

British Schools Overseas (BSO) inspection report

11 to 13 March 2025

Harrow International School Hong Kong

38 Tsing Ying Road

Tuen Mun

New Territories

Hong Kong

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect British Schools Overseas (BSO). Our inspections report on the extent to which the BSO Standards are met, referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

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Summary of inspection findings

Provision at the school meets all the requirements of the BSO Standards. The quality of leaders' decision making and its implementation across all sections of the BSO Framework exceeds requirements. This results in demonstrable and highly beneficial impact for pupils throughout the school.

1. The proprietor and governors are highly successful in holding the school to account. They ensure that school leaders promote pupils' wellbeing and fulfil their duties effectively to ensure that BSO Standards are met in such a way as to produce consistently positive outcomes for pupils. These manifest themselves in the pupils' high levels of personal development and academic achievements. Continued school improvement is supported by robust mechanisms for self-evaluation.
2. Leaders have put effective systems in place to ensure that risks across all areas of operation are carefully identified and mitigated.
3. Boarding staff create a positive, caring and nurturing environment where pupils thrive both personally and academically.
4. The teaching of languages and support for those who speak English as an additional language (EAL) enables pupils of all backgrounds to develop high levels of fluency in English and a command of other modern foreign languages.
5. Leaders have carefully developed a curriculum that is broad and balanced, supplemented by a co-curricular programme that enables pupils to broaden their horizons and flourish intellectually, creatively and physically.
6. Teachers are effective in encouraging pupils to develop curiosity and a love of learning, which leads to high attainment in external examinations. Pupils typically exceed predictions based on their starting points. Teaching successfully supports those pupils who are identified as having individual needs. Assessment data is used strategically and methodically to check that pupils' academic needs are met. Results in external examinations and standardised tests show high levels of attainment and good progress in relation to their assessed starting points.
7. Leaders take care to ensure that the curriculum and the school's values promote understanding and respect for people with protected characteristics, including those with different beliefs and varied cultural backgrounds.
8. Opportunities for pupils to lead extra-curricular activities ensure the development of leadership skills and enable pupils to develop their self-respect and self-confidence.
9. Whilst leaders have designed a suitable curriculum for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, teaching of the programme in the upper school is inconsistent and not always delivered in an age-appropriate manner.
10. Arrangements for the management of health and safety, first aid and the maintenance of the premises are robust because leaders work conscientiously to promote the safety of pupils.

11. The school's careers education programme is comprehensive and provides pupils with the knowledge and understanding to make well-informed decisions about an extensive range of career options.
12. Leaders promote pupils' understanding of their responsibilities as global citizens as well as the need to contribute to their local community. They have a clear understanding of the wider world as well as south-east Asia.
13. The school's knowledgeable safeguarding team carries out its role effectively and ensures that staff are well trained and informed about local contextual risks and understand their responsibility to act promptly when concerns arise.

The extent to which the school meets the BSO Standards

The school meets all the BSO Standards.

- BSO Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are met.
- BSO Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- BSO Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- BSO Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- BSO Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure that personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education in the upper school is delivered consistently so that all pupils experience the same high quality of age-appropriate teaching.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

14. Aspirational governors and the proprietor set high standards for continued school improvement. They are effective in holding the school's leaders to account and ensuring that they actively promote the wellbeing of pupils. Leaders at all levels of the school demonstrate appropriate skills and fulfil their responsibilities successfully to ensure that the BSO Standards are consistently met, and that the school's aims are delivered. They have created highly effective leadership structures. As a result, leaders make a significant contribution to pupils' academic, pastoral and co-curricular outcomes. This includes well-targeted and high-quality training and support for teachers, enabling them to develop their professional skills for the benefit of pupils.
15. Effective evidence-based self-evaluation is a key component of the school's continuing development. School development and performance are measured by thorough and regular monitoring and self-evaluation mechanisms which are in place across all levels of leadership. The result of this is a culture where leaders are continually searching for ways to improve outcomes for pupils. The school regularly communicates and consults with parents, pupils and staff, whose views are considered when strategic and operational decisions are made.
16. School policies and practices follow the relevant guidance of the United Kingdom as well as local requirements. They are clearly understood by staff and implemented conscientiously so that pupils' happiness, safety and wellbeing, which are central to the school's ethos, are promoted. Policies are accessible in a range of languages, and leaders at all levels monitor them carefully to ensure consistent implementation.
17. The school provides the required information to parents and others through its website and other documentation that is made available. This includes the school's boarding principles. Parents are provided with detailed and informative reports on pupils' progress and attainment. Information is also shared as required with the relevant local bodies regarding pupils' attendance and welfare. Leaders work diligently to establish constructive working relationships with local agencies, such as the police and the social welfare department, to safeguard the welfare of pupils.
18. The policy for the handling of parental complaints consists of a three-stage approach, with clear timeframes. Leaders manage complaints in line with this policy and respond promptly and constructively to parental concerns, making changes where merited. Boarders can make their concerns known to staff, who take care to listen and respond, as well as to an independent person whose details are made available to pupils.
19. Leaders have developed procedures for risk management that are robust and systematic. Leaders diligently identify risks relevant to safeguarding as well as those associated with activities, locations, trips and visits, implementing effective mitigations. Staff and pupils are well informed about these measures. Staff remain alert to potentially hidden risks such as pupils withholding safeguarding concerns, and they recognise the importance of constant vigilance. Risk assessments are conscientiously updated to reflect changes in the school's environment, circumstances and procedures, or unforeseen events.
20. Staff responsible for boarders' welfare are well trained and qualified. They ensure that boarders are happy and well cared for through careful supervision and effective monitoring. As a result, the

boarding house provides a secure, supportive and friendly environment for pupils away from their families.

The extent to which the school meets the BSO Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance

21. All the relevant BSO Standards are met.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

22. Leaders provide a broad and balanced curriculum that is extremely well planned to take into consideration pupils' ages, aptitudes and needs. The early years curriculum enables children in Nursery and Reception to develop their communication and language skills to a high standard, in addition to making rapid progress in the acquisition of subject-specific knowledge and skills in a range of areas.
23. Leaders ensure a strong focus on language development throughout the school and provide effective support for the high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). Pupils develop fluency in English. Throughout the school, both in and beyond the classroom, teachers consistently provide opportunities for pupils to develop their language skills, including through debate, skilful questioning and group work, ensuring that they are equipped with subject-specific vocabulary. Pupils acquire the language skills to make clear and nuanced observations.
24. The curriculum is enriched by an extensive programme of extra- and co-curricular options. These opportunities further develop pupils' skills and knowledge through extensive academic, artistic, active, altruistic and leadership activities. This allows pupils to develop interests and passions that equip them for their future lives. The programme also includes a well-planned range of opportunities for recreation, enabling pupils to develop socially, intellectually, creatively and physically. Staff provide additional activities in the boarding houses.
25. Throughout the lower school, teaching is carefully planned. Activities are matched to the pace of pupils' learning and are well-resourced. Consistently effective teaching methods, lesson planning and curriculum promote pupils' enthusiasm, engagement and independence. Teaching is highly successful in developing artistic, aesthetic and creative skills. Methods of teaching and questioning and the atmosphere created in the classroom promote positive behaviour from pupils.
26. In the upper school, teachers' secure subject knowledge and passion for their subject inspire pupils to be aspirational learners who are always aiming to improve. Pupils are self-motivated, engaged and fully involved in their learning. Teachers draw upon pupils' prior learning and use their knowledge of assessment and pastoral data to plan and cater for the needs of individual pupils. Resources are well chosen and appropriate, and effective use is made of time to ensure purposeful and productive lessons. Pupils appreciate that their teachers are kind and supportive and willing to give freely of their time. Leaders ensure that house staff support boarders to manage their academic studies alongside their co-curricular activities. House tutors and other staff are on hand to support boarders each evening, and boarders' progress and attainment benefit from their ability to consult with experts in their subject.
27. The support received by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) enables them to make at least good progress from their starting points. An effective system is in place to identify pupils who require extra support and to establish personalised strategies to meet their needs. This additional support is carefully monitored for its impact on pupils' progress.
28. Through surveys, discussions with pupils and lesson observations, leaders are careful to ensure that teaching does not undermine British values and does not discriminate against pupils due to their individual characteristics.

29. Staff use data in a highly effective way to inform planning and create aspirational targets to motivate pupils. The forensic analysis of data is complemented by the exploration of pastoral data that might impact on pupils' performance. Pupil outcomes in public examinations are carefully and extensively evaluated to identify areas for development. Results in external examinations and standardised tests show high levels of attainment and good progress in relation to their assessed starting points.

The extent to which the school meets the BSO Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation

30. All the relevant BSO Standards are met.

Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

31. The curriculum, supported by well-planned assemblies, enables pupils to acquire a highly developed respect for people with a range of faiths and beliefs. From an early age, children learn about how lives can differ, and as they progress through the school, they develop a mature understanding and respect for people with protected characteristics relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, sex, race and religion. Pupils are tolerant and caring.
32. Leaders are highly successful in promoting spiritual understanding through the philosophy and religious studies (PRS) and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum, and through the 'Beyond Harrow' programme in the sixth form. Consequently, pupils can articulate in a sensitive and mature way what spiritual awareness means to them and how it adds value to their lives. The concepts of right and wrong and personal responsibility are embedded throughout the curriculum from the early years so that pupils are confident in responding to moral questions.
33. Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities are highly effective in developing pupils' self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. Activities within the programme are often led by pupils, which helps to develop pupils' leadership skills. An established school culture of celebrating independent learning, encouraging the writing of academic articles and entering external competitions, promotes pupils' self-esteem and intellectual development. Many aspects of school life are pupil-led, with teachers being careful to step back and adopt a supervisory role. This contributes to a prevailing culture of mutual respect.
34. The early years programme is effective in promoting children's personal, emotional and physical development. Skilful teaching, conscientious planning and a highly productive and imaginative use of resources have a positive impact on children's progress. Children learn through play, pursue their own interests and begin to explore the world around them, thereby building their knowledge, fine motor skills and self-confidence. Positive relationships between teachers and children foster a positive culture for learning in the classroom.
35. The school's PSHE curriculum is aligned with the Harrow values and ensures that pupils understand the world around them and develop a strong sense of identity with their school and what it stands for. The programme is designed to prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of later life. Teaching is almost always effective in this regard, and the programme is regularly updated to ensure relevance and topicality. However, some teaching in the upper school does not deliver the content of the curriculum in an age-appropriate manner. The relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum is effective in teaching pupils about positive relationships, different family types and consent in a manner appropriate to pupils' ages.
36. The physical education (PE) department is highly effective in developing the skills of pupils of all ages and abilities across the school in a wide range of sporting activities. This ensures that physical health maintains a high profile and enables those pupils who are particularly gifted or talented to reach a high standard of performance in a range of sports, including fencing and horse riding.
37. Leaders have put in place effective routines within and beyond lessons to promote positive behaviour and good manners. Procedures to promote good behaviour and prevent bullying are known and understood by pupils and staff and are implemented effectively. Staff and pupils do not

tolerate bullying, and leaders are successful in encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Detailed records are kept, and leaders are diligent in identifying trends and patterns, responding promptly and decisively to any incidents. Pupils' successes, efforts and achievements are routinely and genuinely celebrated and valued by their peers, including during assemblies.

38. Leaders effectively promote the health and safety of pupils, staff and visitors. This extends to arrangements for fire safety and the mitigation of fire risks. Regular checks of the premises, machinery and equipment are conducted to ensure that the site is well maintained and that issues are addressed before they escalate.
39. As a result of diligent and carefully planned supervision, including in boarding and the early years, pupils feel safe and cared for. Prefects are deployed appropriately to assist in this, and their role is well understood and respected by pupils. First aid provision is secure, with a well-equipped and well-staffed medical centre providing prompt professional care. Positive relationships and the boarding house staff's detailed knowledge of the pupils enable them to monitor boarders' mental health and emotional wellbeing closely. Efficient communication between staff ensures that subtle changes to boarders' behaviour are picked up quickly so that appropriate support can be provided.
40. Attendance and admission registers are maintained in accordance with local regulations, and record-keeping is accurate. Staff follow up any unexplained absences immediately and report long-term absences as required to the social welfare department. Leaders are diligent and prompt in following up any concerns about pupils potentially missing education.

The extent to which the school meets the BSO Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

- 41. All the relevant BSO Standards are met.**

Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

42. Pupils experience a broad human, social and economic education in line with the school's aims and ethos and British values. Displays around the school are a visible reminder to pupils of the school's values of courage, humility, fellowship and honour. These values have a clear impact on the behaviour and attitudes of pupils in both the classrooms and boarding houses. Consequently, pupils have a profound sense of what their community stands for and how a well-ordered society works.
43. Leaders enable pupils to develop a deep respect for other people, in assemblies, as part of the 'Facing Challenges' and 'Beyond Harrow' programmes, and in their interactions in day and boarding houses. Relationships between different age groups, in and out of boarding, are warm and positive and are a significant feature of the school. Social development is a key component of the early years programme. Leaders have created a curriculum, from the early years upwards, which enables pupils to learn about world religions and cultures beyond their immediate national context. As a result, pupils recognise the importance of respecting everyone as being equal, and they are intolerant of discrimination.
44. Pupils are highly knowledgeable about the rule of law and debate ethical questions and the principles of right and wrong to an advanced level. They understand the importance of integrity, both as members of society and in the context of scholarship. The PSHE curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about the law, both locally and in the United Kingdom. They learn about practical issues that prepare them for their future lives in society, for example, the laws relating to consent, drinking, driving and drug use. Through awareness of their legal and moral rights and responsibilities, pupils are very well prepared not only for life as citizens of Hong Kong or the United Kingdom, but also as global citizens. This is reinforced by an extensive programme of trips and activities which give pupils an insight into the cultures and lives of others.
45. The curriculum is highly effective in providing a range of opportunities for pupils to acquire an in-depth knowledge of economic matters. For example, each house plans a party with a budget for food, decorations and other items. Pupils learn about saving, taxes, paying bills and managing money. They discuss how important money is when considering a career. The curriculum is well supported in this area by societies that enable pupils to delve more deeply into economics or the world of investing and the stock market.
46. A well-conceived and impartial careers programme enables pupils to learn how to develop themselves in preparation for the world of work. Online platforms, subject option events, interview preparation for particular careers, jobs and university, extensive careers events, including careers fairs, and work-shadowing placements, all contribute to pupils' readiness to make informed choices about their future lives.
47. Pupils explore democracy both through the curriculum and the many opportunities they have to enact it throughout the school. For example, pupils choose ambassadors, members of the pupil dialogue council, heads of house and prefects. They have an impactful voice in the school and recognise that their voices are heard by leaders, and that changes can occur as a result. The PSHE curriculum provides pupils with a deep and extensive understanding of democracy in the United Kingdom and a balanced understanding of topics such as the role of unions, the concept of referendum, Brexit and Scottish Independence.

48. Altruism is one of the pillars of the co-curricular programme, and through an extensive range of activities and societies pupils are encouraged to make an active contribution to both local and global communities. These include fundraising and service projects. Support for various charities is promoted both at school and house level so that pupils recognise the importance of giving back to the local community as well as exercising responsibility as global citizens. Charities and projects chosen by pupils are many and varied, and include supporting an orphanage, coral reef rescue, beach cleans and recycling projects.

The extent to which the school meets the BSO Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

49. All the relevant BSO Standards are met.

Safeguarding

50. Arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective. The safeguarding team is effectively led and appropriately trained and demonstrates a secure knowledge of current United Kingdom and local statutory guidance. A governor with specific responsibility for safeguarding conducts regular reflective audits, and practices are refined where necessary. This culminates in an annual review by the proprietorial board to ensure that the school's safeguarding policies are implemented effectively.
51. Clearly written policies, also translated into preferred languages, define the processes for identifying, reporting and responding to concerns, including low-level concerns about staff and any allegations. Comprehensive training ensures that these policies are understood and implemented effectively by staff. Staff understand their responsibilities, realise the importance of vigilance and feel confident to act on concerns raised by pupils when they arise. Staff are appropriately trained to recognise signs of child-on-child abuse, neglect, mental health concerns and any indicators of radicalisation.
52. Leaders are alert to contextual risks to pupils. Through training and an expectation of vigilance, they ensure that staff are not complacent about the possible occurrence of safeguarding concerns. Boarding staff are alert to the vulnerability of young people living away from home. There are clear systems of communication that enable those responsible for safeguarding to identify and address issues early. Leaders liaise and work effectively with local external agencies such as the social welfare department or police where necessary. Child protection records are detailed and clear. They include actions taken and the rationale for decisions behind those actions. Careful precautions are taken to ensure confidentiality.
53. Pupils are confident that they have a trusted adult to whom they can speak if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable. Leaders have provided a number of age-appropriate avenues through which pupils can share concerns about their welfare, including an independent person who boarders can contact.
54. The school educates pupils about personal safety, including risks they might encounter online. Appropriate network filtering and monitoring systems are in place, which are regularly checked for their effectiveness, and the school tracks online activity for inappropriate usage.
55. Staff responsible for the school's recruitment processes ensure that these are rigorously implemented. The required safeguarding checks are completed before adults are allowed to begin employment or to volunteer at the school. These are accurately recorded on the school's single central record of appointments (SCR).

The extent to which the school meets the BSO Standards relating to safeguarding

56. All the relevant BSO Standards are met.

School details

School	Harrow International School Hong Kong
Address	Harrow International School Hong Kong 38 Tsing Ying Road Tuen Mun New Territories Hong Kong
Phone number	+852 2824 9099
Email address	info@harrowschool.hk
Website	www.harrowhongkong.hk/
Proprietor	Asia International Schools Limited
Chair	Hon. Kenneth Lau
Head	Ms Ann Haydon MBE
Age range	3 to 18
Number of pupils	1642
Number of boarding pupils	279

Information about the school

57. Harrow International School Hong Kong is a co-educational day and boarding school which was founded in 2012. It is housed on a purpose-built site in Tuen Mun in the north-west New Territories area of Hong Kong. The school's proprietor, Asia International Schools Limited, is supported by a local board of governors.
58. The school is divided into two sections: the lower school, which includes the early years and Years 1 to 5, and the upper school, which is sub-divided into the prep school for pupils in Years 6 to 8 and the senior school for those in Years 9 to 13.
59. The school accepts boarders from the age of ten. There are ten boarding houses, equally split between lower and upper school pupils. In each section of the upper school, three boarding houses accommodate male pupils, and two houses are occupied by female pupils.
60. The school has identified 73 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
61. English is an additional language (EAL) for almost all pupils.
62. The school states its aims are to promote educational excellence for life and leadership through an outstanding education that blends elements of philosophy, practice and tradition from Harrow School with an awareness of the cultural context of Hong Kong and the needs of its international community.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

11 to 13 March 2025

63. A team of eight inspectors visited the school for three days.

64. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with a representative of the proprietor
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- visits to boarding houses accompanied by pupils and staff
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

65. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

How are British Schools Overseas inspected?

- The Department for Education accredits British international schools which meet the BSO Standards. Accreditation last for three years from the date of inspection.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect BSO schools. ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the school meets the Standards.
- For more information, please visit **www.isi.net**.