



## **SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE**

### **BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS (BSO) INSPECTION REPORT FOR PEPONI HOUSE SCHOOL**

#### **The key inspection judgements for this school are:**

<b>The quality of education</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' personal development</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership, management and governance</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>

#### **Compliance with the British Schools Overseas Standards:**

The school meets the standards required of British schools overseas (BSO) except those precluded by Kenyan law.

**Date of inspection: 31<sup>st</sup> January – 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2018**

## **SECTION A: SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS**

Peponi House School is a thriving, harmonious community which provides an outstanding quality of education for its pupils. It achieves its aims and meets all of the British Schools Overseas standards except those precluded by Kenyan law\*. The staff of the school are dedicated educators who are highly successful in enabling pupils to reach their potential. The quality of teaching is outstanding. Lessons are well-organised and interesting although in a very small minority of classes teachers' expectations of pupils' work are not high enough. All pupils, including those with English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and disabilities and the most able pupils, make excellent progress from their individual starting points. Their learning skills are highly developed and they are exceptionally well prepared for their future lives. The curriculum is innovative and varied. It enables pupils to thrive and develop, to acquire excellent literacy and numeracy skills and to experience an exceptional range of extra-curricular activities including sport, music and drama. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They are self-confident and socially aware, and their behaviour is excellent. Pupils show strong awareness of the fundamental British values of democracy and the rule of law. Relationships between pupils and with staff are grounded in mutual respect and tolerance and strongly reflect the multi-cultural ethos of the school. Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety is of outstanding quality due to the vigilant approach taken by the school. Leadership, management and governance are of outstanding quality. A highly professional, insightful and 'enabling' approach to school leadership and management gives staff the tools to meet to a high standard the school's key aims of promoting the personal development, achievement and progress of all its pupils. The school is very well supported by its directors who have an excellent knowledge of the school and have well-justified confidence in its capacity to sustain and develop its outstanding educational provision.

\*The school does not meet BSO standards 2(2)(d)(ii) and 5(b)(vi), because Kenyan law precludes paying particular regard to some of the protected characteristics in the UK Equality Act.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:**

Whilst not required by the regulations, the proprietor should:

- address the very small minority of teaching where expectations of pupils' work are not high enough.

## SECTION B: INFORMATION

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION:

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service (SIS) in accordance with the inspection framework agreed by SIS and the Department for Education (DfE) in England for the inspection of British schools overseas.

In reaching their judgements, the inspectors observed lessons and extra-curricular activities, scrutinised samples of pupils' work, inspected the school's policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding and safer recruitment, met with staff including senior leaders, teachers and administrators, pupils, parents and directors and carried out checks on the premises and accommodation.

The inspectors were:

Reporting Inspector:	Peter Jones
Team inspectors:	Christine Graham Chris Hall

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL:

Peponi House is a co-educational day preparatory school for boys and girls aged from 6 to 13 years. The school was founded in 1986 and occupies an attractive 11 acre site in the suburb of Lower Kabete, on the North West outskirts of Nairobi. The school is governed by a Board of Directors. Most pupils and their families live close to the school. The 370 pupils, with an even split between boys and girls, represents a wide diversity of cultures and nationalities. The school has a British character in a distinctive Kenyan setting.

Fifty-seven pupils have been identified as having specific learning needs and/or disabilities (SEND), while ninety-two are identified as being able, gifted and talented. Thirty-two pupils have English as an additional language (EAL). The school is oversubscribed and non-selective. It admits a range of pupils with differing abilities.

The school aims to embrace its motto: "A school of many nations, a family of one". It aims to provide 'a caring environment that puts the child first' which allows children to thrive emotionally, socially, physically, morally, spiritually and academically. The school describes its overriding aim as developing 'responsible, caring citizens who will ultimately become independent, self-motivated young people'. Pupils achieve notable successes and many leave with awards to independent schools both in Kenya and in the UK.

The school is a member of the Independent Association of Prep School (IAPS). This was the school's first inspection against the BSO standards.

# **SECTION C: THE INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

## **1. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is outstanding.

### **Pupils' learning and achievement**

Pupils' learning and achievement are outstanding. All pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their future lives. When pupils join the school in Year 2 their achievement is below and often well below that expected in British schools. They make very good progress during Year 2 and by the end of the year their achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is in line with or above the standards found in British schools. This is because the curriculum is very well adapted to the pupils' needs and teachers have very high expectations of their learning and achievement. The pupils continue to make excellent progress in all subjects as they move through the school because they receive very effective teaching. By the end of Year 8 their achievement, measured by the outcomes of internal and external assessments and Common Entrance examinations, is very high. This represents outstanding progress given their starting points on entry to the school. In 2017 95% of entries in Common Entrance examinations were awarded AA to C grades with a very high proportion of entries achieving AA to A grades. This has been a trend over the last four years. Pupils from the school go on to well-regarded independent schools in Kenya and in the UK; a significant proportion of leavers are awarded scholarships.

Pupils' learning skills are very well developed. They listen carefully to their teachers and peers and concentrate well in lessons. They work well independently, with a partner or as part of a small group. They learn how to share with others, negotiate and think creatively. They enjoy learning. Very good use is made of technology, including SMART boards, computers and tablets to help with hands-on learning, self-directed learning and problem solving. All pupils can explain what they are learning to teachers and to visitors and they are self-evaluative, spotting errors or mistakes and correcting them. From the very start of their school life pupils' books are exemplary. They take pride in their work, and most of the work in books is of very good quality, although in a very small minority of classes teachers' expectations of pupils' work are not high enough. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) achieve very well because they receive effective support and guidance and their needs are identified and recognised by staff. The support provided to improve their reading and other literacy skills is very effective. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) make very good progress from their individual starting points because they are very well supported by specialist staff and class teachers and their progress is carefully monitored. There is a range of activities for the most able pupils so that their talents and skills are developed. In an exemplary Year 2 maths lesson a practical, open-ended investigative approach to understanding 3D shapes using toothpicks and mini-marshmallows allowed two very able pupils to push on and discover how to create a net, a mathematical concept that they would not usually cover until much later in their school career. Within the school's higher order thinking skills (HOTS) programme for older pupils, the most able pupils are

identified and work on activities designed to challenge them academically in, for example, maths and science, art and culture and film criticism. Identification of potential scholars enables the school to provide additional challenge for the most able pupils aiming for scholarships at senior schools. Talented musicians take part in and are finalists in the national Young Musician of the Year competition, and Peponi pupils have represented their country in rugby, cricket, swimming, chess and squash.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment**

Teaching and assessment are outstanding. Evidence seen during lesson observations and from the scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that pupils make very good progress because they receive consistently high-quality teaching. Teachers have very good subject knowledge which is used effectively to plan well organised and interesting lessons which allow all pupils to make at least good and usually very good progress from their individual starting points. In a very high proportion of lessons seen during the inspection the teaching was outstanding. In these lessons the pace of teaching was brisk, all pupils were challenged and made rapid progress, often achieving well beyond their age or level of ability. There was a range of investigative activities which allowed pupils to apply and consolidate new skills and existing knowledge. All teachers provide very effective support for pupils with EAL and SEND and this is identified in teachers' planning. This means that they make very good progress. Teaching assistants are very effective. They work well in partnership with teachers and consequently pupils have access to a broad range of learning environments, including outdoor areas and can work in exciting and innovative ways.

The school has a well-structured and rigorous assessment framework. There is a range of internal tests and assessments and external standardised tests. School leaders and teachers analyse the data from tests and assessments very carefully and very effective support is provided for pupils at risk of falling behind. The impact of data analysis and the subsequent intervention strategies is carefully checked by senior leaders, either through book scrutiny and lesson observations or in senior staff meetings where the grade profiles of individual pupils are carefully checked and barriers to learning are identified. Pupils' receive very good quality oral and written feedback. Their books are marked after every task and they are given guidance on how to improve.

### **Curriculum**

The curriculum fully meets the BSO Standards and is of outstanding quality. It is very well planned and provides pupils of all ages, aptitudes and needs with a wide range and variety of subjects and activities, giving them a very broad educational experience. The curriculum reflects the school's aim of enabling pupils to thrive emotionally, socially, physically, morally, spiritually and academically, and they acquire excellent speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. Based upon the requirements of the National Curriculum in England, the curriculum prepares pupils for Common Entrance examinations and

also satisfies the Kenyan requirements by enabling pupils to study Kenyan history and citizenship as well as Kiswahili. The curriculum is both interesting and innovative and teachers use a variety of teaching methodologies.

Detailed curriculum planning, overseen by a member of the senior leadership team, includes a termly overview for each subject so the level of pupil progression can be monitored. Detailed departmental schemes of work are also produced by heads of departments and are available to teaching staff on the school website. Lessons are planned very effectively, making maximum use of lesson time and ensuring that tasks for all pupils are varied and demanding. The very high quality of the curriculum is a key factor in enabling pupils to learn and make progress and contributes significantly to their outstanding learning and achievement. Outside the classroom pupils experience an exceptional range of extra-curricular activities appropriate to their educational needs. They participate in a wide range of activities grouped as creative, cultural and clubs, and follow one activity from each category each term.

The school has a long standing tradition of excellence in music which includes music lessons, individual instrumental tuition from visiting peripatetic staff, ensembles and choirs. Drama also has a high profile, with junior and senior productions each year enabling pupils to perform and develop self confidence in front of an audience.

Well-qualified sports teachers provide an extensive programme of physical education (PE) and sports. This ensures that all year groups receive weekly PE and swimming lessons. Games lessons include rounders, cricket, hockey, netball and rugby as well as athletics, tennis and volleyball. Pupils participate in overseas sports tours, most recently to the Netherlands, South Africa and the UK.

## **2. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. The school makes excellent provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An exceptionally high quality personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme throughout the school enables the pupils to make strong and well-informed choices about moral perspectives and how they would like to live their lives. The programme teaches pupils about the fundamental British values of democracy, and enables them to develop respect for other people, paying particular regard for the protected characteristics of age, disability and gender, marriage, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief. Under Kenyan law the school is precluded from meeting the BSO standards with regard to certain other protected characteristics.

Pupils enjoy being at the school, where they make friends easily and feel part of a strong multi-cultural community. Pupils say that the school is a welcoming and happy environment where they can thrive and develop, each according to his or her own strengths and abilities. Pupils are polite and friendly, offer a welcoming handshake and are self-confident and socially aware. Behaviour throughout the

school is excellent and relationships between pupils and with staff are based on mutual respect. Pupils show initiative, value their education and are proud of their achievements and of their school. They support each other as well as those in the local community through extensive voluntary activities to help local charities.

Pupils have a firm grasp of distinguishing right from wrong and show proper respect for those around them. They are able to empathise with others and there is a strong element of pupils supporting each other as evidenced by the 'buddy' system where Year 8 pupils help to welcome, support and encourage those in Year 2. This arrangement is held in very high regard by the pupils.

The pupils have strong moral values and they fully appreciate and respect the values, cultures and beliefs of the many nationalities represented in the school. The experience of hearing the whole school singing beautifully together in English and Kiswahili was an example of the natural racial harmony observed in the school. Pupils also develop a very good understanding of the different religions represented within the school and across the world. Bullying is rare in the school and it has declined in recent years. Weekly assemblies and the Monday PSHE lessons, which are given great emphasis in the school, are used to discuss topics such as bullying, E-safety, safety in the home, environmental stewardship and other religions and cultures. The school provides sex and relationships education that is appropriate for the ages and maturity of the pupils. There are excellent opportunities for pupils' cultural development, so that the pupils emerge as well-rounded individuals with a strong awareness of culture in its widest sense and have been able to develop their own sporting, dramatic, musical, creative and artistic talents to the full. They are tolerant, open-minded young people who have good knowledge of and show respect for the beliefs, cultures, views and lifestyles of other people.

Pupils are encouraged to accept a considerable amount of responsibility within the school, in their houses and in their year groups. House Captains are democratically elected by the pupils as are the Head Boy and Girl. In addition there is a body of school prefects, sports captains and three elected Councils; the School Council, the Food Council and the Environment Council. Pupils feel that their views are listened to and acted upon and various improvements to amenities in the school have been provided as a result of pupil consultation with school leaders. Pupils become very strong ambassadors for the British way of life and are equally proud of their Kenyan heritage. They learn about the responsibilities of being a citizen in their own country and also have a very good understanding of life in modern Britain. The curriculum systematically emphasises British history, culture and values, the democratic process and civil and criminal laws.

The high quality careers guidance they receive helps pupils to make informed choices and they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. They also develop a foundation of skills needed to prepare effectively for the professions, opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British and Kenyan society.

### **3. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS' WELFARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety at Peponi House meets the BSO Standards and is of outstanding quality.

The school has a vigilant safeguarding culture, and in interviews pupils and parents confirmed that the school provides a safe and secure environment. This reflects the care taken by staff and directors to provide effective safeguarding measures, careful supervision of pupils and strong security arrangements. All the required safeguarding, welfare, health and safety policies are in place and are implemented very effectively.

The school's safeguarding arrangements are very well organised, meet the Standards and closely mirror required arrangements in English schools. Policies are up to date and reflect the latest UK guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016*. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), a deputy headteacher, and a deputy DSL, who is a qualified psychiatric nurse and school counsellor, both have up to date training in safeguarding and child protection. There is always a DSL on duty during school hours. The DSLs regularly provide induction and annual update training in safeguarding and child protection for teaching and support staff, and ensure that staff are alert to signs of child abuse or neglect and know how to report them. The school ensures that pastoral care is integral to the role of the form tutors who are responsible for oversight of class groups of pupils and their academic and personal development, and staff meetings include pastoral care reviews. The school has put in place a well thought out plan for child protection procedures using local Kenyan support networks and authorities to enable referrals to be made in a way which parallels as far as possible current practice in UK schools.

The school has highly effective anti-bullying and behaviour policies and procedures, including cyber-bullying, and behaviour at the school is excellent. Pupils say that bullying is very rare and that bad behaviour is dealt with quickly by teachers. Any sanctions imposed for poor behaviour are recorded, and usually involve some form of community service. The school's well organised school lunch provision promotes healthy eating as well as giving pupils social training in good behaviour at table. Sports and outdoor activities are integral to the school's provision and play a key role in helping pupils to develop healthy lifestyles. Pupils say that there is always someone they can turn to, including the school counsellor, who is also a DSL and is regularly on site and available for pupils to speak to if they have any concerns or worries.

The school makes all the necessary background checks on the suitability of staff before appointment, reflecting current regulatory requirements in British schools. The checks are thorough and fully recorded in a single central register, which shows all the necessary information about who checked the relevant documents and the dates on which they were checked.

The school has health and safety policies which meet the Standards and are effectively implemented. Administrators and support workers liaise successfully with teaching staff to ensure that the school environment is safe and meets BSO

requirements. The school premises and grounds are safe and secure. The grounds are very well cared for, and premises are maintained to a high standard, for example, toilet and shower blocks are very clean and tidy. Regular fire risk assessments, fire equipment checks and fire drills are carried out. Fire marshals and other staff are suitably trained in procedures to follow in the event of a fire. First Aid provision is well established and always accessible, with a resident qualified nurse and medical room on site, as well as a number of First Aiders on the staff with up to date training. Staff and pupils are well versed in how to stay safe online, and have undertaken comprehensive E-safety training. The school recognises the potential dangers of extremism and radicalisation and all staff have undertaken 'Prevent' training. Supervision of pupils is excellent. Teachers and teaching support assistants provide very watchful care, for example, checking that all of their pupils are wearing protective headgear in hot, sunny weather. Risk assessments for school visits are detailed and practical, with clear contingency plans in the event of an emergency. Parents say that they value the reassurance staff provide on, for example, away team events, keeping them updated by mobile 'phone if any delays occur on the return journey. The school compiles admissions and attendance registers which are kept to date and meet BSO requirements.

#### **4. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

Leadership management and governance meet the BSO standards and are of outstanding quality. The ethos of this multi-cultural school has been securely established by its leaders in line with its aim of allowing all its children to thrive emotionally, socially, physically, morally, spiritually and academically. There is a strong emphasis on the fundamental human values of tolerance, equality and respect for others. Leaders and Directors share a clear vision for the future of the school which builds on the excellent quality of education it currently provides.

The headteacher and his senior team have developed a highly successful model of school leadership and management which permeates management at all levels. The approach is positive, flexible and pragmatic. It encourages staff to take responsibility while promoting a healthy 'no blame culture'. Its prime purpose is to enable staff to motivate pupils and to promote excellent personal development, achievement and progress. The focus is always on the pupils. Leaders at all levels, including administrators and middle managers, show very high levels of professional skill. Leaders have excellent knowledge of pupils' educational needs and of the aspirations of the parents for their children. They are very well versed in how to advise about schools and higher educational provision in Kenya and the UK. Senior leaders rigorously apply excellent self-evaluation skills and recognise clearly how their school can improve. They welcome constructive criticism, do not feel threatened by it and are open to dialogue about their school, and have a very accurate grasp of its strengths and areas for development. The senior team think and act with clarity, and use plain, jargon-free language, making their management style accessible for staff and parents.

The leadership and management of teaching and learning are exemplary. Teachers are clear that they are able to access funding to acquire the teaching and learning resources they need. The school's evaluation of its strengths and areas for improvement in teaching and learning are very accurate because the head of the junior school and academic deputy head carry out a range of rigorous monitoring activities and make accurate judgements about the quality of the school's provision. The school's improvement planning is based on the outcomes of monitoring and it correctly targets the most important issues. Teaching and learning leaders ensure that any training, intervention or support is carefully monitored so that its impact can be assessed and evaluated. Evidence seen during the inspection indicates that the very effective leadership of teaching and learning has played a major part in the school's improvement in recent years. The newly appointed head of learning support is experienced and has a very secure understanding of the strengths of the school's provision and what could be further improved. The learning support department is highly effective; not only in improving pupils' academic outcomes but also in ensuring that they enjoy the support that is provided and make gains in their confidence and self-esteem. The department supports staff very effectively, providing guidance on suitable strategies and resources and carrying out formal assessments. The department is very well led and managed and makes a very good contribution to pupils' achievement.

Relationships within the school are excellent, and reflect the example set by senior leaders of positive attitudes and an emphasis on good social skills. The high quality of personal development and the strong focus on safeguarding, vigilance and care are indicators of the relentless focus on meeting pupils' needs. Leaders and managers see preparation for the next stage of education as key to their work with pupils. They are fully aware of the options available to them in schools in Kenya and the UK and parents value their advice on school destinations. Premises and accommodation are of very good quality overall, with excellent use of indoor and outdoor space to enrich the pupils' experience. The school and its grounds are very well maintained and provide a welcoming and safe environment for pupils.

### **Partnership with parents**

Parents are very supportive of the school and value the excellent development of communication with the school, which the school plans to develop further. Parents receive a very good range of information from the school. The parent handbook provides excellent information about all aspects of school life including email addresses and phone numbers of key staff. There are regular written reports on pupils' progress; the reports provide a good quantity of information about children's progress. This is written clearly so that parents understand the strengths and areas to improve in their children's learning. The school's website has a secure area for existing parents and pupils and parents also receive information via the school's virtual learning environment (VLE). There is regular communication from the school and parents can arrange meetings at the beginning and end of the school day. The school has a comprehensive parental complaints and grievances policy and suitable procedures. These are made

known to parents on line and in hard copy at the school. There have been no formal complaints made in the past five years.

## **Governance**

Governance is outstanding and is highly effective in supporting the school and enabling it to achieve its aims. The directors know the school very well, visit it regularly and have an excellent understanding of its provision and needs. Through regular contacts and meetings they liaise very well with senior leaders and managers and hold them closely to account in all areas of provision, including the quality of education and the work they have done to meet the BSO Standards. Directors understand the importance of safeguarding and child protection, and have up to date knowledge and training in the local, national and UK context. The directors are aware of the great potential of the school and have well founded plans for its extensive re-development on the current site.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Peponi House School		
School association:	The Independent Association of Prep Schools (IAPS)		
Status of BSO application:	First Application		
Local ages of compulsory schooling	From: 6	To: 14	
Age range of pupils:	From: 6	To: 13	
Number on roll (full-time pupils aged over 5):	Boys: 185	Girls: 185	Total: 370
(part-time pupils aged over 5):	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Pupils aged under 5 (full-time):	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils (if any) registered locally as needing educational or medical support	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Address of school:	PO Box 23203, Lower Kabete, Nairobi 00604, Kenya		
Telephone number:	+254 (0) 20 2585710		
Email address:	secretary@peponihouse.sc.ke		
Website address:	www.peponischool.org		
Number of sites occupied by school:	One		
Name of Headteacher:	Mr Robert Blake		
Name of Proprietor:	School Operators Limited		
Name of Chair of Directors:	Mrs Kristina Pratt		
Date and type of last BSO inspection:	First inspection		

**This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which is approved by the Department for Education in England to provide independent professional inspection of British schools in England and overseas. The report is available from the School Inspection Service website: [www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk](http://www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk).**