

The ABC International School

British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

Inspection Dates: Tuesday 1 October-Friday 4 October 2013

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Age Group	2-18
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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection report follows the English Department for Education (DfE) Schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas. The inspection was carried out by four inspectors from CfBT Education Trust who spent four days at the school. CfBT is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools in England and overseas and quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

It is one of the world's leading not-for-profit education companies, providing a range of education services in the UK and internationally. CfBT employs over 2,500 staff worldwide, all working on projects relating to educational quality.

To be recognised by the Department for Education, a British School Overseas (BSO) must have an inspection report which shows that their performance against all the standards is at least satisfactory. This reflects the standards required for continuing registration as a school in England. Schools meeting the standards will have their inspection reports published on the Department's website and will be registered on Edubase.

Inspectors report on the extent to which schools meet the relevant Standards for British Schools Overseas. The inspection follows closely the framework for the inspection of Independent schools in England but, where appropriate, also takes account of compliance with local regulations.

The Standards are as follows:-

1. The quality of education provided by the school (Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment).
2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils.
4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff.
5. The premises and accommodation.
6. The provision of information for parents, carers and others.
7. The school's procedures for handling complaints.
8. The quality of provision for boarding.
9. Leadership and management of the school.

The purposes of the inspections are to:-

- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education and of the care for their welfare
- provide rigorous and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and celebrate their strengths and to identify and remedy any weaknesses;
- inform parents and the wider public of the quality of British schools overseas by placing reports in the public domain.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1 Outstanding

Grade 2 Good

Grade 3 Satisfactory

Grade 4 Inadequate

Proportions used in the report

90–100%	Vast/overwhelming majority or almost all
75–90%	Very large majority, most
65–74%	Large majority
51–64%	Majority
35–49%	Minority
20–34%	Small minority
4–19%	Very small minority, few
0–3%	Almost none/very few

Information about the school

Established in 1995, the ABC International School (ABCIS) is a multi-national, non-denominational day school for both first and second language English speaking students. Providing education for two to 18 year olds, the school offers instruction in all UK curriculum subjects through the medium of English. Staff teach an adapted version of the English National Curriculum, the Cambridge and AQA IGCSE and AS/A levels.

The school comprises students of 37 different nationalities and provides a rich cultural diversity. The teachers are well qualified with the majority UK trained. In October 2013 there were 734 pupils on roll and 65 staff. The school is housed in three separate buildings with the Early Years campus situated approximately one hundred yards away from the main school campus. The school aims, as part of its mission, 'to create an excellent teaching and learning environment for the development of our students and staff so that all may realise their full potential.' In 2013, all students in Year 13 who left school moved onto higher education. Destinations included universities in the UK, America and Australia.

Currently, the school has full membership of a number of organisations. These include the Federation of British International Schools in South and East Asia (FOBISIA) and the Council of British International Schools (COBIS).

Summary of the evidence base used by the inspection team

This BSO inspection was carried out by four CfBT Education Trust inspectors. In total inspectors visited 71 lessons. They held 35 meetings including those with the school's owners, staff, parents and carers and talked with representative groups of pupils. Inspectors also observed the school's work and looked at self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors examined the results of questionnaire surveys returned by parents, carers and pupils and followed up on issues that were raised.

Evaluation of the school

The ABCIS is an outstanding school. It provides an excellent 'British style education' while fully embracing and celebrating its Vietnamese context and culture.

Most pupils achieve well during their time at ABCIS and make rapid strides in progress, often from lower than average starting points. As a result, the measure of that progress (value added) indicates that in many subjects pupils' progress is outstanding. A relatively small number of pupils from the whole school population take 'A' levels. Nevertheless, over the last three years, the progress made by these pupils is high compared to pupils in other international schools taking the same examinations.

Pupils' results at IGCSE are similarly good across the wide range of subject options. Over the last three years, pupils' attainment exceeds worldwide averages in most subjects. For example, in 2013 49 per cent of all grades achieved by pupils are either A* or A with 89 per cent of all grades A*-C. Importantly, almost all pupils in the year group met and many exceeded their expected grades.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children make good progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals from their low individual starting points, particularly their language skills, when they arrive in school. They settle quickly into a

safe, secure and welcoming environment. By the time pupils move to Year 1 they are generally working at age-related skills in all the areas of learning. This illustrates the impressive strides they make, particularly in their language skills and in their personal and social development.

Few children who start in pre-nursery and nursery are able to speak or understand English. Similarly, for many, their personal and social development skills are lower because they have had few opportunities to make decisions for themselves. These same gaps in learning are found by the increasing numbers of children who join the school in Reception (aged four to five). Consequently, these areas become the focus for the Early Years Foundation Stage staff who ensure that they provide numerous opportunities for children to gain the experiences necessary to improve their skills.

From these low starting points, most children make good progress in the different areas of learning. By the time they leave the Reception Year (ready to start Year 1) their attainment tends to be typical for their age. Children make especially good gains in their ability to communicate. There are particular strengths in personal, social and emotional development as well as in the expressive arts and design. In personal, social and emotional development, children are beginning to appreciate the needs of others, mix easily and share their toys and equipment. Their growing levels of independence encourage children to make choices about activities and most children work together harmoniously, often for sustained periods. In communication, language and literacy, children discuss how they could help in the 'fruit shop', allocating roles and responsibilities accordingly. They listen carefully and are starting to use their growing English vocabulary as they respond to the questions they are asked.

In mathematics, most can count to ten and begin to use some mathematical terms. When counting objects, some can spot a miscount and relate numbers to objects that they are choosing on the whiteboard. This is reinforced in practical activities where, for example, most can match their toy cars to numbers and then calculate what happens when some are taken away.

Pupils' attainment and progress in **English** are good and sometimes outstanding. By Year 2, pupils have made excellent gains in speaking and listening and make good progress in reading and writing. They reach standards expected of pupils in England at this stage. They listen carefully and take an active part in discussions. They know many letter sounds and commonly used words. They are developing a widening vocabulary. They continue to make mostly good progress throughout Key Stage 2, although their progress in reading outstrips that in writing. By the end of this key stage, their attainment broadly matches the English average. They think out loud during discussions, in a considered way and build on other pupils' ideas. They read with increasing expression and good understanding. They are becoming curious about word definitions and, for instance, tease out the difference between "imaginary and imaginative". Their writing features some complex sentences, as they develop ideas and arguments.

Progress in reading continues to be more rapid throughout Key Stage 3 where most pupils now read with increasing fluency and expression. Attainment levels at the end of Key Stage 3 broadly matches those of pupils in England. Pupils have a good understanding of their varied reading texts and are well on the way to becoming active interrogators of the text. Their progress in writing is somewhat slower and they encounter difficulties with tenses and grammar. They do however read widely for pleasure and their discussions largely reflect a widening vocabulary. Pupils' progress follows a similar pattern in Key Stage 4 and by the end, their attainment in achieving A* to C grades is above the English average. However, their attainment at the highest levels is below this. When given the chance, these older pupils overcome their natural diffidence in reading aloud and engage fruitfully in text-based discussions. These show a very good understanding of motive and characterisation. Their fluency in reading is improving, as is their word choice in their writing. Their use of correct grammar is an area for further improvement and is a current school focus.

From their starting points in **mathematics**, almost all pupils make expected progress, and from Key Stage 2 onwards, most pupils make outstanding progress and achieve above average levels of attainment. In Key Stage 2, it is not unusual for pupils to be performing at levels expected of older pupils. For example, results at the end of 2013 results indicate that three quarters of pupils in Key Stage 2, and over 90 per cent of pupils in Key Stage 3 were above the expected curriculum standard. These high standards underpin the year on year outstanding achievement at IGCSE and 'A' level, compared to results in England and worldwide results. The 93 per cent of Year 10 pupils sitting IGCSE examinations one year early under the Accelerated Curriculum Programme achieved an A* grade standards and this show an improving trend over the last three years.

In Year 2, pupils work at a high level, developing their fast mental recall of the two, three, four, five and ten multiplication tables, exploring associated 'sharing' facts while more-able pupils describe the inverse nature of division to multiplication. The school's focus on cross curricular development of English as an additional language (EAL) skills ensures almost all pupils use mathematical language accurately when explaining what they are learning; the more-able are challenged to express their understanding of how mathematics relates to the real world, for example through the Year 3 traffic census data gathering activity. Year 4 pupils are competent in recognising and using common 2-D representations of 3-D objects, mostly at a level above their age related expectations for their age.

In Year 9, pupils manipulate algebraic formulae, equations and expressions, find common factors and multiply two linear expressions. Year 10 pupils revel in applying their skills to the solution of trigonometric ratio problems and bearings, while exploring good cross curricular links. The Year 12 accelerated mathematics group demonstrates high quality skills and understanding in solving geometric progression problems.

Attainment and progress in **science** are good. Pupils in the primary phase (Years 1-6) make rapid gains in knowledge, understanding and in scientific skills, such as observation and prediction. By Year 2, they make good quality observational drawings, for example, of leaves. They begin to predict where mini-beasts might live on the basis of their experience. They reach levels typical for their age by Year 3, when they record and communicate their findings clearly through writing and graphs. By Year 6, many pupils exceed the levels expected for their age, especially in problem solving and in critical thinking. They ask interesting scientific questions, like whether bacteria are alive. When undertaking experiments, they find scientific reasons to explain their findings.

This good progress is sustained into Key Stage 3 where pupils' attainment is securely above that expected for their age. By this stage pupils devise their own fair tests to carry out investigations, for example to establish the impact of exercise on the body. They analyse and interpret simple data and give scientific explanations for their findings, using scientific vocabulary precisely and accurately. They work safely in the laboratory.

By Key Stage 4 results in science in IGCSE are typically above the world average, representing good progress from pupils' starting points. In 2013, there were particular strengths in physics where in 93 per cent of pupils achieved A*-C, with 67 per cent achieving A*-A grades. This compares well to a world average of 46 per cent for A*/A grades. This success was due to rigorous teaching, with skilful questioning that challenges the most able as well as the least able. Chemistry results were in line with world averages for A*-A while in biology they were below.

At AS level results in chemistry and biology were well above the world average in 2013 in relation to A-C grades (85 per cent in biology compared to a world average of 56 per cent and 85 per cent in chemistry compared to a world average of 59 per cent). As in IGCSE, the results were lower in relation to A grades. Progress over the last three years has varied but was good overall. Very small numbers of pupils enter for the A level examination. These numbers are too small for comparative purposes.

A similarly positive picture of attainment and progress is found in many subjects across the curriculum. For example, in 2012 IGCSE results, 50 per cent of pupils achieved A* in art, 75 per cent reached A*/A in economics with 66 per cent gaining similar grades in history.

Pupils at the ABCIS achieve so well because they learn through an outstanding curriculum. It takes full and up-to-date account of UK curricula and prepares pupils thoroughly and well for examinations commonly used in the UK. Consequently, pupils of all ages are able easily to enter, or re-enter, the UK educational system. Programmes of study are carefully planned so that work set meets the needs of the different ability groups represented in the school and builds on their existing levels of

knowledge, understanding and skills. In addition, the school offers an excellent range of extra-curricular activities which enrich and complement pupils' learning opportunities.

The quality of teaching is outstanding because teachers are confident, assured and know their subjects exceptionally well. Pupils respond accordingly, behave very well and regard themselves as part of 'the team', working closely with teachers to ensure they make the rates of progress they know they should. This partnership working is evident in the high quality marking found in most parts of the school and in most subjects. As a result, most pupils know the levels at which they are working at and how they can improve. Just occasionally, there are some inconsistencies in teachers' approaches to marking and in the level of challenge that they set for a few pupils. The school has already identified these as areas for improvement. Excellent tracking of pupils' progress ensures that any potential underachievement is picked up early with remedial action and support introduced where necessary.

Pupils' behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Pupils' show high levels of duty and responsibility in the way they act towards others. For example, the way in which Year 13 pupils act as mentors to younger children and provide them with good role models is impressive. Pupils are very knowledgeable about the cultures of both Britain and Vietnam and show great respect for them.

The attention to and quality of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent. Pupils and staff enjoy excellent, supportive relationships which enable pupils to feel safe and valued. Both pupils and their parents commented favourably on how well the school listens to their views and takes action where possible. Over ninety per cent of parents responded to the questionnaire provided by the inspectors. This is an exceptionally high response and almost all were positive in their comments about the school and how well it communicated with them. School leaders make excellent use of the resources and accommodation that are available. Additional spending on information and communication technology (ICT) has produced positive results with more pupils regarding and using ICT as an essential tool for learning.

Key to the school's success is the inspirational leadership provided by the headmaster and school owners. Their successful leadership is mirrored at all levels because the headmaster empowers colleagues and is happy to delegate responsibility to them. Consequently, leadership has an excellent capacity to improve the school still further. Tracking pupils' progress and holding teachers to account for the performance of their classes has improved significantly in recent years. Self evaluation is accurate and the school now gathers a wealth of data about pupil performance which is made available to all staff. However, the categorisation and accessibility of this information is not always made clear enough to teachers.

As a result of this inspection, undertaken during October 2013, the school has demonstrated that it meets the Standards for British Schools Overseas. This judgement is endorsed by the British Government, quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and is valid for a period of three years.

Standard 1. The quality of education provided by the school

The school provides an outstanding **curriculum** for pupils across the age ranges. Currently, it is the only school in Vietnam to follow the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum for England from Year 1 in Key Stage 1 through to Year 9 in Key Stage 3. At Key Stages 4 and 5, a wide selection of IGCSE and GCE 'A' Level courses are offered. The school practises curriculum and external examination accreditation commonly used in schools within the UK, and ensures that pupils can easily enter or re-enter the UK education system at an appropriate level.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and coherent: it celebrates the school's inclusiveness, and is entirely committed to meeting the needs of all pupils. It takes full account of the school's local and international context.

Curriculum policies are in place for all phases, along with long and medium term planning. Staff produce short-term plans to guide them through the delivery of lessons and ensure there is clear continuity and progression through the range of learning activities. Programmes of study have been planned to challenge pupils of all abilities and groupings, and carefully build upon pupils' existing levels of knowledge, understanding and skills. A key element in the curriculum is the whole school English Language Immersion Policy, which is followed at all times by staff and pupils, including during extra-curricular activities and on school trips. This enhances the development of pupils' speaking, listening and literacy skills. By carefully highlighting cross-curricular opportunities within medium term planning, staff have sought to promote numeracy through many subjects, such as mathematics, science and ICT.

Curriculum reviews are undertaken on a regular basis, with middle managers in all areas of the school assuming responsibility for ensuring quality coverage and successful implementation of planning. Teachers, specialists and support staff reflect on the range and quality of the curriculum and the impact of the experiences on pupils' personal development and academic outcomes.

An emphasis is placed on developing the pupils' language skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1; specialist teachers of music, foreign languages, art and physical education enhance the pupils' experiences at the school. In Key Stage 3, pupils study 13 subject areas and at IGCSE level they have a wide subject choice. Pupils can access enhancements to the curriculum, for example Springboard

Mathematics provides support or extension, and in Key Stage 4 some pupils of mathematics and language successfully take IGCSE subjects early (at the end of Year 10) under the Accelerated Curriculum Programme.

The personal, social and health education curriculum throughout the school is outstanding, and older pupils believe it has a broad and relevant impact on all pupils' personal development. There are carefully planned opportunities for pupils to work with the local community. For example, during 'GO MAD' charity fund-raising weeks and the promotion of pupils' varied cultural backgrounds in whole school events such as Cultural Appreciation Week. Older pupils benefit from the 'work experience programme': for example, Key Stage 5 pupil volunteers work with groups of pupils in the EYFS and Key Stage 1, and secondary-age volunteers provide pre-planned learning experiences to younger pupils during events such as the 'cultural appreciation week, book week, and science week'.

Opportunities are provided for pupils to enjoy leadership responsibilities, for example within the prefect duty system, as student librarians, canteen monitors and student counsellors. "The Green Team" is an influential eco-group raising pupils' environmental awareness and implementing energy-saving initiatives. The school celebrates its 'international-focus' through an appreciation of pupils' and other stakeholders' cultural diversity and traditions. Year 13 pupils have the opportunity to engage in other activities such as the International Award, and the model United Nations at both local and international level.

The strong relationships enjoyed between teachers, other responsible adults and pupils underpin the confidence that pupils of all ages have to seek help and advice in academic and pastoral matters. Key Stage 5 pupils avail themselves of high quality university and careers advice. Pupils participate in outdoor education and residential experiences provided throughout the school from an early age.

All pupils are encouraged to become involved in lunchtime and after-school activities. The school offers an excellent programme of extra-curricular activities across the age ranges. The youngest pupils can enjoy construction, puzzle, ballet, and Glee clubs; in Key Stage 2, pupils join in swimming, sewing, art, football, and current affairs clubs; older pupils can try handball, yoga, golf, School Community Pioneers and Duke of Edinburgh Awards. There is also a wide range of day and residential trips, and visiting speakers to the school.

The quality of **teaching and assessment** is outstanding. It is founded on excellent subject knowledge of the English National Curriculum and relevant training and experience of effective teaching and learning strategies. During this inspection, almost all the teaching seen was of good quality and much of it was outstanding.

Teaching is assured and engaging. Pupils are highly motivated and work exceptionally well together. One Year 9 pupil put it well by simply saying, 'We are a team.' This teaching approach is a feature of most lessons and gives pupils the chance to develop both their language skills and ideas. It provides a change of learning pace and allows for consolidation and extension. Detailed lesson planning is firmly rooted in a range of accurate assessments of pupils' progress during previous lessons. This provides continuity of learning and a redirection of it, if needed.

Teachers' marking of pupils' work is regular, accurate and, on most occasions, offers clear improvement points. There are good examples in most subjects, particularly English and geography. They often lead to improvement. Where marking does not, it is because pupils are not given the chance to reflect on the comments and put things specific right in subsequent lessons.

Accurate assessments also lead to work that is usually well matched to individual needs. The use of techniques such as "all will, some will and a few will..." is successful in setting learning tasks at different levels to match the range of pupils' abilities. Just occasionally, this approach is not followed. At these times, the most able are not extended to work at the higher levels of which they are capable and the least able are not well supported in the tasks set for them. The very best teaching is inspirational and prompts pupils to succeed beyond their own expectations. One example from several was a Year 8 singing lesson where pupils sang superbly in four part harmonies of a new piece and burst into spontaneous applause when evaluating the recording.

Most lessons are well structured and allow pupils to succeed at different levels. A good example of this was a Year 6 physical education lesson in which critical thinking skills were well promoted alongside problem solving and physical skills. Work is frequently well matched to individual pupils' needs when teachers use probing questioning judiciously and with cultural sensitivity. This encourages pupils to overcome what for some is natural reticence and gives the teacher valuable insights into their understanding.

A key strength of the teaching is the range of effective learning strategies used. These include : whole class teaching; small group work with effective teacher interventions; well-prepared and imaginative use of resources; investigative work in science and geography for instance and opportunities for self and peer assessment. Such strategies all add variety to the pupils' time in lessons. They secure pupils' interest; encourage follow-up in homework and promote wider reading for enjoyment at home.

Displays across the school promote learning very well. They celebrate pupils' work seen in humanities so that all can benefit from good examples. They also prompt thought and provide follow up as in a Year 9 classroom that featured the captions: "A

woman without her man is nothing.” This was displayed alongside, “A woman: without her, man is nothing.” This made the point sharply that punctuation matters.

Pupils at the early stages of acquiring English (EAL) make good progress because of improvements to provision since the previous inspection. When pupils are withdrawn from lessons, they mirror what goes on in the mainstream ones and benefit from smaller groups and intensive support. The school plans to improve this further with a range of measures including sharper assessments and tracking of progress and more widespread use of EAL techniques in mainstream classes.

Standard 2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils’ behaviour is outstanding. In classrooms and public areas, such as the playgrounds, the library and the canteen, they behave in a thoughtful and self-disciplined way, showing consideration for others. In lessons, pupils show respect for teachers and peers, working together in a highly effective way. Because they enjoy their learning so much, attendance is high and pupils arrive punctually for lessons. They take the responsibility for completing their homework very seriously and have extremely positive attitudes to learning. For example, pupils work in the library together to tackle work they find challenging, without prompting from teachers. Parents say that pupils miss school during the holidays.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils clearly know right from wrong and demonstrate this in the way they act towards others. They show high levels of duty and responsibility in their considerable fundraising activities. They also develop moral sense in relation to care for the environment from the youngest age. For example, when taking care of plants and animals. Spiritual development is evident in pupils’ sense of wonder in lessons and this is maintained throughout school. For example, Year 6 pupils were agog when considering the size of viruses and bacteria and explained clearly and with awe how small they were. Pupils reflect on the diversity of faiths and cultures represented within the school. They learn through the taught curriculum, for example, about beliefs and cultures in India in Year 4.

Pupils are particularly knowledgeable about the cultures and values of Britain and Vietnam and show respect for them. This is reinforced by special events and celebrations, such as ‘cultural appreciation week’ and United Nations day which pupils take an active part in organising. Awareness also develops through the strong emphasis the school places on the history of Vietnam so that pupils understand the context in which they live. British values, such as democracy and inclusion, are grasped through, for example, voting for house captains. Pupils are aware of key features of life in Britain. For example, through reading a British book, pupils

developed an awareness of the national anthem and why it was important to British people.

As pupils progress through the school they develop in self-esteem and confidence, because they feel safe and valued. The 'Star of the Week' system ensures pupils feel rewarded for their efforts as well as their achievement. In lessons, they are confident enough to try hard and fail, understanding the value of learning from their mistakes. They are also confident in asking questions in lessons, either when they do not understand or when they want to extend their learning. They begin to develop independence in learning from Reception Year onwards because they have the opportunity to make decisions about what they do.

Pupils have a keen awareness that they are members of a school and a wider community. Young pupils accept the responsibility of helping new children to settle. They assist them with language difficulties and play with them in the playground. Older pupils take on a very wide range of leadership roles with confidence and take their duties very seriously. Year 13 pupils, for example, act as mentors to younger pupils, providing them with good role models. Mentoring is a lengthy process, requiring a great deal of commitment. All Year 6 pupils are proud to contribute to the school community, for example by becoming computer prefects and helping to keep order in the canteen. They, in turn, introduce pupils in Year 5 to these responsibilities at the end of the year. Pupils have a very strong commitment to raising money for charities, for example raising funds to support Operation Smile and the Saigon Children's Charity. A large number of fund raising events are initiated and run by the pupils themselves.

By the time they leave school students develop into well rounded, caring, ambitious and polite individuals. They are very well prepared for the next stage of their lives.

Standard 3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding. This is a key feature of this exceptionally caring school. Pupils and staff enjoy excellent, supportive relationships, which enable the pupils to feel safe and valued. High standards of pastoral care at formal and informal levels are based on effective systems and clear channels of communication. From Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2, class teachers know their pupils very well and report this knowledge regularly to the heads of school. In Key Stages 3, 4, and 5 form tutors have daily contact with pupils and report regularly to their heads of year and head of school. The headmaster meets all pupils regularly as a matter of principle. Pupils know who to approach and the recent appointment of a school counsellor is an indication of the school's commitment to pupils' well-being. Older pupils regularly support younger ones in class and set them a fine example. Staff help pupils new to the school to find friends and settle in quickly. The school cares extremely well for its staff in a variety

of ways including the provision of housing for new appointees, advice and very comprehensive insurance.

The school promotes good behaviour highly effectively through its policies, systems and daily practice. The school's expectations are high and encourage pupils to expect the same of themselves. A strong work ethic permeates the school allowing pupils and staff to concentrate on teaching and learning. Bullying, including cyber-bullying, is firmly discouraged. Any concerns are promptly dealt with and carefully recorded. The arrangements for safeguarding fully meets requirements and mirror those found in UK independent schools. Accredited senior staff lead regular training for teaching staff concerning child protection issues. The school acts promptly on any concerns that are raised and, in the absence of local safeguarding provision, involves parents directly.

The school has meticulous arrangements for health and safety. Evacuation procedures are well rehearsed and fire safety equipment is regularly serviced. Qualified nurses run medical centres efficiently on both sites. They have led the school's successful efforts in addressing an outbreak of conjunctivitis. Support and kitchen staff work hard to maintain high standards of cleanliness and they take a pride in their school. School compounds are secure and pupils' movements between buildings are closely supervised. Risk assessment for off-site activities is carefully carried out. The school's admissions and attendance records meet requirements.

Standard 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school's owners, working through the headmaster and administrative staff, ensure that all the required checks are in place to confirm that staff are suitable to work with children and that they have the right to work in Vietnam. The school fully meets the requirements of the standard.

Standard 5. The premises and accommodation

The school makes excellent use of the premises, resources and accommodation that are available and fully meets the requirements of the standards.. As numbers grow, this relatively small site is nearing its capacity and this has been recognised by the owners and school leaders. Consequently, detailed plans for a new campus have been drawn up. This is planned to be open for 2015 and will have sufficient space to cope with future growth in pupil numbers. Currently, the premises and accommodation fully meet the local requirements as set out by the Peoples Committee of Binh Chanh district, Ho Chi Minh City. For example, regular fire- safety inspections and food-hygiene checks are carried out by the local authorities and the school has all the necessary certificates required to operate.

Classrooms are well maintained and a regular programme of decoration and upgrading has resulted in good-quality accommodation. It meets pupils' learning needs and enables staff to deliver a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities. For example, recent improvements in provision for design technology and better library facilities have had a positive impact on pupils' learning in both of these areas. Similarly, developments across the campus in ICT have enabled all pupils to have regular access to high quality facilities and resources. New computer rooms together with an increasing use of laptops and tablets have resulted in pupils viewing ICT as an essential tool for their day-to-day learning. . Most classrooms are of a good size, well resourced and contribute well to an attractive learning environment.

Despite its heavy use, the school site is litter free, tidy and clean. Pupils take a great pride in the school environment and this is well reflected in classroom displays. Many support pupils' learning through interactive work and celebrate pupils' achievements. A feature of many of the classrooms is the way in which the British nature of the school and its curriculum are strongly represented. For example, in a geography room pupils are asked to explain why British families might choose Kenya for a holiday as part of their comparative study.

Pupils' safety and security are paramount and effective systems are in place to provide for both.

Standard 6. The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents, carers and others is outstanding. Information can be accessed via the school's website, and a comprehensive range of curriculum and organisational brochures available at the school campuses. Details of school contacts are available to parents through the website, and on written communication, such as publications, letters and e-mails. The 'Now and Next' newsletters and the excellent 'Connect' magazines and yearbooks celebrate achievements within the school community. They also include examination results, calendar events and other up-to-date information.

Termly overviews for all topics and subjects are distributed as part of the school's efforts to inform parents about the curriculum, teaching and learning. The pupils' homework diaries are very informative, including information regarding academic performance and progress, expected standards of behaviour, how to deal with bullying, and health and safety issues.

An 'options evening' takes place to inform for Years 9 and 11 pupils and their parents and there is a transition evening for Year 6 pupils and their parents. Parents receive written reports throughout the year, which inform them of how well their children are doing academically and socially and any steps they could take to bring about further improvement.

The parents' survey and personal verbal feedback strongly indicated the high value parents place on the school's 'open-door' approach with regard to sharing concerns or seeking further advice. Parents are invited to attend a 'parent's day' twice a year. From Early Years Foundation Stage through to Year 6, parents receive three reports during the year in varying formats, sharing their children's effort grades, targets and comments in all subjects. A 'settling in' grade card is issued at the start of each key stage.

The parents'-teachers' group provides an additional channel for promoting open communications between parents, teachers and the school administration. The school supports a growing network of community links and works very effectively with schools and institutions in Saigon, regionally and internationally.

Standard 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints

The school meets all the requirements of the standards. The complaints' procedures are clear and are available on the school's website. In addition, when parents register their children at the ABCIS they sign to confirm that they are aware of all procedures and protocols. School records indicate that complaints' procedures are rarely used and parents confirmed that easy access to school leaders means that any issues can usually be addressed informally.

Standard 8. The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable.

Standard 9. Leadership and management of the school

Pivotal to the success of the school is the inspirational leadership demonstrated by the headmaster and school's owners. As a result, the school's promise to parents that it will 'deliver educational excellence within a caring and supportive framework' is being realised. They are well supported by other leaders in ensuring that the vision for the school is understood and pursued by pupils and staff at all levels. Demanding high levels of achievement from each pupil and supporting their personal development is at the heart of what the school does well. It is successful because

leaders and middle managers are empowered to take decisions that will have a beneficial impact on pupils learning and well-being. For example, leaders in the primary and early years' departments have made changes to the curriculum for younger children so that it is more relevant and personalised in meeting their individual needs. Children's levels of confidence and independence have increased as a result.

The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses because its self-evaluation is rigorous and honest. The school compares its examination results against the best schools internationally and there is a wealth of information provided about pupils' performance. On occasions, some staff are unclear which are the key information documents for them to read, particularly in relation to pupil progress. Consequently, they engage in unnecessary 'searching' through the school's database for the information they need. Staff at all levels are held to account for the performance of pupils in their class and there is no hint of complacency. Indeed, there is a transparency about the accountability systems so that everyone is clear about expectations of performance. Reviews are followed by detailed and challenging action plans which set out how improvements will be achieved in both subject departments and phases. Many of these are statistically driven and relate to the performance of individual groups of pupils. They set out clear timescales and explain how results will be judged. The school's increasing academic successes demonstrate how well this process is working. A strength of the approach is that all staff have an involvement, they are all made aware of expectations and so have a genuine ownership and commitment to future improvements. Consequently, the school has an excellent capacity for further improvement.

Staff recruitment processes and their subsequent deployment and training are excellent and help to explain why the quality of teaching and pupils learning are so high. Allied to the rigorous selection processes for new staff, the school provides a first-rate induction programme which means that new recruits are able to settle quickly into the school routines. Systems for staff appraisal are comprehensive and robust with teachers' classroom performance regularly assessed to ensure that pupils receive the best possible teaching. In addition, staff are provided with an outstanding range of training opportunities, both in school and elsewhere, aimed at improving their teaching. The owners' commitment to staff development generally, not only for teachers at the ABCIS, but also for teachers in the region can be illustrated by their generosity in allowing teachers from other school to attend ABCIS courses free of charge.

Governance of the school is excellent and this stems from the very successful working relationship between the owners and the headmaster. The owners are very much 'hands on', supporting the leaders and involved in the school's work on a day to day basis and meeting regularly with parents. This works well because there is a clear separation of roles and responsibilities and the headmaster is empowered to make all the necessary strategic and organisational decisions. Between them, the school owners and headmaster ensure that all financial, legal and safeguarding

regulations are met. In addition, they promote equal opportunities and rigorously tackle any form of discrimination. The headmaster's performance is regularly reviewed by the school owners.

Management, including staffing, facilities and resources is outstanding. Management procedures are highly efficient and enable the school to function smoothly and focus on its core purpose. This is because of the high quality of administrative leadership and support staff. The school has a good balance of experienced and newly appointed staff, all of whom are very well qualified and trained. Almost all are British trained and qualified which enables them to confidently teach the UK curriculum and prepare pupils well to enter or re-enter the UK education system.

Parents recognise the high quality of the leadership and management of the school. In their responses to the parent questionnaire almost all agreed or strongly agreed that the school was well led.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The ABCIS fully meets the requirements for British Schools Overseas.

What the school could do to improve further

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

Increase still further the proportion of outstanding teaching by:-

- ensuring that all marking leads to improvement in the quality of pupils' work (as required in the school's policy)
- setting work that is sufficiently challenging to meet the needs of all pupils represented in the class

Making better use of the wealth of data available in the school by:-

- improving management information systems so that information on pupil performance data and year group/whole school summaries can be more easily accessed by staff
- Categorising information so that all staff know what is essential for them to access and understand and where, if necessary, they can find greater levels of detail.

Summary of inspection judgements

Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education	√			
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils	√			
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs	√			
How well pupils make progress in their learning	√			

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	√			
The behaviour of pupils	√			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils	√			
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The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable				
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Leadership and management

Overall effectiveness of leadership and management	√			
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School details

Name of school	The Anglophone British Curriculum
Type of school	International School
Date school opened	1995
Age range of pupils	2-18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	734
Annual fees (day pupils)	98,2300,000VND to 369,094,000VND
Annual fees (boarders)	Not applicable
Address of school	21E Street, KDC Trung Son Binh Hung Binh Chanh Ho Chi Minh City
Telephone number	0084 8 54311833
Email address	office@theabcis.com
Head teacher	Gary D. Benfield
Proprietor	Le Bong Ha

GLOSSARY

Achievement – Progress made by a student taking his/her individual circumstances and starting point into account.

Accreditation – The system whereby a school or similar organisation is assessed against agreed standards and if deemed as having achieved the standards required is provided with some form of official certification or recognition.

Accreditation Board – The body responsible for the strategic direction, operation and conduct of the accreditation service provided by CfBT.

Assessment – The process of finding out how well students have learnt what they have been taught. It is a continuous process that occurs throughout the school year, using a variety of forms for different purposes.

Attainment – The level students reach, usually measured by reference to benchmarks, such as test and examination results.

British Schools Overseas Inspection (BSO) – Inspection framework and standards defined by the DfE for British schools overseas to opt to be inspected against.

CfBT Education Trust – CfBT is one of the world's leading not-for-profit education companies providing a range of education services in the UK and internationally.

Central Support Team – Personnel based in CfBT Head Office who are responsible for the administration of the various educational services provided to international schools.

Combined or Joint Visit – a BSO Inspection visit combined with an ISQM accreditation or re-accreditation visit conducted (or DSIB inspection in Dubai) at the request of the school. This will be carried out concurrently with reference to both frameworks and sets of standards. Some of the standards against which the school will be inspected are common, but some of the BSO standards relate to the British nature of the school.

Cycle of Inspection – The period of three years between BSO inspection visits.

Curriculum – The educational programmes or courses of study taught by a school including subjects and activities inside and outside the classroom, as well as extra-curricular enrichment programmes.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) – All private schools in Dubai are required by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority to be inspected by the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB). A joint DSIB/BSO inspection may be requested through the KHDA's strategic partner CfBT Education Trust.

Leadership – Leadership at any level (for example principals/headteachers, governors, board members, team/subject leaders) involves setting direction, empowering staff to work effectively, creating a suitable environment for learning, and setting an example to others. It entails different skills from management.

Learning – Students' gains in knowledge, skills and understanding.

Management – The practical business of running a school, department or aspect of a school's work in an efficient and useful way.

Ofsted – The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills is the non-ministerial government department of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in England and is responsible for school inspections in England.

Progress – The gains in learning made between two points in time. A student can be described as having made insufficient progress, satisfactory, good, or outstanding progress in relation to his/her starting point.

School self-evaluation – The identification by the staff of a school of its strengths and weaknesses across the key aspects of its performance. Effective self-evaluation focuses specifically on the impact of the school's work on the outcomes for students.

Standards –

(1) The levels of knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils and a school demonstrate at a particular point in time.

(2) The evaluation requirements to be used in the inspection of British Schools Overseas.

Teaching – All activities undertaken by the teacher aimed at enhancing students' learning.

With 40 years' experience of delivering education services worldwide CfBT Education Trust exists solely to provide education for public benefit.

Teaching and learning are the essence of what we do and we have more than 2,500 staff around the world designing and delivering services. CfBT staff support educational reform, teach, advise, research and train. As one of the top 30 charities in the UK, we work for and with individuals and communities in order to help them reach their potential

CfBT has built a reputation for providing high quality educational support and inspection services to national organisations such as Ofsted, the Teacher Training Agency and to schools in the north of England. Our main aim is to improve schools through high quality school inspections. We have strong values and a clear vision to deliver a world class inspection service that will directly contribute to improving the quality of teaching, learning and care of all children and young people in settings, schools and colleges.

CfBT first delivered inspections on behalf of Ofsted in 1993. Since then we have developed our experience and expertise in the field of school evaluation and improvement to become one of the UK's first major providers of inspection services. CfBT Education Trust has been successful in bidding for the recent tender to manage inspection services on behalf of the office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted). For the next three years CfBT will be responsible for delivering inspection services in schools (both maintained and independent), the learning and skills sector and initial training education.

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