

St Stephen's International School, Bangkok

British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

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Lead Inspector: Sally Lane

Team: Kaushi Silva
Nadine Powrie
Simon Spry

Age Group: 3 - 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 Education Development Trust who spent three days at the school. Education Development Trust is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas and quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education.

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

To be recognised by the DfE, a British School Overseas (BSO) must have an inspection report which shows that its 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 the UK Government's Get Information about Schools website.

Inspectors report on the extent to which schools meet the relevant Standards for British Schools Overseas. These were updated with effect from September 2017. 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 DfE issued a policy update in October 2018. The Department confirmed that 'our policy is now to accredit schools in countries where to meet certain standards would be in breach of the host country laws, as long as there is evidence to substantiate this, and all other standards are met'.

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.
7. Manner in which complaints are handled.
8. Leadership and management of the school.

The purposes of BSO 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 BSO 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

St Stephen's International School (SSIS) opened 25 years ago in 1998 and is located in the Chatuchak area of Bangkok. The proprietors are Hands Management Ltd. The family owners are also on the board at St Stephen's sister school in Khao Yai and Brighton College Bangkok. The school's vision aims to create the 'Leaders of Tomorrow Today' in an 'East meets West' environment.

There are currently 381 pupils on role, aged 3 to eighteen years, making it smaller than similar all-through, co-educational schools. The secondary phase is smaller than the primary as some parents choose to move their children to schools with more facilities. Most pupils are of Thai or mixed Thai origin with a small number from other countries. SSIS is an inclusive school that caters for approximately 43 pupils identified as having special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND) for whom it makes special provision. Almost all pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), but only a small number need additional support to give them access to the curriculum.

Children in the early years follow the latest English early years framework (EYFS). Pupils in the primary school follow the international primary curriculum (IPC) alongside the English national curriculum for English and mathematics. In key stage 3, the international middle years curriculum (IMYC) is followed alongside specialist subjects. Cambridge Assessment International Education (CAIE), IGCSE, A levels and/or the high-school diploma are studied in Years 10 to 13. Students graduate mostly to Thai universities, but a minority attend international universities, including in Australia and the UK.

All COVID-19 restrictions have now been lifted but pupils continue to wear masks. The school adapted well to the numerous periods of online learning and intervention strategies are in place to mitigate any gaps in learning. Parents and carers were very happy with the management of online learning as shown by the high satisfaction rate in surveys conducted at the time.

Summary of the evidence base used by the inspection team

This BSO inspection was carried out by four Education Development Trust inspectors. The BSO registration and self-review documents were completed and the inspection dates were agreed upon with the school with 10 weeks' notice of the start date of the inspection. Inspectors had access to information about the school before the inspection.

Inspectors visited 58 lessons. Six were jointly observed by an inspector and a senior member of staff.

There were 26 meetings, which took place with leaders, teachers, pupils, parents and members of the school's owners and governing board.

Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in books and the work produced digitally. They analysed a wide range of documents relating to assessment, policies and operational and strategic plans. The school's safeguarding arrangements were inspected. Inspectors also considered the views of parents, pupils and staff.

Evaluation of the school

SSIS is a **good** and improving school and provides a good quality of education for pupils from three to 18 years. In some areas the school's provision is outstanding.

The school meets all the BSO standards except those which it is precluded from meeting because of legislation in Thailand. These are explained later in the report. The requirements of the host country take precedence and no action points are, therefore, specified in relation to these unmet standards and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

Almost all children enter the early years with limited **English** skills. From low starting points, most make good progress, particularly in communication skills. Most children develop good speaking and listening skills, can interact well, follow instructions and talk about their work. By the end of Reception, children have made good progress but their reading and writing skills remain lower than UK expectations. There has been an upward trend over the past two years through the development of children's phonics skills as well as the nurturing of a love of reading through the use of high-quality texts.

In primary, pupils make rapid progress. By Year 6, most attain standards which are well above those expected in the UK for their age in reading and writing. Pupils' attainment in spelling, punctuation and grammar is less consistent. A strong emphasis on comprehension and grammar skills, through storytelling, enables pupils to enjoy literature while analysing writing structures. Year 6 pupils can accurately retrieve and interrogate information from known texts and analyse poetry structures. Most pupils can write confidently for different purposes.

Across secondary, pupils make outstanding progress and, continuing the upward trend, attain well above UK expectations in IGCSE first-language English. Older pupils' ability to analyse complex texts is developing well. In Year 8, pupils analyse the

significance of religion in the Victorian era through a study of Jane Eyre. In post-16 there is an intensive focus on advanced text-analysis skills, using texts such as Atwood's commentary on social relationships. This contributes to attainment which is higher than UK averages.

Across the school, pupils with EAL are well supported and make good progress across all skills. Overall, there is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls or between those pupils with SEND and their peers.

Attainment and progress in **mathematics** in the early years are good. Attainment and progress are outstanding in primary and secondary. Almost all pupils reach standards above national averages in England. Girls perform slightly better than boys at GCSE. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls at A level. Pupils with SEND and those who speak EAL make similar progress to that of other pupils as a result of effective personalised interventions.

All pupils are expected to explain their reasoning and justify their answers using mathematical language. As a result, their conceptual understanding is well developed. Consistent reviewing of misconceptions is a common feature in lessons.

Most children in early years make at least good progress. They develop spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures through practical and investigative activities. Children talk confidently to adults when comparing objects by size.

In the primary phase, most pupils make better-than-expected progress from their starting points. By Year 6, most pupils are confident dividing numbers up to four digits by a two-digit whole number using long division.

In the secondary phase, pupils further develop critical thinking, reasoning skills and problem solving. By Year 11, most pupils can solve simultaneous equations. By Year 13, most pupils can find the centre of mass of various shapes by integral methods and apply these results to problem-solving in context. AS and A-level results are outstanding and above UK national averages.

Overall, there is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls or pupils with SEND and their peers.

Standards in **science** are good in the early years, above UK expectations in primary and outstanding in secondary and post-16. Progress is outstanding in primary, secondary and post-16 and good in early years.

Children in the early years make rapid progress in their scientific understanding of the world from low starting points and by the end of the Reception Year are broadly in line with what is typically seen in the UK. In an outdoor learning session, inspectors saw the children developing their scientific prediction skills in floating and sinking through practically making small boats to take animals across a river.

As pupils move through the IPC, they cover topics that build scientific skills, knowledge and understanding. In a Year 2 lesson they could describe sunrise and sunset and in Year 4 they could explain the way some muscles work. Skills continue to develop across key stage 2. In a Year 6 practical experiment on insulation and conduction, pupils were able successfully to carry out a simple fair test, discussing hypotheses and carefully recording information. Outstanding progress through key stage 2 means that all groups of pupils leave primary with attainment above UK expected standards.

Pupils rapidly develop their scientific skills across the secondary phase, carrying out experiments and analysing and evaluating results scientifically. By the end of key stage 4, outstanding progress in science leads to attainment that is, on average, above worldwide and UK comparable standards. As students then move into key stage 5, good progress continues and the small number of students who take A levels go on to perform exceptionally well in physics, chemistry and biology.

Pupils' attainment in **information and communication technology (ICT)** and **computing** are outstanding. Their progress is good overall. They routinely use technology to improve their learning throughout the curriculum. The time spent learning online during COVID-19 restrictions has enhanced their skills.

Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of ICT are developed well throughout the school in dedicated lessons and throughout the curriculum, particularly from Year 3, when pupils bring their own device to school. In the Reception Year children use recording devices and programmable toys to support their IT skill development.

In Year 1, inspectors saw pupils having fun learning how to give step-by-step instructions by 'programming' one another as robots. By the end of Year 6 pupils can use programming language with confidence.

In key stage 3 pupils continue to make excellent progress. For example, in Year 8 pupils use programs to build their own websites.

In IGCSE and A-level examinations pupils perform better in computer science than in ICT. The proportions of pupils gaining A* to A grades at IGCSE was high in both subjects. However, only the large majority achieved their aspirational predicted target grade in ICT compared to all, not only achieving, but on average gaining more than half a grade

higher than predicted in computer science. It is not statistically reliable to compare results with UK and international averages due to the small numbers involved.

Pupils are successful in a wide range of **other subjects** and make very good progress during their time at the school.

The IPC curriculum helps pupils make links across a range of subjects. They research, investigate and think for themselves. These skills enhance future learning. In a Year 1 lesson, with great enthusiasm, pupils designed, made and evaluated a board game to meet specific success criteria.

In IGCSE examinations, results across all subjects are very strong with over half of all pupils gaining A* to A grades. In a Year 11 history lesson pupils were very engaged by the controversial subject of the role of Nazi women and were able effectively to share their ideas both in writing and verbally.

It is clear from A-level results that the best students are amongst the best in the world, as seen by those achieving CAIE awards in 2022 for: the best in the country for further mathematics, a best in the world award for IGCSE mathematics and the best in country award for AS psychology.

Summary of other judgements against the BSO standards:

- The quality of the curriculum provided by the school is outstanding (see Standard 1 below).
- The quality of teaching and assessment is good overall (see Standard 1 below).
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding (see Standard 2 below).
- The welfare, health and safety of the pupils are outstanding (see Standard 3 below).
- The standard for the suitability of the proprietor and staff is met (see Standard 4 below).
- The premises and accommodation meet the requirements of the standard (see Standard 5 below).
- The provision of Information for parents meets the requirements of this standard (see Standard 6 below).

- The school's procedures for handling complaints meet the requirements of the standard (see Standard 7 below).
- The leadership and management of the school are good (see Standard 8 below).

As a result of this inspection, undertaken during November 2022, the school has demonstrated that it meets the Standards for BSO 2017 except for those standards that cannot be achieved legally in Thailand. The school's provision prepares pupils well to enter or re-enter the UK independent school system. This judgement is endorsed by the British government, is quality assured by Ofsted and is valid for a period of three years.

Standard 1. The quality of education provided by the school

The standards relating to the quality of the education are met except for the standard in paragraph 2 (2) (d) (ii). This is not met because of the requirements of the host country relating to the UK Equality Act 2010.

The quality of the **curriculum** is outstanding. St Stephen's mission, 'leadership in the making to create tomorrow's leaders today', offers pupils of all nationalities, from early years to the end of Year 13, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum through the medium of the English language. The school follows the new English EYFS curriculum. In primary, the IPC is taught alongside maths and English from the English national curriculum. In key stage 3, pupils follow the IMYC along with specialist subjects. CAIE, IGCSE and A-level courses are followed in Years 10 to 13. Alternatively, pupils can sit the High School Diploma to enter university in Thailand. The curriculum is enhanced by daily lessons in Mandarin and Thai and a specialist music lesson every week. The school makes full use of the resources available in the local community. A preparatory college exam-entrance day prepares pupils for the transition to a UK college or university.

To become leaders in the global community, pupils master skills that they will rely on in the future, for example working with others, problem solving, critical thinking and ICT across all subjects.

The curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND and/or with EAL.

Leaders regularly check coverage and progression of skills in every subject. They carry out audits to ensure a strong British focus throughout the curriculum. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to learn about Britain and British values. For example, they learn about democracy by electing the school council. Key aspects of British society, including public institutions such as Parliament and the monarchy or famous British businesses are studied in personal, social and health education (PSHE), history, English, biology and business. All pupils develop an understanding of the world around them with empathy, respect and tolerance for the values of others, including the protected characteristics of age, disability, belief, race, sex and sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity. The school is unable to promote respect for gender reassignment or civil partnership because of current Thai law.

All pupils are involved in at least two extra-curricular activities including rock club, roller skating, football, basketball and yoga. Outside school pupils' personal development is enhanced by regular educational visits. Pupils demonstrate leadership skills by successfully participating in debates and the Model United Nations. They are developing excellent communication skills as demonstrated by their leading assemblies, hosting events, leading parent tours and being involved in parent information mornings.

An effective careers education programme runs through the whole school from EYFS to Year 13 as part of the PSHE programme. Option choice guidance is comprehensive for both pupils and parents. Support is provided for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) tests and other university entrance tests. Almost all students apply to university. They receive life-skills lessons in preparation for a life away from their family and attend guest-speaker lectures.

Pupils are regularly involved in house charity fundraising and service projects within and outside school to support their local and global community. For example, pupils organised a sale of red poppies to raise money for the Royal British Legion.

The quality of **teaching, learning and assessment** across the school is good overall and is sometimes outstanding. This contributes to almost all pupils making strong progress in acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum. Most teachers make good use of assessment information to meet the needs of every pupil in the class and they track pupils' progress towards individual targets. As a result, there is a high level of challenge and the majority of teachers routinely set extension tasks for more-able pupils, who are well versed in the targets they should be meeting.

Teachers demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of, and a strong interest in, their subject, leading to well-planned, engaging teaching which enthuses pupils. Links between subjects are strong and teachers make learning meaningful. Most teachers' questioning skills are well developed and serve to challenge pupils to think deeply about their responses and reflect on their contributions. For example, in a Year 11 English lesson, pupils were asked to consider whether Shakespeare routinely uses race to denote power and identify plays where they could verify this. This led to a more in-depth analysis of the wide range of his writing. Most teachers also skilfully adjust the pace of learning through targeted questions using a fast pace for recall of facts and then slowing down to provide high-quality thinking time. Teachers deal with pupils' misconceptions as soon as they emerge. Higher-order thinking and reasoning skills are well developed.

Teachers and support staff know their pupils well. Almost all pupils demonstrate positive attitudes, excellent behaviour, and enthusiasm for learning. Consequently, lessons are orderly and productive. Strong relationships enable pupils to take risks in their learning, knowing that they can make mistakes and that teachers will encourage them to do so. Staff in the early years know how young children learn. They plan continuous-provision tasks well, ensure that children's first experiences of formal learning are positive and promote independent learning skills. In primary and secondary, pupils make good use of technology to research subjects in more detail, gain access to homework and also share their learning.

Leaders and teachers make effective use of teaching assistants as well as specialist staff to contribute to pupils' learning. Pupils who speak EAL receive well-planned, targeted support which enables them to make good progress in all aspects of their learning.

The systems for documenting pupils' progress and targets are comprehensive. The majority of teachers use this information to plan effective individual or group interventions. However, the use of assessment information for planning, in order to meet the learning needs of pupils, especially the most able, and challenge them to attain the progress they are capable of, is not yet embedded. Most pupils receive high-quality and detailed feedback on their work. Pupils recognise the value of this and are mostly encouraged to reflect and respond to it. Most secondary teachers make accurate use of their knowledge of examination requirements to plan challenging tasks.

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

The standards relating to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils are met except for the standard in paragraph 5 (b) (vi). This is not met because of the requirements of the host country relating to the UK Equality Act 2010.

The school meets the requirements of the standard. The spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, in and outside lessons, because they have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They are proud to have initiated the 'student charter', which sets out the rights and responsibilities of the pupils. They are highly respectful towards staff, parents and each other. Consistent application of behaviour policies results in pupils rarely misbehaving.

Pupils are self-confident and self-aware. They speak eagerly of their initiatives when taking responsibility for projects, such as planning and looking after the school environment through the Eco Warriors group or fundraising projects such as the sale of red poppies to raise money for the Royal British Legion. They are keen to learn and take responsibility and proud to honour the school's mission: 'Leadership in the making to create tomorrow's leaders today'.

They are eager to learn and work exceptionally well independently, in pairs and small groups. They listen exceptionally well, but also challenge views constructively. For example, pupils told inspectors that they feel strongly that the school ought to celebrate the diverse community in the canteen lunch and as a result a 'special-cuisine day' every Wednesday is now in place. There is a student chant and pledge made each year by all pupils on Wai Kru day (Respect the Teacher Day) when pupils promise to show respect for teachers and to do their best. Pupils appreciate cultural diversity and realise the consequences of prejudice and racism. The school reinforces this appreciation through subjects, pastoral work, assemblies and flag announcements.

Pupils say that they feel listened to by their teachers. Their views are sought through regular well-being and academic surveys. They are encouraged to talk in their PHSE lessons. Leaders actively seek the views of pupils when making decisions, for example during the annual curriculum review.

Pupils are kind and compassionate. All are involved in community service and each year group has a charity partner. There are also annual events to raise money such as the school fair, bikeathon and walkathon.

British values are embedded in the curriculum and blended into the learning environment. Pupils have a thorough understanding of democracy. For example, they elect one another as class leaders, house captains, library monitors, head pupils, whole-school prefects, sports captains and host various events throughout the school. The student council, elected by their peers through a robust process, meets fortnightly to discuss ideas raised in class.

Pupils have a strong knowledge of public institutions and services in the UK. They learn about the judicial system, including civil and criminal law in Britain, in PSHE, history and ICT/computing through problem-solving and the use of higher-level thinking skills. For example, in ICT, pupils learn about respecting the civil and criminal law in England when looking at data protection and computing-related legislation.

Pupils have positive attitudes showing mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths through open discussions in lessons, assemblies and events such as 'Odd Socks Day'. Teachers encourage pupils to explore different political views. For example, in Year 8 English, pupils explore political views when reading 'Animal Farm'.

The school is fully inclusive. Inspection evidence, including discussions with pupils, scrutiny of their work and examination of curriculum plans, confirms that the school encourages respect for others. The school pays due regard to all of the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010 but is unable to promote respect for all of them due to the current laws of the host country. Those precluded are civil partnership and recognising the changed sex in gender reassignment.

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

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

The school's arrangements for the care and support of its pupils are outstanding. Pupils report that they feel safe in the school and know who they can turn to if they are worried about any aspects of school life. Comprehensive and well-established policies and systems ensure that all pupils, staff and visitors are safe and well supported. Buddy systems are in place for new pupils to help them settle and named mentors support new staff.

School leaders and senior staff maintain a focus on the well-being of both pupils and staff. Robust health and safety policies ensure the safety of all in and around the school, on educational trips and while using the internet. Pupils report that they have regular training and reminders about how to stay safe online and are clearly aware of the dangers they may face online.

School leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to the safeguarding of pupils, which is noticeable in the culture of the school. There are secure systems, policies and arrangements for child protection that meet both UK requirements and are in line with the laws in Thailand. Staff report that they receive regular training on safeguarding and understand their responsibilities with regard to the school's rigorous approach to keeping children safe. There are robust procedures for monitoring any incidents. Parents agree with their children that they keep safe and staff care for them well.

Bullying is rare but pupils are aware of the need to report any incidents. These are dealt with immediately and with sensitivity. Information during anti-bullying week meant that pupils had a good understanding what bullying is. The school's counsellor is available to support pupils in need and older pupils know how to gain access to this support. The promotion of good behaviour throughout the school means that pupils'

behaviour is exemplary. The school keeps records of any misbehaviour in line with the behaviour policy.

The arrangements for ensuring pupils' good health are well established, as are systems for dealing with first aid in school. The school nurse keeps meticulous records of injuries and medication and communicates well with staff and parents. The school's canteen provides a choice of freshly cooked, healthy meals.

The school's procedures for fire evacuation and lockdown are robust. The review and rehearsal of systems ensure that all pupils and staff are familiar with their role in any emergency. Systems are stringent and match the requirements of the UK as well as meeting local requirements.

Written risk assessments are rigorous and result in a healthy, safe learning environment. Checks ensure that the premises and equipment are safe for use. Well-established security systems and personnel protect pupils from any unauthorised intrusion. Arrangements for safe transport are well established with clear record keeping and monitoring of incidents. Drivers and support staff undergo the same checks as teaching staff and are well aware of safeguarding issues. They also adhere to safe systems for handover to parents.

Pupils' attendance is around UK averages at 95% and punctuality is good.

Standard 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

Recruitment procedures are of a high standard. In accordance with the appropriate safeguarding procedures, all staff undergo careful vetting and checks. These arrangements are rigorous and clearly outlined in the school's safer recruitment policy. These checks ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. The school keeps very detailed and comprehensive records both online and on file. Thorough checks are also in place for the proprietor and the board of directors, locally recruited staff, parent helpers and outsourced staff, such as caterers and after-school club providers.

Leaders take a great deal of care to ensure that they carefully plan future staffing and they make sure that they make good appointments to meet the needs of the pupils. Before potential new staff start employment the school carefully checks identification, medical fitness, 3 references, right to work in Thailand and the appropriate police checks, depending on the country of origin of the candidate. The new member of staff is then carefully inducted into the school. The school does not use supply staff.

Standard 5. The premises and accommodation

The school meets the requirements of this standard. Pupils benefit from a high-quality learning environment where the relatively compact space is used well to maximise the impact on learning.

The site is safe and secure and standards of hygiene are high. Air conditioning and soundproofing are effective and teaching spaces are maintained and decorated to a good standard.

There is a range of specialised facilities, including a recently refurbished swimming pool, that provide a stimulating environment to support learning. There are well-stocked libraries as well as specialist spaces for art, music, science, food technology, physical education and ICT. There are also shaded communal outside play areas.

All teaching spaces benefit from appropriate technology in classrooms to enhance teaching and learning. The school's use of devices as part of a 'Bring Your Own Device' policy from Year 3 onwards also has a positive impact on teaching and learning in the school.

There are ample and appropriate spaces for learning across the current site to meet adequately the pupils' learning needs, although planned future proposals to rebuild the school nearby would enhance this.

The school occupies a compact site alongside a busy road. Careful arrangements are in place to ensure secure access and also safe pupil movement around the car parking area.

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

The school meets the requirements for this standard.

Parents feel fully informed about their children's education and spoke to inspectors of a 'positive relationship' with the school and a 'genuine family feel'. The school's website is up to date, accessible and informative and there is a range of additional social media platforms which parents see as being relevant sources of information. Parents are very appreciative of the useful and timely information the school provides in a variety of other forms. Weekly email communication, alongside regular texts and newsletters, parents say, are an effective way of maintaining dialogue with the school. Additionally, parents highly value the parent workshops and attendance at them is

mostly good. Parents commented that a useful reading workshop helped them support the teaching of phonics at home.

The school's regular parent surveys ensure that parents feel that their views are genuinely heard. An improvement in the provision of food at the school is a good example of the difference parental feedback has made.

Parents say the termly written reports, alongside regular face-to-face meetings, are an instrumental part of their positive relationship with the school. They regard the comments relating to progress as having a positive impact on pupils' learning. They welcome what they describe as the 'honesty' in the school's reporting style, with the combination of reporting what is currently going well alongside suggested next steps in learning. Evidence from the inspection endorses their views.

The school's 'open door' policy, which enables immediate concerns or questions to be raised and dealt with, is also of great value to parents. They like the way that senior staff greet pupils at the start of the day and are immediately accessible if needed. They are aware that the school has a complaints and concerns policy and they know how to gain access to this and use it if needed.

Parents feel that the school acted appropriately during COVID-19. They were kept informed of how the school responded to the pandemic and felt that the quality of teaching and learning was good during that time. They felt well supported during the pandemic.

Standard 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints

The school meets the requirements of this BSO standard.

The complaints policy is available on the website. The staged procedure outlines how complaints are resolved and the expectations of all parties within timescales. Records of all concerns and their resolution are kept. There have not been any formal complaints. All minor concerns are dealt with fairly and in a timely manner to the satisfaction of parents. The overwhelming majority of parents say that leaders are always available and feel comfortable in approaching them. Parents' views are sought through regular surveys which have largely positive results.

Standard 8. Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership fulfils its responsibilities in ensuring that the BSO standards are fully met.

Senior leaders including the principal are visible and accessible to all stakeholders. They form a stable team and have ensured the continuity of the school's vision, which is embedded in the culture of the school and shared by all. The school is successful in integrating the best of both Western and Eastern educational practice and cultural values and traditions, including British values.

There are a comparatively large number of leadership roles in this small school. Effective middle leaders are held accountable by their line managers, particularly through individual pupil-progress meetings and bi-annual subject and key stage reviews. These reviews are very thorough and involve a deep analysis of data, assessment of the quality of teaching and learning and establishment of areas for development. This accountability has a good impact on the development of the subject or key stage. Early years leadership is good and developing strongly. The school's reflective, ambitious leaders bring about improvement and provide the school with the capacity to improve further.

There is a well-established performance management system in place for all staff which is informed by self-review. In addition, it is linked to school, professional and personal development. Leaders encourage the promotion of staff from within the school wherever appropriate. Teachers say they find the high expectations of them reassuring and that leaders are supportive. They told inspectors about the family feeling amongst the staff. The results of recent surveys have been largely positive and show that they feel appreciated and recognised. Most are proud to work at the school. They are good role models and share good practice in their areas of expertise informally and through workshops which are highly valued. Teacher turnover is relatively low and improving after COVID-19.

The school's self-review is accurate and the verification team largely agreed with their assessment, particularly in terms of progress being very good. School development plans are focused on whole-school improvement across different aspects, taking into account the views of pupils, parents and staff through regular surveys and recommendations from external reviews. The school has gone some way to addressing the areas for development in the last report. However, while the analysis of data is now thorough, with good systems and intervention in place, the use of this information is not well understood by all. Leaders do not sufficiently interrogate the progress of individual pupils against their potential.

The board of governors represents the shareholders and is involved in the strategic planning of the school. Members work together with the principal and support him effectively while allowing him the autonomy to run the school. The separate

responsibilities of the governors and principal are understood and respected. The board has clear financial policies and ensures that the school operates legally and is compliant with all requirements. Governors approve the budget and the principal operates within this. They evaluate the performance of the principal reflecting on his vision and leadership, which is closely linked to the performance of the whole school.

The chair of governors knows the school well and is committed to the 'East meets West' philosophy so that pupils' experience of Thai language, culture and history (TLCH) is given high priority. Governors do not want the largely Thai school population to lose its Thai traditions or ability to communicate effectively in the Thai language. The rigorous evaluation of the Thai department is the same as in other subjects. Leaders are held to account for the quality of the TLCH programme across the school. The school meets all its obligations with regard to the TLCH programme.

St Stephen's is an inclusive school with a strong commitment to safeguarding and equality. There is a strong sense of community in the school and a thorough knowledge of individual pupils. Inspectors witnessed happy, kind and tolerant pupils who thrive in the caring school environment.

EYFS provision

Early years provision is good.

Baseline assessments show that most children arrive in the early years with limited early-learning skills. Settling the children into new routines is a priority, as is supporting them so that they feel secure and confident in a new environment. As a result, children make their strongest progress in the areas of self-awareness, health, self-care and listening skills. In the last academic year, only around half the children achieved a Good Level of Development. In the coming year, internal data predicts that a large majority of children will achieve this.

An inclusive curriculum and experience-based provision are matched to the new English Early Years Framework. Specialist subject and play areas are successful in developing wider skills, including gross motor skills. In continuous provision sessions, through well-planned tasks, children are successfully developing creativity and fine motor skills, including pencil control.

Most teachers have a good understanding of how young children learn. Teachers encourage children to explore the world around them through independent choice. Targeted questions encourage them to think about their learning. For example, children in Reception classes have a balanced diet and 'eat a rainbow'. As a result, many children will actively seek to identify meals that are healthy.

The tracking of children's progress is through observational assessments. The early years coordinator monitors progress of groups and individuals and plans effective interventions. Following gender differences noted last year, there has been an active programme to include boys' interest areas by engaging parents and introducing more non-fiction texts. Regular progress meetings with parents share children's achievements and next steps in learning. Relationships with parents are strong.

Leadership in this phase is effective. A good knowledge of new curriculum expectations, innovative methods of teaching and learning and more robust systems for planning and tracking children's progress are beginning to help children make better progress. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that all pupils experience a seamless transition into the primary phase through clear targets for attainment in core subjects.

Post-16 provision

Sixth-form provision is good.

The cohort of students has been small over a number of years. There are currently 28 students, who progressed from Year 11 with no additional joiners this academic year. Many in Year 11 did not progress into the sixth form but students are on the appropriate course, retention is excellent. The sixth form is inclusive and will allow students to take fewer than the expected three or four A levels and re-sit IGCSE examinations if appropriate. Students also take the IELTS examination. There are 11 or 12 subject options including the high school diploma, which allows entry to Thai university. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and understanding of examination requirements. They know their students well. Rigorous intervention is in place to help students to improve their grades.

Attendance at 95% is in line with the rest of the school. Very few students come to school late. Students say they value the small school with its community feel and where everyone is friendly. Their behaviour is exemplary and they are very respectful of both their teachers and one another.

Leadership opportunities are plentiful, including the roles of head students and community, sports, well-being and eco-prefects. Leaders are voted for by their peers in a democratic way. These prefects have extra responsibilities to organise activities and fundraising events. For example, the well-being prefect has set up an email for students to contact if they do not feel comfortable speaking face to face.

Students receive up-to-date careers advice and university guidance. The head of sixth form advises on international universities and another specialist on Thai university

applications. Last year most went to Thai universities but a minority went to Australia, the UK, Toronto or China.

Leadership of the sixth form is good. The leader is accessible to students and listens to their views despite having limited time for the role. She has the support of senior leaders and has an understanding of some of the main priorities for development.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

St Stephen's School meets all of the required standards except those that would be in breach of the host country's laws.

It cannot fully meet the standards set out below that relate to the UK Equality Act 2010.

2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics of civil partnership and recognising the changed sex in gender reassignment as set out in the Equality Act 2010;

What the school could do to improve further

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

Assessment systems are in place that enable leaders to interrogate the progress of individuals and groups of pupils over time. The use of this assessment information for planning and meeting the needs of all pupils is inconsistent. Leaders should monitor how effectively teachers use assessment to meet the learning needs of all pupils, including the most able.

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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Leadership and management

Overall effectiveness of leadership and management		☒		
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School details

Name of school	St Stephen's International School
Type of school	Private
Date school opened	1998
Age range of pupils	3-18 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	381
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	n/a
Annual fees (day pupils)	342,650 Baht to 589,450 Baht
Annual fees (boarders)	n/a
Address of school	998 Viphavadi Rangsit Road, Lad Yao, Chatuchak, Bangkok 10900
Telephone number	+66 (0)2 513-0270-1
Email address	info@sis.edu
Headteacher	Mr John Rolfe
Proprietor	Hands Management Company Ltd

GLOSSARY

Achievement – Progress made by a pupil 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 Education Development Trust

Assessment – The process of finding out how well pupils 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 pupils 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.

Education Development Trust – Formerly CfBT Education Trust, we are 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 Education Development Trust 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 Education Development 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 – Pupils' 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 pupil 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 pupils.

Standards –

- (1) The levels of knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils and a school demonstrates 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 pupils' learning.

With 40 years' experience of delivering education services worldwide Education Development 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. Education Development Trust 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

Education Development Trust 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.

Education Development Trust 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.

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Education Development Trust

16-18 Duke Street

Reading

RG1 4RU

UK

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