received.

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the school director and observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the boarding house and the facilities for sick and injured pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Tony Halliwell

Reporting inspector

Sally Dibb-Holland

Team inspector (former headteacher, BSO school, Egypt)