



## **SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE**

### **BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS (BSO) INSPECTION REPORT FOR KENTON COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL, NAIROBI**

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

<b>The quality of education</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' personal development</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership, management and governance</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>

#### **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: 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

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

Kenton College Preparatory School in Nairobi meets the standards required of British schools overseas (BSO) except those precluded by Kenyan law. It provides a good quality of education. The school has an outstanding curriculum which is broad and balanced and has been skilfully adapted to meet Kenyan requirements and make best use of the local environment. Pupils' learning and achievement are good. When they join the school in Year 2 the pupils' attainment is generally below average when compared to schools in the UK. They make good progress as they move through the school, but their progress is not yet outstanding overall because pupils' writing is sometimes limited and there are weaknesses in some pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables and in handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar, which teachers' marking does not always correct. Excellent progress is made in Year 8 where teachers prepare pupils very well for the Common Academic Scholarship and Entrance examinations, enabling them to gain places at senior schools of their choice in Kenya and the UK. In 2017 42% of the Year 8 cohort gained a scholarship. Teachers work hard. Much of the teaching is good and some is outstanding. There is also a clearly identifiable element of teaching that requires improvement and is characterised by slower pace and lower expectations with some undue repetition of work. Pupils with additional learning needs receive effective support. All pupils participate and many excel in a wide range of well-organised and well-resourced sports activities, some achieving a high level of success in nationwide tournaments organised by the Independent Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS).

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They behave very well. They are confident and socially aware, and have excellent attitudes to learning. The school makes excellent provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's great strengths in sport, the arts and languages together with its rich and varied extra-curricular programme help pupils to become well-rounded and personable young people. The effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding and takes account of the local context. Pupils are very well cared for, feel safe in school and understand how to stay safe online. Procedures for recruiting and vetting staff are very well organised and recorded. Health and safety policies and procedures meet requirements and pupils are well supervised.

Leadership, management and governance are good. The school has a distinctive character and the headmistress exemplifies good British school leadership. The school's self-evaluation was not as accurate as might have been expected because it did not take full account of the data on pupils' progress. The school's grounds and buildings are of fine quality and are well-maintained, reflecting careful management and good leadership. Parents say they feel their children do well at the school and have confidence in its leadership. Governors give excellent support, are very aware of the importance of safeguarding and have plans for the future development of the school.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

To secure further improvement, the proprietor should:

- rectify the weaknesses that are found in some pupils' handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar, and knowledge of multiplication tables;
- improve teaching so that it is all of a consistently high quality and focuses on new learning rather than repeated work;
- ensure that teachers' marking is accurate and rigorous; and
- refine the school's self-evaluation and increase its accuracy through closer analysis of data on pupils' progress.

## **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, held meetings with governors, staff and pupils, examined relevant documentation and records and scrutinised pupils' work. Questionnaires provided by the school and completed anonymously by parents and pupils were scrutinised.

The inspectors were:

Reporting Inspector:	Peter Jones
Team inspectors:	Christine Graham

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL:**

Kenton College is a co-educational day preparatory school for boys and girls aged from 6 to 13 years. The school was founded in 1924 as a boys' boarding school in the Rift Valley of Kenya and moved to its present site in central Nairobi in 1935. Girls were first admitted in 1992, and boarding ended in 1998. The School stands in attractive grounds covering 35 acres in the mainly residential suburb of Kileleshwa. The school is an educational trust with a board of six governors. The pupils and their families live in Nairobi or its suburbs and surrounding rural areas. The school roll reflects the multi-cultural nature of Nairobi, with a range of more than thirty nationalities, including Kenyan, and a balance maintained in numbers between pupils of different ethnic origins. There are 353 pupils on roll, with 172 boys and 181 girls. Twenty-one pupils have received an assessment by an independent educational psychologist and 117 pupils who are designated as able, gifted and talented (AGT) receive specialist support. The school has a Christian ethos, although pupils from families of other faiths or none, are made equally welcome. The school is over-subscribed and admission is based on an entry assessment where priority is given to siblings and children of Old Kentonians. A range of pupils with differing abilities is selected.

The school aims: 'to provide a purposeful and happy environment, with opportunities for children of all races to discover and exploit talents and strengths, and so develop academically, culturally, physically, socially and spiritually. The intention is to have a caring and supportive character of the school to enable children to flourish in a community where values of honesty, self-reliance, co-operation, respect for and consideration of others are nurtured. The school also aims to provide a well-balanced curriculum to ensure that every child leaving Kenton College will gain access to a secondary school of their choice, in Kenya or overseas, and move on in the world as a competent, self-assured individual.'

## **SECTION C: THE INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

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

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

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

Pupils' learning and achievement are good. When they join the school in Year 2 pupils' achievement is generally below average when compared to pupils at the same stage in the UK, as evidenced in pupils' work and lessons. They make good progress in all subjects as they move through the school and this is reflected by results in standardised tests, although pupils are more skilled in applying spelling and punctuation rules to test questions than to independent writing. Good progress is seen in pupils' responses in lessons and in their learning skills but this is not always matched by the quality of work in their exercise books. Pupils are able to use descriptive language very well and understand how to structure a piece of writing. Their writing, both narrative and non-narrative, generally engages the reader but is sometimes limited in both quantity and quality. Handwriting is not always of good enough quality and there are some weaknesses in spelling, punctuation and grammar, and in some pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables. The results from Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT) indicate that some pupils have the potential to achieve even better than they currently do. Pupils' progress accelerates in Year 8 as teaching and learning focus on preparation for the Common Academic Scholarship and Entrance examinations. Here pupils make excellent progress which enables them to gain places at senior schools of their choice in Kenya and the UK. In 2017 42% of the Year 8 cohort gained a scholarship.

Pupils learn well. They are enthusiastic and participate willingly in discussions. Their speaking and listening skills are excellent. They enjoy reading and read with understanding, which helps them to make good progress in all subjects. They work hard in class and also engage wholeheartedly in the many opportunities the school gives them to excel in sport, drama, languages and the arts, which help them to become well-rounded young people.

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

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Much of the teaching is good and some of it is outstanding, although there is a clearly identifiable element of teaching that requires improvement. Behaviour in lessons is excellent and when work is challenging, pupils persevere and are resilient. Relationships in lessons are outstanding and teachers have secure subject knowledge. They explain things well and use information technology including tablet computers to very good effect. Additional support in lessons from teaching assistants is very effective. Homework provides good opportunities to consolidate learning. Teaching and learning resources are in good supply and are used well. Very skilled teaching in the best lessons enables pupils' progress to be sustained and rapid. In these lessons teaching shows strong and confident subject expertise, brisk pace and a clear focus on what pupils will learn, how they will learn it and what progress they should make. For example, in an outstanding Year 8 English lesson, during a class discussion of a Philip Pullman novel, outstanding teaching

helped pupils refine their use of language and persevere in answering challenging questions and formulating ideas.

Where teaching is less effective, the pace of lessons is slower and pupils do not learn as quickly. Teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve in written work are sometimes too low and they do not identify or correct weaknesses in basic skills so that errors in spelling, grammar and higher level punctuation become reinforced. A work scrutiny of pupils' exercise books showed that there is too much repetition of work from previous years. For example in mathematics, pupils sometimes work on undemanding addition and subtraction calculation tasks and complete work which is not sufficiently different from the work given them in previous years. Pupils are not always moved on to new topics or problem solving tasks quickly enough. Verbal feedback in lessons is effective. There is a suitable marking policy, although some marking does not always show pupils clearly enough how to improve.

### **The quality of the curriculum**

The curriculum is of outstanding quality, with an appropriate spread of subjects well designed to meet pupils' needs. The school promotes British democratic values effectively through its thoroughly British curriculum. This includes very clear references to the full range of British culture, history and religion. The curriculum is based on the English national curriculum with some added features to meet Kenyan educational requirements. Schemes of work are well planned and show good subject expertise. The curriculum's range and balance are suitably adjusted as pupils move through from the Junior School to the Senior School. The curriculum takes account of the skills and knowledge needed for the UK Common Academic Scholarship and Entrance Examinations, contributing significantly to pupils' success.

Very many pupils participate in the extremely wide range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities available at the school. The school day begins early and extends through to late afternoon, giving time for all pupils to undertake a very varied programme of afternoon activities which develop their interests, promote personal development, and enhance the school's provision for able, gifted and talented pupils. For example in an afternoon session based on a junior United Nations, pupils had excellent opportunities to polish their debating skills, listen to the views of others and consider the importance of democratic processes. In orchestra rehearsals pupils were able to work together in positive, well planned sessions which added to their confidence as musicians.

A wide range of well-organised and well-resourced afternoon sports activities, for example in athletics, cricket and tennis, enables pupils to participate and perform to an exceptional standard, with high levels of success in nationwide IAPS sports tournaments. The impact of the high quality curriculum is seen in the outstanding personal development of the pupils. Suitable guidance about school destinations, including schools in the UK is provided for Year 8 pupils.

Teaching identifies successfully those pupils who need additional support and the learning support department is very effective, with pupils well supported and making progress from their individual starting points. Pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) are also well supported in lessons. Challenge for pupils identified as able, gifted and talented is provided through the school's afternoon programme and subject-specific scholarship classes as well as being indicated in lesson plans.

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

The quality of pupils' personal development is outstanding.

Pupils in all age groups are very proud of their school and their achievements, and are fine ambassadors for Kenton College. They are confident and self-assured young people who value their education and have excellent attitudes to learning. Their attendance at school is excellent and they arrive promptly at lessons and other activities. Pupils relate very well to each other, and to their teachers and other adults who support them in school. They develop over their time at Kenton a good knowledge of the beliefs, cultures, views and lifestyles of other people. They are socially aware and are welcoming to visitors. The pupils live up to the school's clear and consistent ethos of respect and politeness and they strive to ensure that their behaviour is of a very high standard.

The school celebrates typically British events such as the British Legion Poppy Appeal, Bonfire Night and it holds a Christmas carol service. The institutions of state in Kenya, many of which reflect their British origins, are covered by the Kenyan history and citizenship programme which all pupils undertake. Assemblies refer to British institutions including parliament, and strongly promote tolerance, respect for others and an understanding of difference. Pupils know right from wrong, and the very well defined school ethos ensures that they are expected to accept responsibility for their own actions. They readily take on roles and responsibilities in the school including head boy and girl, prefects, house captains and sports team captains. Form representatives are elected by pupils and attend regular school forum meetings where ideas for improvements are communicated to school leaders. A pupil voice questionnaire gives the opportunity to express views and opinions and responses are acted upon by the school.

The school has a Christian ethos, and strongly encourages tolerance and respect for other faiths and cultures. Prayers at the communal lunch sittings are often delivered by pupils in their native language. A wide-ranging religious studies curriculum includes reference to Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism as well as Christianity, with visits to local places of worship such as Hindu temples and synagogues. Pupils are able to learn about traditional Kenyan music and Indian dance. The wide range of nationalities and cultures represented in the school, and the schools' management of this diversity, is key to pupils' outstanding personal development. It strongly encourages pupils to be tolerant and aware of each other's common values and aspirations.

Pupils have excellent opportunities to support the local community, for example when they work with local schools, raise funds for a hospice and support Kenyan

wildlife conservation work, including a project to save the endangered Northern white rhino. Awareness of the local environment and culture are consistently promoted through visits in Kenya to key locations including traditional villages, mountains, national parks, archaeological sites and museums. Overseas visits, including sports team trips, broaden pupils' awareness of world cultures.

The school is very clear in its non-partisan approach to political topics as they arise in the curriculum. Teachers are aware of the Prevent duty and are alert to the dangers of radicalisation. A carefully planned wellbeing programme provides good personal, social and health education, and effectively promotes moral perspectives and British and democratic values. Age-appropriate coverage is made of human reproduction and personal relationships. Under Kenyan law the school is precluded from meeting the BSO standards requiring particular regard to be paid to certain protected characteristics. There is a well-established programme of broadening activities for Year 8 after they have taken Common Entrance examinations. This includes the production of a play, a First Aid course and visits out of school to farms and animal conservation projects. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, whether in schools in Kenya or the UK.

Kenton College offers exceptional opportunities for all pupils to participate and excel in sport. There is provision for a wide range of sports on site including athletics, cross-country, cricket, hockey, netball, rounders, rugby, swimming and tennis. The extensive grounds, sports pitches and PE facilities encourage pupils to enjoy physical activity and this strongly promotes a healthy lifestyle. School lunch, taken by all pupils, is a communal meal taken in the dining hall, with an emphasis on good table manners. A strong incentive for good behaviour is a special lunch table set aside for pupils who receive the weekly 'marvellous manners' award. Pupils say they enjoy the food, which is of good quality.

There are many excellent opportunities for cultural development through music, drama and art. A very well organised Year 6 music concert involved a large number of pupils in instrumental and choral performance, and had the added benefit of allowing parents and other members of the school community to celebrate pupils' musical achievements. Whole school drama and musical productions give pupils experience of performing in front of an audience and help to develop their confidence. An extensive display of art work in the school hall by the full age range of pupils, framed and for sale in aid of a local charity, as well as work on display around the school and large scale outdoor sculptures are testimony to pupils' good experience in the visual arts.

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

The quality of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety is outstanding.

Safeguarding is very well planned to promote the welfare of pupils, and has outstanding features which carefully take into account the local context. The school has a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and a deputy, both of whom are senior members of staff and have been trained, along with the headmistress and safeguarding governor, to the higher level required. All staff, including local



domestic and maintenance staff, receive timely up to date training in safeguarding. The DSL has an excellent knowledge of child protection procedures, records any related issues and ensures that staff know about signs of child abuse and are trained in e-safety. In the absence of a UK-style local authority child protection support agency, the school is a member of a Kenya wide network known as the Child Protection Advocacy Network & Multi-Disciplinary Team (CPAN/MDT) which is a valuable source of medical & legal support and guidance for independent schools in the country.

Pupils say they feel safe and secure in the school, and responses to a parent questionnaire corroborate this. Pupils are positive and resilient in their attitudes to school, but say that they would talk to a teacher if they were troubled or concerned. Security at the school is tight and carefully monitored, and the premises and accommodation are maintained to a very high standard. The school provides effective e-safety training, and pupils understand how to stay safe online. There are well-implemented policies and procedures to promote good behaviour and a well-established system of rewards and sanctions. These are highly effective. Pupils say that bullying is rare, but that if it does occur the school deals with it quickly. The school has a written health and safety policy which meets the standards and is effectively implemented to ensure the health and safety of pupils and comply with the relevant local health and safety laws. There is a suitable fire safety policy. Clear fire safety arrangements are in place and regular fire drills are carried out and recorded. The school makes outstanding provision for the physical and mental health of pupils with a qualified paediatric-trained doctor and a trained school counsellor on site, a well-equipped medical room and trained first aiders. The school has an effective system of recording attendance and checking quickly any unexplained absence. A detailed admissions register is kept. Risk assessments for school visits are thorough and take good account of potential hazards and contingency plans. Supervision of pupils is very good. Two minor instances of potential hazards for pupils were seen during the inspection. The school took immediate steps to rectify the matters in question.

The school carries out the required checks on suitability and vetting before staff are appointed to the school, and keeps meticulous records of all the necessary documentation. Interview panels for staff appointments include a member with safeguarding and safe recruitment training. A single central register of appointments allows the school to hold a comprehensive overview of appointment details.

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

Leadership, management and governance are good.

The school presents itself accurately as a distinctive, well organised and orderly educational community with a successful mix of British, Kenyan and international pupils. The headmistress communicates clearly the values and ethos of the school to pupils, staff, parents and the local community, and exemplifies good British school leadership. Parents and pupils have confidence in the school,

reflecting years of consistent success in providing a high standard of education and helping pupils to move on to senior schools of their choice, including a significant number with scholarship awards. Strong leadership from the headmistress, with the support of her senior team, enables the school to meet its vision to provide a purposeful and happy environment, and facilitates the outstanding personal development of pupils described in this report. The expectations of school leaders for excellent behaviour, tolerance and equality throughout the school community are fully realised. Positive relationships between school leaders, staff and pupils contribute significantly to the success of the school and to pupils' progress. School leaders have put in place an outstanding safeguarding culture which ensures that pupils feel safe and know how to stay safe. The development of policies and procedures for ensuring welfare, health and safety has been very well managed by senior leaders.

The school has extensive and well maintained grounds with ample outdoor sports facilities. The grounds also have the advantage of providing a learning resource in themselves, given the range of trees and the natural environment on the site. The school buildings are well maintained with good quality additional classrooms built recently.

The school's senior leadership team has worked very hard to promote improvements in teaching, learning and progress, including the provision of professional development for teachers. Leaders have used their knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses to drive forward school improvement, and they know that there is scope for this work to have still greater impact. The school has put in place procedures to assess and track pupils' progress although there is scope to carry out more accurate critical analysis of this data. The school's self-evaluation, prepared in advance of the inspection, was at times rather ambitious in its claims with the quality of teaching being judged by the school to be outstanding. Joint lesson observations carried out by inspectors and senior members of staff showed that at the time of the inspection the school was able to accurately identify that alongside some outstanding and good teaching, there is an element of weaker teaching which requires improvement. The scope for improvement in teaching and in some aspects of pupils' work demonstrates why senior and middle leadership and management are not yet outstanding.

### **Partnership with parents**

Regular surveys conducted by the school show high levels of parental satisfaction. This was confirmed by interviews held with parents during the inspection. The school provides all the necessary information for parents through its website and regular newsletters. Parents' consultation evenings and reports inform parents about their children's progress. The school has a complaints policy which meets the BSO standards. No formal complaints were received last year.

### **Governance**

Governance is good. It is secure and well-managed, with governors showing good awareness of their responsibilities and holding school leaders to account for

the quality of provision. Governors take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. There is a designated safeguarding governor, and the governors are trained and very well informed in relation to safeguarding. This ensures they are in a strong position to advise on safeguarding in the local context, including the CPAN/MDT networks. Governors know the school very well, and provide excellent support to help it work effectively with local and national authorities. They support the school fully in its ambition to become a BSO school, and have an ambitious strategic development plan for future expansion.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Kenton College Preparatory School		
School association (if applicable):	Independent Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS) UK		
Status of BSO application:	First Application		
Local ages of compulsory schooling	From: 5 yrs.	To: 18 yrs.	
Age range of pupils:	From: 6 yrs.	To: 13 yrs.	
Number on roll (full-time pupils aged over 5):	Boys:172	Girls: 181	Total: 353
(part-time pupils aged over 5):	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Pupils aged under 5 (full-time):	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Pupils aged under 5 (part-time):	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
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:	Gichugu Road. P.O. Box 25406 Kileleshwa, Lavington – 00603, Nairobi		
Telephone number:	254 774 434703		
Email address:	admin@kenton.ac.ke		
Website address:	www.kentonschoolnairobi.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 Headteacher:	Mrs. Maureen Cussans		
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mr. Christopher Banks		
Date and type of last BSO inspection (if any):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IAPS Review October 2011</li> <li>• No previous BSO inspection</li> </ul>		

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