



SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE

BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS (BSO)

INSPECTION REPORT FOR

THE BANDA SCHOOL, KENYA

The key inspection judgements for this school are:

| | | |
|---|--------------------|----------|
| The quality of education | Outstanding | 1 |
| Pupils' personal development | Outstanding | 1 |
| Safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership, management and governance | Outstanding | 1 |
| Effectiveness of the Early Years' provision | Outstanding | 1 |

Compliance with the British Schools Overseas Standards:

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

Date of inspection: 4-6 October 2017

SECTION A: SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

The Banda School provides an outstanding education for its pupils. It meets all the British Schools Overseas (BSO) standards, except those precluded by Kenyan law. It also meets its own aims very well. Children make excellent progress in all aspects of their development in the early years foundation stage (EYFS) and they are very well prepared for Year 1. Pupils continue to make excellent progress in all subjects throughout the school and when they leave the school in Year 8 their achievement is very high. In 2017 a very high proportion of pupils in Year 8 gained scholarships to independent schools in the United Kingdom (UK), Kenya and South Africa. Pupils make particularly good progress in mathematics, reading and speaking and listening. They write well, but in a minority of English lessons teachers spend too long perfecting writing skills so that opportunities for pupils to plan their work and write independently are more limited. The curriculum and teaching are outstanding: both enable pupils to make excellent progress. Teachers have very good subject knowledge which is used to good effect in lively and challenging lessons. Assessment is outstanding. There is a clear marking policy but in a few cases written comments do not provide sufficient guidance for pupils on how to improve. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) achieve well because of the effective support they receive. Pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEN and disabilities) also make very good progress. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They are courteous, show great respect for others and they have strong moral values. The school's arrangements for safeguarding and ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent. The procedures for recruiting and vetting staff are clear, appropriate and consistently applied. Leadership, management and governance are outstanding. The proprietor and headteacher have created a vibrant, happy and high achieving school within which pupils' happiness, safety, security and academic achievement are paramount.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

To secure further improvement, the proprietor should:

- ensure that pupils have opportunities to plan and complete independent writing in English lessons; and
- ensure that all teachers apply the school's marking policy consistently.

SECTION B: INFORMATION

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION:

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

In reaching their judgements, the inspectors observed lessons, attended assembly and held meetings with the proprietor, headteacher, staff and pupils. They examined the school's website, documents and records, scrutinised pupils' work and reviewed responses to parents' questionnaires completed before the inspection.

The inspectors were:

| | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Reporting Inspector: | Christine Graham |
| Team inspector: | Peter Jones |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL:

The Banda School is a co-educational, non-selective day school for boys and girls aged 2 to 13 years. It was founded in 1966. The school is on a 32 acre site bordering Nairobi National Park. There are 34 nationalities in the school. English is the main language, with a number of the pupils also speaking Kiswahili, Afrikaans and a range of European home languages. The school is divided into three sections: Pegasus Early Years for children in the EYFS, the Lower School for pupils in Years 1 to 4 and the Upper School for those in Years 5 to 8. There are 336 pupils on roll in the main school and 73 children in the EYFS. Twenty-two children under the age of 5 attend on a part-time basis. Eighty-eight pupils have been identified by the school as having SEN and disabilities. Thirty-two pupils are identified as having EAL. The curriculum is based on the British National Curriculum, with some adaptations, and it is guided by the EYFS curriculum in early years. The curriculum includes the compulsory subjects of Kiswahili, Kenyan history and citizenship. Pupils are prepared for the Independent School Examination Board (ISEB) Common Entrance and Scholarship Examinations at 13+. They move onto secondary schools predominantly in the UK, South Africa and Kenya. The education the school provides is based on Christian foundations. The school's mission statement is: *'We give all our children wings and teach them how to fly'*. The school states that its aim is, *'to bring out the best in all of the children in its care and to create thoughtful, confident and independent individuals who are equipped to deal with the challenges that will face them in the world today and tomorrow'*. It places emphasis on the importance of harmonious co-existence in a country of cultural and economic diversity. The school is a member of the Independent Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS).

SECTION C: THE INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

1. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is outstanding.

Pupils' learning and achievement

Pupils' learning and achievement are outstanding. Children make very good progress in the EYFS and in key stage 1 in all aspects of their learning and by the end of Year 2 their achievement is above that expected in British schools. Pupils continue to make very good progress in all subjects and when they leave the school in Year 8 their achievement, as measured by internal assessment data and the results of external examinations, is very high. In 2017 93% of entries in Common Entrance examinations were awarded A* to C grades and in a year group of 27 pupils, 21 scholarships were awarded to independent schools in the UK, Kenya and South Africa. Pupils achieve extremely well in all subjects. In recent years the school has focused on improving pupils' reading skills and encouraging a love of reading. The success of this can be seen in the number of pupils who say that they like to read, in their fluent reading skills and in their ability to apply higher order comprehension skills. A whole school phonics intervention programme was implemented and this was then extended to include a school-wide literacy programme, which has accelerated pupils' progress and improved their basic literacy skills. Writing is taught very effectively but in a few English lessons teachers spend too long modelling specific features of writing which limits opportunities for pupils to plan and complete independent tasks. Writing seen in other subjects shows that pupils' writing skills are very well developed so most do not require this high level of support. Pupils' independent learning skills are very effective and they are well equipped to tackle the demanding work that they receive in lessons. They love learning, are genuinely excited when they master a new concept, and they are very resilient: they do not give up even when tasks are very challenging. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson pupils were faced with a difficult problem solving task. Although initially daunted, within minutes they were working with a partner testing strategies and checking the results of their calculations, so that all pupils managed to solve many of the equations successfully within the allocated time. Pupils can apply skills and knowledge taught in a range of subjects to new tasks and they work very successfully as individuals or with a partner or small group. Pupils with EAL benefit from the strong focus on oral work enabling them to make very good progress in acquiring fluent and accurate English. Pupils with SEN and disabilities make very good progress from their individual starting points because of the skilled and sensitive support they receive. The work they are given is well matched to their needs.

The quality of teaching and assessment

Teaching and assessment are outstanding. Evidence seen during lesson observations and from the scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that pupils make such excellent progress because they receive consistently high quality teaching. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and they use this very effectively to motivate and engage pupils. The school's lesson planning format ensures that lessons are well planned, challenging and focused on what different groups of pupils will learn. Pupils are encouraged to discuss, question and test their

understanding and teachers encourage them to learn from their mistakes. This produces confident learners who are very well supported by the staff and their peers. Teachers' questioning skills are effective and they ensure that all pupils participate in the lesson and understand the topic. They ask probing questions to deepen and consolidate pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers support pupils with EAL very effectively and the use of drama, discussion and games during lessons ensures that these pupils are fully involved in learning and make very good progress. Teachers say they enjoy their work and feel valued and very well supported. They provide pupils with regular homework which extends and consolidates work completed in class and provides opportunities for individual research.

The school's assessment policy is based on the 2014 National Curriculum. Pupils are assessed against subject and age appropriate criteria. They are judged to be working towards an objective or as having achieved or exceeded it. Teachers use information from the assessments to plan lessons which help individual pupils to revisit key concepts and consolidate their understanding or to move onto more challenging work. Formal assessment data, from standardised tests and other assessments, is collected and recorded and pupils' progress is carefully evaluated. Any underachievement is identified and support is provided for any pupil at risk of falling behind. Older pupils are well prepared for Common Entrance examinations and these provide a measure of pupils' achievement during their final years in school. A very strong feature of all lessons is the very effective oral feedback provided for pupils, it helps to eradicate misunderstandings or errors or provide greater challenge, and this helps all pupils to make rapid progress in lessons. Marking is usually effective but a few teachers do not always provide sufficient written guidance for pupils to ensure that they know how to improve their work.

The quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is outstanding in its breadth, depth and variety. It is based on the English National Curriculum and the requirements of Common Entrance examinations, includes Kiswahili, Kenyan history and citizenship as required of schools in Kenya, and is extended by a vast range of extra-curricular provision and activities. It meets the aims of the school well and enables the pupils to develop into knowledgeable and well-rounded young people with a love of learning. It is very well adapted to the needs of pupils of all abilities. Curriculum planning, including daily lesson plans, is excellent and this contributes strongly to the exceptional progress made by all pupils. The use and integration of technology into the curriculum is a very strong feature of the school's work: individual tablets extend learning in all subjects. Older pupils have access to a virtual learning environment (VLE) which is an effective learning tool. All pupils participate in a wide range of day and residential visits which enhance the curriculum and give pupils first-hand experience of the geography, history and culture of Kenya and the wider world. High altitude training for runners and the Year 8 ascent of Mount Kenya help pupils to acquire determination and perseverance which prepare them well for their future lives. A visit to New York gives pupils experience of the arts through visits to museums, galleries and theatres. All pupils have a weekly drama and music lesson, and role play and games are used to very good effect in all subjects. There are a number of choirs, including one specifically for upper school boys, and the chamber choir

sings in several different languages and styles. There is a rock band and opportunities to use the school's recording studio. Performance is a strong feature of the school's work. Every year group performs at least one play during the year and there are a number of school productions. There are frequent concerts including those by the choirs and the school orchestra. There are opportunities for pupils to participate in competitions and festivals with other schools. Pupils sit London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) and other external examinations with many gaining merits and distinctions. The art curriculum is demanding and very well planned and pupils of all abilities produce original work of an exceptionally high standard. All pupils participate in a range of team and individual sports in school with opportunities to compete at a local, national and international level. On leaving, a high proportion of pupils gain scholarships in art, music and sport. The co-curricular programme provides opportunities for pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding of, for example, nutrition, fitness, and current affairs. Special events such as Book Day and Environment Day enrich the curriculum. The work done during Environment Day was so successful that it led to a whole school pledge to do more to support the environment. The effective use of visiting speakers promotes pupils' interest and understanding. An enrichment programme provides opportunities for independent study outside the classroom through its focus on project work. The very well designed curriculum provides all pupils with exceptional opportunities to gain new skills and interests, enjoy school and make excellent progress. Pupils identified as gifted and talented have exceptionally good opportunities to develop their talents to the highest level.

2. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils are fulsome in their praise for the school, describing the warmth of the relationships, the sense of community and the benefits they gain from their education. A number of pupils said that coming back to the school after a day or residential visit was 'like coming home' They described the same sensations of feeling safe, valued and well cared for. Pupils are self-confident, self-aware and thoughtful. They have excellent social skills and they are courteous to their peers and to staff and visitors. Their behaviour is excellent and attitudes to school and to wider society are exceptionally positive. Attendance is very good and pupils arrive punctually for lessons. Pupils know how to stay safe online and in their day-to-day lives. They volunteer their help willingly for the benefit of others as, for example, when they support local charities.

Knowing right from wrong and 'doing the right thing' is a key part of the ethos of the school, helped by, for example, the work they undertake on the school's anti-bullying strategy. Pupils say that it is easy to make friends and they show a great deal of empathy for others. They have strong moral values which influence all aspects of their lives. The wide range of nationalities in the school adds significantly to pupils' appreciation of their own and other cultures and they have a very good understanding of the main world religions. They are tolerant and show respect for the values, beliefs, cultures and lifestyles of other people. The school provides age-appropriate sex and relationships education. However, although the Kenyan constitution protects the rights and fundamental freedoms

of all people without exception, the school's curriculum cannot pay particular regard to protected characteristics such as gender reassignment, civil partnership and same sex unions which are not recognised under Kenyan law.

Pupils' cultural education is very well developed, they receive an exceptionally well-rounded education and develop a strong awareness of culture in its widest sense through opportunities to develop their own sporting, dramatic, musical, artistic or creative talents. Pupils carry out a wide range of responsibilities within the school and in their own classes or year groups. This includes the role of class representative on the school council, prefects, house captains, sports captains and the role of head boy and girl. Pupils explained that they value the impact made by these post holders and could easily identify the qualities and attributes which made these pupils well suited to their roles. Pupils are clear that their views are listened to. They explained that the school council is very important and that their views do make a difference.

The school has a strong British ethos and culture. Pupils learn about the citizenship of their host country and also have a very good understanding of life in modern Britain. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme and curriculum systematically emphasise British values wherever possible, and pupils become very strong ambassadors for British values. There are many opportunities for them to engage with the democratic process when voting for elected roles within the school or for the charities they wish to support. The school provides independent careers advice and guidance. Pupils say that they will miss the school when they leave but they know that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education and have the confidence and skills to cope with the new opportunities it will bring.

3. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS' WELFARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY

The provision for safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety is outstanding. A rigorous culture of safeguarding and attention to the welfare of pupils is in evidence throughout the school. This ensures that pupils are very well cared for and that they feel safe and fully protected. Policies are well written and are very effectively implemented to ensure that child protection procedures are thorough and consistent. The school's deputy headteacher is the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), with the head teacher as deputy DSL. Both they and the proprietor have been appropriately trained to the higher level of safeguarding and child protection. The DSL has a very good knowledge of child protection procedures and how to implement them. The school maintains careful records of child protection issues and these are retained separately from routine pupil records. A Kenya-based network of professionals with skills relevant to child protection, including medical and social services, and legal expertise provides very good advice and support for the school within the local context. The school has clear procedures to follow in the event of a child protection issue arising. All staff are aware of the importance of safeguarding, are familiar with the latest child protection documents and are aware of what to look for in identifying child abuse. Staff, including non-teaching staff, receive timely training in safeguarding as part of their induction and continuing professional development. Staff are very aware of the importance of e-safety, and pupils are given regular training to ensure they

are aware of how to stay safe online. Teachers know that extremist views and radicalisation have no place in education and would be in stark contrast to the ethos and spirit of the school.

Health and safety requirements are met in full. There are thorough risk assessment policies and procedures for pupil activities on site and during visits out of school. The school places a strong emphasis on the security of the school site with carefully controlled access. An effective anti-bullying policy is in place. Pupils are confident that if any bullying did occur it would be dealt with quickly and effectively. Fire risk assessments, fire safety equipment checks and fire drills are regularly carried out and documented appropriately. The school has good first aid provision with a full-time qualified nurse and trained staff, including in paediatric first aid, on site. A suitable medical room is available in the event of a pupil being unwell or injured. Procedures in the event of injury are clearly set out. Pupils are strongly encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle through awareness of nutrition, a balanced school meal menu and high levels of participation in sport.

Staff supervision of pupils is very good and reflects well-organised staff deployment arrangements and a high staff/pupil ratio. The school has a positive approach to behaviour management, with rewards for good behaviour and appropriately graded sanctions, duly recorded, in the event of a pupil misbehaving. Attendance and admissions registers are kept carefully and meet requirements. The school has an accessibility plan which allows for adjustments to be made to provision for disabled pupils. The school recruits staff almost exclusively from Kenya and the UK and is meticulous in making all the necessary checks before confirmation of appointment. For those coming from the UK the school makes prohibition from teaching checks as well as requiring the International Child Protection Certificate (UK). Appropriate checks have been carried out on the proprietor.

4. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Leadership, management and governance are outstanding. The headteacher has an ambitious vision for the school which has at its heart the desire to provide the very best education, care and support for every pupil. The exceptionally good quality of all aspects of the school's work shows that her vision is realised. The headteacher promotes the sense of community which is felt by all pupils and staff and which is a very strong feature of the school. Pupils talk very positively about the changes that have occurred under her leadership and staff, at all levels, value the support and development they receive.

The headteacher has appointed a highly effective group of senior leaders, many of whom have progressed their careers from within the school. The senior team share the vision for the school and bring a great deal of expertise to their roles, with a clear focus on teaching, learning and pupils' achievement. The senior team support and develop the capabilities of teachers and other staff very effectively within a culture of continuous improvement. There are weekly training sessions during which the best British educational practice is shared with all staff, resulting in consistent approaches to teaching and learning which help to develop very effective teaching. The headteacher and senior staff have

an accurate view of the quality of teaching, including that of teachers new to the school, and there are good examples of the school's development programme resulting in significant and rapid improvements in individual performance. Staff value the opportunities for career progression within the school. The senior team have ensured that teachers and other staff enjoy their work, feel valued, and are skilled and confident practitioners who are willing to implement new ways of working.

Staff newly arrived from the UK are very well supported both personally and professionally and this helps them to settle into their new role and focus on their teaching. Staff receive very effective induction and mentoring and their performance is regularly reviewed. School self-evaluation is rigorous. Strengths and areas for development are identified and acted upon. The school's policies are regularly reviewed and take account of all UK statutory guidance. The leadership of key stages and subjects is effective and has a very positive impact on the work of teachers, as for example in mathematics where teachers talked of the excellent support they receive from the head of department. Safeguarding is an integral part of the school and school leaders have created a culture of vigilance where pupils' welfare is actively promoted. The school is very well resourced, the building is attractive and it provides a safe and welcoming learning environment for pupils.

Partnership with parents

The partnership with parents is very effective. The responses to parental questionnaires completed before the inspection were positive, indicating a high degree of satisfaction with the education and care the pupils receive. Parents are kept well informed about school policies and activities. The school has a well organised website which provides a full range of up-to-date information about the school. There are weekly newsletters and parents receive updates about school events. There is regular communication from the headteacher and good opportunities to talk with staff at the end of the school day. There are detailed pupil reports and consultations with teachers helping to ensure parents are informed about their child's progress. The complaints policy is made available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on the website. There was one formal complaint in the last year which was dealt with in accordance with the school's policy.

Governance

Governance is outstanding. The proprietor is the chair of governors and he has drawn together an advisory board which offers expert advice and guidance on all aspects of the school's work. The chair of governors has an exceptionally good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas requiring further development. He has appointed a highly skilled senior leadership team and he ensures that they receive effective advice and support and access to professional development, including that available in the UK. The chair of governors is a regular visitor to the school and the staff and pupils are used to welcoming him to their classrooms. He has an ambitious vision for the school and for the education it provides, and at the heart of all school improvement activities is his belief that all pupils should feel valued, secure, happy and safe. It is this that drives all the actions taken by the leadership team and it is this that makes the school so effective. The chair ensures that the school's budget

allows for regular upgrading of the facilities and resources, this includes recent improvements to the hall and the investment in both the resources and infrastructure for ICT.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS' PROVISION

The provision made in the Nursery and the Reception Classes for children under five is outstanding. Children make consistently excellent progress in all aspects of their development. Staff are particularly effective in promoting the language development of all children including those with EAL or those who need additional support. The safeguarding requirements of the EYFS are met and staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The Nursery and Reception teachers and support staff work together very effectively so that there is clear progression from one year to the next. They have a very good understanding of the EYFS curriculum. Teaching, planning and the use of assessment are very effective so that the activities provided for children are very well matched to their needs and help them to make excellent progress in all aspects of their development.

The leadership and management of the EYFS are outstanding. The EYFS leader has a very clear vision for the EYFS. She has established an open plan setting within which children can develop independent skills within a safe environment. She provides staff with very effective training, development and guidance this results in an exceptionally high level of teaching, support and care. She reviews key documents, ensuring that the staff can check children's progress and development and that they are able to provide additional support where necessary. The supervision of staff is well managed and rigorous.

The personal development, behaviour and welfare of children are major strengths of the EYFS. The children feel safe and secure because the staff ensure that they always have someone to help them. Classes and groups are small and all children receive a great deal of care and attention. There are appropriate and effective safeguarding arrangements. Staff model excellent behaviour through the courteous way they interact with children and with their peers. The children behave well, often with levels of maturity and independence which are beyond their years. The children are caring towards others and there is no bullying or discrimination. Equality and diversity are promoted successfully. Relationships with parents are very positive. The provision made for two year-olds is very good with well-maintained toilets and nappy changing areas and appropriate activities and rest periods where needed.

Children make very good progress. They develop very high levels of concentration and they focus on their work for long periods of time. The staff provide a very good range of activities, such as 'finger gym' in order to ensure that all children have a very secure mastery of the basic skills. Their progress is regularly checked by staff and support is provided for any child who requires it. There is a well-structured phonics teaching programme so children in the Reception Class have a good understanding of letters and sounds. Children in the Reception classes are interested in learning and their speaking and listening

skills are very well developed so they will happily ask questions and discuss the answers they are given. They are ready to learn and acquire mathematical and writing skills at an early stage. During the inspection children in the Reception classes were applying phonic skills in the independent writing of words or simple sentences. By the end of the year all children can form letters accurately and write at least one sentence without support and many can do a great deal more than this. Children in the EYFS are very well prepared for the next stage in their education.

SCHOOL DETAILS

| | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Name of school: | The Banda School | | |
| School association (if applicable): | IAPS | | |
| Status of BSO application: | First Application | | |
| Local ages of compulsory schooling | From: 6 | To: 13 | |
| Age range of pupils: | From: 2 | To: 13 | |
| Number on roll (full-time pupils aged over 5): (part-time pupils aged over 5): | Boys: 163 Boys: N/A | Girls: 173 Girls: N/A | Total: 336 Total: N/A |
| Pupils aged under 5 (full-time): Pupils aged under 5 (part-time): | Boys: 26 Boys: 13 | Girls: 25 Girls: 9 | Total: 51 Total: 22 |
| Number of pupils (if any) registered locally as needing educational or medical support: | Boys: N/A | Girls: N/A | Total: N/A |
| Address of school: | Postal: PO Box 24722, Nairobi 00502, Kenya. Physical: The Banda School, Magadi Road, Langata, Nairobi, Kenya. | | |
| Telephone number: | + 254 20 8891260 | | |
| Email address: | office@bandaschool.com | | |
| Website address: | www.bandaschool.com | | |
| How many sites does the school occupy? If more than one, please include address/telephone details for all sites in the boxes above. | One | | |
| Name of Head Teacher: | Mrs Alison Francombe | | |
| Name of Proprietor: | Mr David Hutchison | | |
| Name of Chair of Governors/Trustees (if any): | Mr David Hutchison | | |
| Date and type of last BSO inspection (if any): | First application for BSO; Previous IAPS review 2011 | | |

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