



part of Independent Schools Inspectorate

British Schools Overseas

Inspection Report

Peponi School

March 2024

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School's Details

School	Peponi School			
Address	Peponi School PO Box 236 Ruiru 00232 Kenya			
Telephone number	+(254) 020 2585 375			
Email address	info@peponischool.org			
Headmaster	Mr Mark Durston			
Chair of governors	Mrs Kristina Pratt			
Proprietor	School Operators Limited			
Age range	12 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	352			
	Day pupils	195	Boarders	157
	Form II (Year 8)	5	Shell/Lower V (Years 9 & 10)	164
	Upper V/Sixth Form (Years 11, 12 & 13)			183
Inspection dates	12 and 18 to 20 March 2024			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Peponi School is an independent, co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged 11 to 18 years. Founded in 1989, the school is located in its own grounds in a suburb northeast of Nairobi. The school's ethos is based on Christian principles and British independent school traditions. The school is owned by School Operators Ltd. The company directors form the governing body of the school.
- 1.2 The school currently has a small number of pupils in Year 8 but this provision will cease when the current cohort join Year 9. The school is organised into two sections; Years 9 to 11, and the sixth form. There are five boarding houses; a co-educational house for Year 9 pupils; two houses for male pupils and two houses for female pupils.
- 1.3 The inspection of the school involved two visits. A joint compliance visit took place alongside Peponi House, the preparatory school, inspection in the first week, then the quality of education section of the inspection took place in the following week.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school seeks to provide the best all-round education, preparing pupils for the challenges of an ever-changing world through setting exacting standards and purposefully high expectations of all its pupils. The school encourages pupils to believe in themselves, to be inquisitive, resilient and ambitious. The school aims to praise high achievers in any aspect of their lives: in the classroom, on the sports field or on the stage. The school endeavours to bring out the very best in each and every pupil.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Pupils come primarily from Kenya, but also from Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, and Tanzania. The majority of families are from the business sector in East Africa, with some belonging to professional backgrounds such as medicine and law, as well as affiliations with the United Nations, NGOs, and expatriate communities. Full boarders are typically international pupils, but there are some from Nairobi. Most pupils enter the school at Year 9 and some join in more senior year groups. A small number enter the sixth form in order to complete their A levels and university entrance having completed their IGCSEs in other Nairobi schools.
- 1.6 Pupils' ability profile upon entering the school, based on UK standardised tests, is broadly average. The school has identified 31 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 22 of whom receive additional support. English is an additional language (EAL) for 228 pupils, of whom six receive support for their English. The school has identified 23 pupils as being the most able in its population, and provision is made for them in the curriculum.

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 INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection 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 February 2018.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets all of the Standards for British Schools Overseas and the Minimum Standards for Boarding (MSB) 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 in paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a-c) and (d)(i), 2(2)(e-i), 2A, 3(a-i) and 4 are met, but those relating to paragraph 2(2)(d)(ii) (encouraging respect for other people) and 3(j) (not discriminating against pupils because of their protected characteristics) cannot be met because they are precluded by the country's legislation.**
- 2.3 The curriculum of the school is well planned, fully documented, and is supported by appropriate schemes of work. It covers the required breadth of material which provides pupils with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education, with the exception of encouraging respect for certain protected characteristics, which are precluded by Kenyan law. It enables pupils to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills and a good understanding of English. As a result of appropriate identification and intervention, pupils who have SEND make progress which is broadly in line with their peers.
- 2.4 In accordance with Kenyan education laws, Kiswahili is taught to Year 9. It is then offered as an additional language to IGCSE. The school is also required to teach Kenyan history and culture up to Year 9, and the school chooses to continue this provision to all year groups via the tutorial system.
- 2.5 The curriculum takes into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils and provides personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, relevant careers guidance for the older pupils, and appropriate programmes of activities for all pupils. As a result, the curriculum provides all pupils with the opportunity to learn and make progress and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British and Kenyan society. Whilst a large number of pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), only a small number require additional support in their studies and examinations. This support ensures they make good progress overall. Pupils take public examinations at IGCSE and A level.
- 2.6 Most teaching is well planned, utilises effective methods and uses of a range of resources, demonstrates a good understanding of pupils and their needs, and enables pupils to make good progress. Generally, teachers deploy effective behaviour management strategies to enable pupils to learn new knowledge and skills and to deepen their understanding. Teaching typically fosters pupils' self-motivation, application and interest. In the questionnaires, a small minority of staff did not feel that leaders encourage staff to express their views about the educational and welfare provision. Inspection evidence did not support this view.
- 2.7 The school has designed its own framework for assessment which confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a). It references the school's aims and uses British national norms and standardised assessment information to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.
- 2.8 Pupils receive appropriate relationships and sex education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.9 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the quality of the pupils' learning and achievements and the contribution that the curriculum and teaching make to these outcomes.

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

- 2.10 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in sub-paragraphs 5(a), (b)(i-v) and (vii) and MSB 13, 17 and 21 are met but that in sub-paragraph 5(b)(vi) (encouraging respect for other people) cannot be met because it is precluded by the country's legislation.**
- 2.11 The school promotes principles and values which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. These enable pupils to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence; distinguish right from wrong; accept responsibility for their own behaviour; contribute to the lives of others; and gain knowledge and respect for public institutions in both England and Kenya. The school promotes the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, which encourages understanding and harmony between different cultural traditions.
- 2.12 In order to comply with Kenyan law, the school cannot encourage respect for all of the protected characteristics set out in the UK Equality 2010 Act. Those aspects relating to age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex are met, but those relating to gender reassignment and marriage or civil partnership cannot be met. The school promotes a balanced presentation of political issues and preclusion of partisan political views. In the questionnaire, the vast majority of parents agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 2.13 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the quality of the pupils' personal development and the factors which contribute to their development.

Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.14 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], and MSB 3, 5–12, 15, 16 and 20 are met.**
- 2.15 Suitable arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to UK statutory guidance, the Minimum Standards for Boarding, as well as the requirements of Kenyan law. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that pupils of all ages are listened to and provided with support where required. Safeguarding is managed effectively, staff are suitably trained, systems are in place to enable all adults to report concerns to the designated safeguarding leads, and appropriate communication between the school and external advisory bodies promotes the wellbeing of pupils at risk or in danger of harm. Pupils have a secure awareness of how to keep safe online. In the questionnaires, almost all staff agreed that the safeguarding training equips them to deal effectively with any concerns about pupils which may arise.
- 2.16 Good behaviour is promoted, and pupils understand the systems of rewards and sanctions, which are effective. Bullying is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable.
- 2.17 The school complies with the relevant health and safety laws, including those relating to fire safety. Risk is assessed and managed appropriately through a range of risk assessments for on-site areas, lessons and events as well as off-site trips. Suitable provision is made for first aid and pupils are properly supervised. Admission and attendance registers are maintained as required. Documentation in these areas is thorough and demonstrates effective oversight of procedures.

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

- 2.18 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and MSB 19 are met.**
- 2.19 The suitability of persons appointed as members of staff is checked in line with both national requirements and guidance issued to schools in the UK. Appropriate checks are made on staff working

as contractors, volunteers and others who have access to the site. A comprehensive and accurate record is maintained of the recruitment checks undertaken.

Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.20 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and MSB 4, 7, 9 and 23 are met.

2.21 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

Part 6 – Provision of information

2.22 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and MSB 1 are met.

2.23 A range of information, including the contact details for the school, the head, the chair of the board, a statement of the school's ethos, and the safeguarding policy are provided on the school's website. Policies and particulars of arrangements for the curriculum; admissions, behaviour and exclusions; preventing bullying; health and safety; first aid; handling complaints; and the provision for SEND and EAL are made available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on the school's website together with details of the school's academic performance. The school provides parents with an annual written report of their own child's progress.

Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.24 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and MSB 14 are met.

2.25 The school's complaints procedure is available on the school website. It provides for any concerns or complaints to be handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear timescales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.26 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and MSB 2 are met.

2.27 The leadership and management of the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities so that the BSO Standards are met consistently. In both the school's day-to-day leadership and in the oversight of, and decisions made by, the governing board, the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted.

2.28 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the impact of leadership and management on the pupils' learning, achievement and personal development.

Part 9 – Minimum Standards for Boarding

2.29 The Minimum Standards for Boarding [standards 1–21] are met.

- 2.30 A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice is available to parents, carers and staff, is known to and understood by boarders, and is seen to work well in practice. The school's leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities consistently and effectively so that the standards are met, and actively promote the wellbeing of pupils. Senior boarding staff are knowledgeable and experienced and have undertaken appropriate training in the management and practice of boarding. They use this to ensure that boarders' welfare is safeguarded and promoted.
- 2.31 The school provides a homely and welcoming environment in which boarders feel safe, secure and comfortable, and where their privacy is respected. Good-quality sleeping accommodation is provided for boarders and is separate for male and female pupils. Good-quality living accommodation and equipment, including appropriate internet access, is provided for boarders for the purposes of organised and private study outside school hours and for social purposes. Sufficient toilet and washing facilities with good-quality fixtures and fittings and access to hot water are provided for boarders. Accommodation provided for boarders is well lit, heated and ventilated, cleaned and maintained. The five boarding houses are well furnished and of sufficient size for the number, needs and ages of boarders accommodated, with appropriate protection and separation between boarders' accommodation and staff accommodation.
- 2.32 All boarders are able to access a good range and choice of activities outside teaching time, including sufficient and suitably timed free time each day. In the questionnaire, parents agreed that the boarding experience helps their children's progress and personal development.
- 2.33 All boarders, including those with special dietary, medical or religious needs, are provided with good-quality, nutritionally balanced meals with choice and variety, and of sufficient quantity. Good-quality facilities are provided for the hygienic preparation, serving and consumption of boarders' main meals in a separate building adjacent to the boarding accommodation. In addition to main meals, boarders have access to drinking water and to food or the means of hygienically preparing food at reasonable times. The school is sensitive to boarders' individual needs in this respect.
- 2.34 The school has, and implements effectively, appropriate policies for the care of boarders who have medical conditions and/or are unwell, ensures that the physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing of boarders are promoted, and prompt action is taken when health concerns are identified. Boarders are supported and educated to understand their health needs, how to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle and to make informed decisions about their own health.
- 2.35 Effective arrangements are made to care for boarding pupils who are sick or injured. Boarders are accommodated away from other children where this is necessary to care for the child in question or to protect other boarders, for example from contagious conditions. Where boarders need to be cared for away from their usual accommodation, they are provided with good-quality accommodation, including toilet and washing facilities. The accommodation is staffed appropriately and provides boarders with appropriate privacy.
- 2.36 The school ensures that the welfare of boarders at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy, and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified. Boarders and staff know what they would need to do in an emergency and can be evacuated safely. Fire drills are carried out regularly in boarding time. The school premises, accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured, and they are provided a safe environment in which they can live and learn. Security of the school site and of the boarding accommodation is robust. CCTV cameras and patrolling of school buildings and grounds for security purposes does not intrude unreasonably on boarders' privacy. All parents who responded to the boarding questions in the questionnaire agreed that they are able to contact boarding staff easily and that their children are well looked after if they are ill or injured.
- 2.37 There is an appropriate process of induction and guidance for new boarders. Boarders are enabled to communicate, and develop positive relationships with staff, make their views known and maintain a

good relationship with their family or carers. Boarders' views, wishes and feelings about their boarding experience are sought and taken into account by the school.

- 2.38 The school operates safer recruitment procedures. Boarders are at all times under the responsibility of an identified member of staff who is suitably qualified and experienced. There is continuity of staff, as far as is reasonably possible, such that boarders' relationships with staff are not overly disrupted. Staff know the whereabouts of boarders in their charge at all times or know how to find their whereabouts. There is at least one adult member of staff sleeping or on duty in each building, who is responsible for the boarders and available to meet boarders' needs during the night.
- 2.39 Residential staff are provided with suitable accommodation, comprising accommodation in which meals may be taken, living accommodation, sleeping accommodation, and suitable toilet and washing facilities. This accommodation is appropriately separated from the accommodation and facilities provided for boarding pupils. A large majority of boarders who completed the questionnaire were positive about their experience of boarding.
- 2.40 The prefect system gives prefects specific duties and responsibilities that are appropriate for them, with adequate staff supervision, training and measures to counter possible abuses of the role. During the inspection, some pupils raised concerns over the pressure they felt from some prefects exerted in the preparation for inter-house competitions. This is being addressed by leaders.
- 2.41 The school encourages boarders to raise their own complaints about boarding provision. The school's written record of complaints identifies those complaints relating to boarding provision, and action taken by the school as a result of those complaints, regardless of whether they are upheld or not.

3. Inspection of Educational Quality

Preface

In addition to evaluating whether or not the school met all of the Standards for British Schools Overseas, this inspection evaluated the **quality** of the school’s work, focusing on the two key outcomes for pupils:

- the quality of the pupils’ learning and achievement;
- the quality of the pupils’ personal development;

Headline judgements of educational quality include one of the ISI descriptors ‘excellent’, ‘good’, ‘sound’ or ‘unsatisfactory’. In addition, the text identifies clearly the impact of the curriculum, teaching, pastoral care, leadership and management and boarding on outcomes for pupils.

As ISI inspections of British schools overseas are for the benefit of the pupils, inspections aim to:

- provide objective and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and build on 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;
- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils’ education.

The report refers to year groups in accordance with the system most commonly used in England. Where the school’s own names differ from those used in England, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Form II	Year 8
Shell	Year 9
Lower Fifth	Year 10
Upper Fifth	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils’ learning and achievement is good.

3.2 The quality of the pupils’ personal development is good.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Ensure the consistent progress of cohorts and groups of pupils through the more effective use of assessment data.
- Ensure that all lessons are sufficiently planned to meet pupils’ individual needs so that all pupils are suitably challenged and actively engaged in lessons and make consistent progress.

- Ensure teaching across all subjects and ages encourages and develops pupils' study skills and critical thinking skills in line with the school's aims.
- Ensure pupils' behaviour is managed consistently and fairly.
- Ensure training and supervision of senior pupils with roles of responsibility promotes appropriate leadership skills, in particular, with regard to their leadership of inter-house competitions.

The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement.

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement is good.
- 3.5 The school has developed systems to track and monitor pupils' performance in standardised tests, curriculum assessments and public examinations. Whilst close attention is paid to individual pupils' progress and attainment, there is less visibility of and, therefore, less ability to respond to, the performance of particular groups of pupils. Standardised assessments show that pupils make good progress throughout their time in the school, whilst public examination results show pupils make more rapid progress to iGCSE and A level. Results in recent years have been above the averages for all pupils in UK schools. As a result, almost all pupils gain entry to universities in the UK, Western Europe, Australasia, the USA and Canada. Pupils appreciate the support they receive in preparing for their university applications.
- 3.6 Pupils of all ages and abilities develop good knowledge and skills across a wide range of subjects. Pupils can demonstrate a high degree of comprehension and application of knowledge to a range of situations. For example, when pupils in Year 9 studied the portraiture of Picasso and Van Gogh, they created self-portraits, which showed both excellent artistic skills and strong understanding of those artists' styles. In Year 12 sociology, pupils demonstrated excellent prior knowledge as they revised subcultural theories of deviance.
- 3.7 The development of pupils' understanding is hampered in some lessons as a result of teaching that is less well planned. Progress in developing subject skills is sometimes initially slow where teaching in the lower part of the school is inconsistent in providing opportunities to develop and apply their knowledge and skills. Opportunities for questioning and investigation are limited and planned activities are not always matched to pupils' abilities. Some pupils find it difficult to remain engaged in lessons as a result of teaching strategies which do not engage their interest.
- 3.8 Pupils develop excellent speaking skills as demonstrated in various opportunities they have for public speaking. For example, at a school assembly, senior pupil leaders introduced each component, and the two 'thoughts for the day' presented by senior pupils were erudite, confident and clear. Pupils' written skills develop well. Some individual extended project work is notably strong.
- 3.9 Leaders seek to encourage pupils to listen critically rather than just absorb knowledge. This aims to enhance their speaking skills, as they articulate their thoughts, and provides them with opportunities for creative, and also concise scientific, writing which can be applied to other subjects. As their confidence grows, pupils become more articulate and clearer in their questioning and explanations and are able to rephrase and hone their thoughts both verbally and in writing.
- 3.10 Pupils develop their numeracy skills to a high standard across all ages and abilities. Pupils are adept at using mathematics appropriately in other areas of the curriculum, and this supports their learning across the school. Pupils' mental arithmetic skills are strong, and pupils are able to apply these to solutions to real-world problems, for example, pupils in Year 10 apply equations of motion and geometrical formulas in mathematics. Pupils develop a strong understanding of algebra, manipulate equations accurately and apply them with precision. Use of mathematical terms, rules and methods are generally underpinned by understanding rather than rote, and this helps to develop pupils' mathematical analysis of how to solve problems. Pupils can identify the most succinct solution methods, demonstrating insight and effective decision-making.

- 3.11 Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) well in a number of contexts. Many are adept at manipulating presentation software, video-making, researching and accrediting sources, and the creation of interactive worksheets using tables and graphs. Senior pupils demonstrate their understanding of how to use artificial intelligence applications appropriately to aid their learning or embellish their work.
- 3.12 Pupils develop good study skills. When pupils are challenged by teachers to explain their thinking, they respond positively and relish the challenge. This was seen when pupils synthesised their understanding of prior learning and knowledge in art, creating their own artwork in the style of famous painters. In English, pupils in Year 12 analysed the trailer from *Blade Runner* and synthesised their findings with their prior knowledge of dystopian fiction.
- 3.13 Some teachers provide academic feedback designed to encourage analysis and reflection. For example, they indicate that a spelling error is on a particular line of text but expect pupils to find the word in question. However, where teachers focus on whether information is simply understood or not, readily providing pupils with correct answers, pupils are less able to develop critical higher thinking skills, demonstrate their powers of analysis, hypothesise knowledge and understanding, or apply what they have learned.
- 3.14 Pupils, both in groups and as individuals, achieve outside the classroom at a high level. In sport, pupils compete enthusiastically in a range of team sports, especially in cricket and hockey, against a range of other schools. Pupils contribute to national and international teams, for example in the World Children's Games in South Korea. In tennis, pupils are successful in local tournaments, and some perform at academy level. School teams compete successfully in the Kenyan Association of Independent Senior School Organisation (KAISSO) fixtures.
- 3.15 Music plays an important role in the school. Pupils learn instruments both in and out of school and put their musical skills to good use in the orchestra, choir or one of the instrumental ensembles on offer. Performances at annual concerts and termly teatime events enable pupils to demonstrate their achievements. Success in UK associated board music examinations include regular attainment of the higher grades and at diploma level. Musical success beyond school has included finalists in the East African Young Musician of the Year competition as well as membership of the Nairobi Youth Orchestra.
- 3.16 Pupils typically demonstrate excellent attitudes to their learning. When the work is challenging, pupils are committed, resilient and eager to consolidate and extend their learning. In many lessons, the relationships between teachers and pupils promote these excellent attitudes. Pupils take opportunities to work independently and collaboratively in a purposeful manner, and they evidently enjoy their learning. Pupils take responsibility for their learning from an early stage, undertaking extra work beyond the class, or asking teachers for individual support, something pupils report that teachers are unflinching willing to offer. In a few lessons and activities, attitudes to learning are less positive. This is often because teaching lacks suitable planning, so that pupils are not adequately engaged in their learning.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.17 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.
- 3.18 Pupils' self-confidence is excellent; they have a strong sense of self and are proud of who they are. Pupils have an underlying desire to succeed and are ambitious. This is reflected in their desire to improve their learning by seeking help beyond the classroom. Pupils who have SEND demonstrate similar qualities and engage well with their learning, helping them to make progress. Pupils develop resilience in all aspects of school life. For example, they recognise that only one house can win in inter-house competitions and that victory and failure raise emotions which need to be handled with care and sensitivity. Pupils respond positively to teachers' feedback and understand how to improve their work and learning outcomes.

- 3.19 On a few occasions, pupils' resilience develops as a result of teachers' inconsistent feedback and behaviour management. Pupils learn strategies to navigate their way through these inconsistencies. Pupils gain a good understanding of their academic strengths and can apply this knowledge well when making choices at IGCSE and A level. Pupils develop collaborative skills and understand how to work well in teams.
- 3.20 Pupils have a growing understanding of making choices as they progress through the school. They know they can make decisions in the classroom. For example in art, pupils in Year 9 chose to complete their self-portraits in alternative styles to the rest of the class. In many subjects, pupils choose to present their work in a preferred style or medium, and some extend themselves in unusual ways. For example, pupils choose the topic and the manner of presentation for their individual research projects. Pupils contribute to the school council to effect changes to school life, and pupils organise and lead house competitions, the wellness week and a 'business fiesta'. Pupils learn to manage their time, develop research skills and meet deadlines when they choose to complete the headmaster's essay, the Gaudi project, the Mandela essay and their extended project qualifications. Pupils understand the commitment required to gain success in the school's tiered award structure, leading to the 'diploma', the 'charter' and ultimately the 'testament'. This process plays an important role in their preparation for university applications.
- 3.21 In their response to the questionnaire, a small majority of pupils felt that the school does not listen to what they have to say about the school. Discussions with pupils corroborate this to an extent, but this was linked to an inconsistent approach by some staff in responding to issues raised rather than a systemic lack of opportunity for pupils to raise their concerns. Evidence shows that pupils are able to raise concerns and to effect change in school and in their houses. Pupils spoke highly positively about the support they receive from senior house staff on an ongoing basis.
- 3.22 The spiritual understanding of pupils is good. They have an appreciation of the non-material aspects of life, for example where pupils in Year 12 demonstrated an empathy for people who live in cramped conditions in over-populated cities. Pupils of all faiths are able to reflect spiritually in formal acts of collective worship in the school's non-denominational chapel. Annual celebrations of religious festivals further enable pupils to develop their spiritual awareness where they choose to. Pupils' response to morning prayers is mixed. Some use the time to quietly consider the day ahead, whilst others question the value of the daily experience.
- 3.23 Pupils exhibit strong moral values. They accept responsibility for their own behaviour which results in highly positive conduct around the school. Pupils know right from wrong. Through personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) lessons, pupils develop an awareness of Kenyan law and how it may differ from other countries, such as the approach to gender identity, marriage, alcohol and vaping. Pupils seek to understand and respect the school's rewards and sanctions structures. However, some teachers are not consistent in their approach to behaviour management, which undermines pupils' trust in the system. Where pupils' behaviour in class is less positive, it is often attributable to the lack of appropriate planning and behaviour management. Inspectors judged that this inconsistency explains the large proportion of pupils' responses to the questionnaire which disagreed with the statement that the school treats pupils fairly.
- 3.24 Around the school site, pupils respect property and the environment and behave well in small friendship groups. Some pupils were frustrated by their peers' lack of respect for personal property in the boarding houses. Leaders have used this aspect of boarding house life to encourage pupils to show concern for others and to act responsibly within their community. This matter has been addressed by senior leaders and improvements are acknowledged. Pupils are fiercely proud of their houses and compete with enormous gusto, passion and commitment. However, younger pupils report that the perceived importance of house competitions can lead to inappropriate pressure to participate being placed on them from senior pupils and prefects in the house.

- 3.25 Pupils develop excellent social awareness. They collaborate successfully both in and out of the classroom, in sport, and in performing arts. Pupils are supportive of one another, mutually encouraging in the classroom and appreciative of each other's personal qualities. They understand the need to work collectively towards a common goal, for example when they build and decorate classrooms in government primary schools.
- 3.26 Pupils contribute to the school community and beyond through a number of initiatives designed to expand their personal development. The boarding community enables pupils to develop an additional range of social skills. The impact of living together and having shared responsibility for decisions in the house, develops pupils' sense of community. Community service forms a major part of the school's outreach programme. In addition to non-uniform days, cake sales and a business festival, pupils gain strong experiences as contributors to various charitable endeavours. Charity teams work across the whole school and across the city of Nairobi. For example, staff identify suitable government school locations and assist pupils in formulating plans and budgets to build and decorate classrooms which in turn enables the schools to educate more pupils. Pupils worked in three institutions, painting walls, building desks, preparing meals, coaching new sports, teaching and mentoring. Pupils raise awareness of a range of other issues such as mental health, cancer, and fighting hunger through their sustainable hunger-alleviation initiative.
- 3.27 The school celebrates its rich diversity. Pupils develop an understanding of their own cultures and those of others. They acknowledge people's differences through a range of school activities and in PSHE lessons. Seating arrangements ensure pupils mix in classes and at mealtimes in line with the school's honour code. Some older pupils raised cases of self-segregation where pupils of a particular heritage tend to socialise more together, but this was not observed by inspectors around the school or in boarding. Academic prowess is celebrated by the school, but some pupils feel that the efforts of those less academically able are not equally appreciated. They cited the certificates of high-achieving pupils on display in prominent places around the school which has a negative impact on some pupils' sense of self-esteem. Senior leaders are clear about the school's approach to celebrating all successes, whether academic, sporting, artistic or social. Around half of pupils who responded to the questionnaire did not feel that pupils are always kind and respectful to each other. Further discussion with pupils revealed that this was primarily based on a perceived inequality towards younger pupils by older pupils around house competitions.
- 3.28 Pupils have a well-developed understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They appreciate the strong teaching they receive on a range of life issues from dealing effectively with examination stress to managing sexual health. Pupils are very aware of how to keep safe online and knowledgeably discussed how a case of cyber-bullying had been dealt with effectively by the school. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They greatly appreciate the prominent role that sport plays in the school schedule and the positive impact it can have on their mental health as well as their physical fitness.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 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 proprietors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended roll call, registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for sick and injured pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, pupils and staff to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Alexander Mitchell	Reporting inspector
Mr Alex Osiatynski	Team inspector (Former head, IAPS school, UK)
Mr Alan Cooper	Team inspector (Former senior teacher, HMC school, UK)