



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS

**INSPECTION REPORT ON
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OLOMOUC**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

International School Olomouc

Full Name of School	International School Olomouc		
Address	Rooseveltova 101 Olomouc 779 00 CZECH REPUBLIC		
Telephone Number	+420585754880		
Email Address	info@ischool.cz		
Head	Mr Petr Pospisil		
Chair of Board of Directors	Mr Petr Pospisil		
Age Range	2 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	64		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (31 boys; 33 girls)		
Numbers by Age	2-3:	4	5-11: 37
	3-5:	22	11-16: 1
Inspection dates	04 Nov 2013 to 07 Nov 2013		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI Schedule* for the inspection of British schools overseas. The inspection consists of two parts: a preliminary two-day visit followed by a four-day (team) inspection.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools in England and overseas. As such, ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the relevant Standards for British Schools Overseas and the *ISI Framework* requirements. ISI is also the agency responsible for the inspection of schools in membership of the Associations of the Independent Schools Council (ISC). Accordingly, ISI inspections of British schools overseas are required to:

- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education and of the care for their welfare;
- provide objective and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and build on their strengths and to identify and remedy any weaknesses;
- inform parents and the wider public of the quality of British schools overseas by placing reports in the public domain;
- report to the DfE the extent to which schools comply with the published Standards for British Schools Overseas;
- where applicable, assure ISC Associations that their member schools maintain the quality of provision expected.

ISI inspection is for the benefit of the pupils in the schools and through public reporting makes the information available to parents, governments and the wider community.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. The major difference is that schools in England must comply with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, which do not apply with legal validity to schools outside the United Kingdom. However, the inspection of overseas schools takes account where possible of compliance with any local requirements and it judges the extent to which the schools comply with the British Government's Standards for British Schools Overseas. The range of these Standards is 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 for parents, carers and others.
7. The school's procedures for handling complaints.
8. The quality of provision for boarding.
9. Leadership and management of the school.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features

- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law.

The report will be placed on the ISI website within two weeks of its issue to the school and will also be published on the Department for Education website. The report will remain on the web sites for 3 years, at which point it will be removed.

CONTENTS

Page

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

(a) Main findings

(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with Standards requirements

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills

(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)

(c) The contribution of teaching

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

(a) The quality of governance

(b) The quality of leadership and management

(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The school was originally founded as an international school in 2001. Since 2007 it has offered a British education to Czech national pupils as well as expatriate pupils. The school consists of the Preschool, for children aged from two to five, and the Primary School, for pupils aged from six to eleven or thirteen. The Preschool moved into new purpose-built accommodation on the school's site in 2012.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide a good quality, all-round education in English, while also developing pupils' mother tongue. It seeks to provide a family environment where pupils feel safe, flourish as individuals, find joy in learning and become global citizens.
- 1.3 The school is situated on the edge of the historic city centre of Olomouc. The site, which is shared with local Czech schools, includes a grass and wooded area for play and outdoor learning. The school is managed as a limited liability company with four shareholders who serve as directors. The main shareholders are the two executive directors who lead the Preschool and Primary School respectively.
- 1.4 The school currently has 64 pupils. A large majority are Czech nationals, and others come from a range of countries. Pupils follow an English curriculum and Czech nationals also follow a Czech programme in accordance with local requirements. Almost all pupils are learning English as an additional language, and additional support is provided as required. A small number of pupils have been identified by the local education psychology agency as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- 1.5 The Primary School is organised in small classes, usually spanning two year groups, and classes are often regrouped for more individualised teaching. The school provides for continuation into the secondary years where this is required.
- 1.6 The ability profile of the school is slightly above the UK national average overall, with a wide spread of abilities represented. Admission is based on consideration of whether the school's provision is suitable for pupils.
- 1.7 English National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is successful in its aim of giving pupils a good, all-round education in English. Children make a good start in the Preschool, quickly gaining fluency in using English. Foundations are laid well in reading and writing so that pupils confidently access the whole curriculum in English as they move through the school. Pupils achieve good standards in English and mathematics. They gain broad knowledge and skills through cross-curricular themes that encourage independent thinking and practical investigation. Pupils make good progress in relation to their ability. They take pleasure in learning because of interesting approaches that encourage active participation. Teaching is good overall, though the quality varies. Clear curricular frameworks are followed, but daily lesson planning does not always consider adaptations for different ages and abilities, or the pace of learning to be expected. Teachers lack opportunity for shared lesson observations and reviews of pupils' work. A few pupils have been identified as having SEND, but learning support is not provided consistently for all those who encounter difficulties in their learning.
- 2.2 The school provides a family environment where individuals are valued and helped to flourish. Children in the Preschool are sociable and co-operative. In the Primary School, the 'buddy' system encourages older pupils to care for younger ones and they do so responsibly. Pupils make effort to adhere to class rules, motivated by the rewards they receive for good work and behaviour. They develop awareness of the wider world and of their responsibilities as global citizens. The school makes good arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety.
- 2.3 The school is well led and managed by the heads of the Preschool and the Primary School, and governed effectively by the board of directors. Leadership provides vision and a strong sense of direction in planning the school's development. Technology is used to excellent effect for administration and communication, and to keep track of pupils' progress. The school works closely with parents and keeps them well informed about their children's learning. Parents and pupils are generally well satisfied with the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas

(The range of the Standards for British Schools Overseas is given in the Preface)

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Standards for British Schools Overseas.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Develop daily lesson planning to give more consideration to the needs of different ages and abilities, and the pace of learning.
 2. Extend good practice in teaching, through shared lesson observation and reviews of pupils' work, to maximise pupils' learning.
 3. Develop consistent provision of learning support for those pupils who require it.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills

- 3.1 Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils become fluent in English, in accordance with the school's aims. They achieve well across a broad curriculum, taught in English, and they also reach a good standard in their mother tongue. Many show the joy in learning which the school seeks to inspire.
- 3.2 Pupils are linguistically versatile, enjoying their mastery of more than one language and making rapid progress in English from their point of entry to the school. They listen well, and speak with increasing confidence, although they are not always skilled in taking conversational turns. Pupils are well grounded in basic skills of reading and writing, becoming competent in spelling, punctuation and handwriting, and increasingly accurate in grammatical expression. They achieve well in mathematics, thinking logically as they apply their learning in solving problems. They use their skills creatively and gain a breadth of knowledge in cross-curricular themes, although they lack consistent opportunity to build on their literacy skills in the process. Pupils use information and communication technology to good effect to support their learning, confidently researching and presenting their findings.
- 3.3 Pupils succeed beyond the classroom in a small range of extra-curricular activities, and in individual pursuits outside school. They are physically active and perform well in activities such as swimming and skiing, though there is little participation in team sports. Pupils have achieved some notable success in creating an award-winning video, and are becoming increasingly successful in competitions, for example in mathematics.
- 3.4 Children make a good start in Nursery and Reception and generally achieve the goals set by the early years curriculum for the end of the Preschool. Pupils' attainment in the Primary School cannot be measured against a fixed English national average, but on the evidence available it is judged to be good. They achieve well in standardised tests in English and mathematics for international pupils. They make good progress in relation to their ability, as shown in the school's detailed measures of progress, and in pupils' work. The destinations of leavers have included a local Czech middle school and a boarding school in the UK.
- 3.5 Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities sometimes make good progress. This is not consistently the case, because the school's provision for learning support is at an early stage of development and pupils' needs are not always clearly identified. Pupils who receive additional support because they join the school late with little English are well supported and make good progress, helping them to catch up.
- 3.6 Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and usually work hard. They ask questions and are keen to contribute their views. They assess for themselves how well they understand and readily seek help. Pupils enjoy practical and investigative work, organising themselves purposefully and co-operating in pairs and in groups. They work well independently.

3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)

- 3.7 The quality of curricular provision makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement. The school successfully meets its aim of providing a good all-round education in English.
- 3.8 The curriculum is broad and balanced, and suitable for pupils of all ages, abilities and needs. It combines the discrete teaching of English, mathematics, physical education and a Czech programme with a cross-curricular thematic approach that covers an appropriate range of other subjects. These thematic units of work are well planned and set pupils' learning in context. They include a good range of work in art, science and technology. The curriculum includes little regular provision for music and singing, though some pupils learn a musical instrument in or out of school. Curriculum frameworks for English and mathematics are chosen carefully and kept under review to ensure that core skills are built on systematically throughout the school.
- 3.9 The curriculum in English takes good account of the needs of pupils who, in almost all cases, are learning English as an additional language. The Czech programme is integrated effectively within the curriculum. Good arrangements are made to support pupils' first languages, such as French, while other pupils are learning Czech. An appropriately challenging curriculum, including specialist subject teaching, is provided as needed for the secondary years.
- 3.10 The school supports pupils' personal, social and health education, and cross-curricular themes address issues such as growing up. It is now beginning to audit its provision in order to secure more systematic coverage and progression as pupils move through the year groups.
- 3.11 The school lacks specialist provision for learning support. It has identified this as an area for development, given the increasing range of abilities and individual needs represented. The school works with the local educational psychology agency, to which parents have recourse, and acts on its recommendations. Some individual education plans have been drawn up for pupils, but these do not consistently guide teaching and learning. The school does not make routine provision for pupils who are particularly able, gifted or talented, although it allows some who are highly able in mathematics to work with an older year group. It recognises the need to extend learning support and to provide more tailored and consistent provision for individual pupils, based on a shared understanding of their particular difficulties or capabilities.
- 3.12 The curriculum for Nursery and Reception children is extremely well developed. It stimulates interest in all areas of learning and supports children's all-round development. Children's confidence in understanding and using English, alongside Czech, is built effectively from the start, resulting in rapid progress.
- 3.13 Pupils of all ages have opportunities to take part in a small number of extra-curricular activities that includes art, aerobics, recorders, piano and multimedia interests. They make the most of time at school outside the school day. Pupils are supervised before school, from 7.30 am, and after-school care is available until 4.30 pm.
- 3.14 The many enrichment activities support the curriculum well and include visits, for example to castles and museums. Pupils have the opportunity to perform at Christmas in a local theatre. International days, book fairs and events such as the

recent Halloween workshop enliven the curriculum. Cross-curricular themes often start and end with special activities, such as a pirates' treasure hunt in the Preschool. Primary pupils participate in an annual residential ski or summer camp.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The quality of teaching is good overall. Although it is also sometimes excellent, the quality varies. Teaching effectively supports achievement of the school's aim that pupils should receive a good all-round education and find joy in learning. The quality of teaching underpins pupils' achievement, and secures good progress throughout the school.
- 3.16 Teachers have a good understanding of the school's curriculum framework and of how to build pupils' skills over time. They regularly check pupils' learning, in test and quizzes, as well as through standardised assessments. They collect detailed information about pupils' progress. This information is increasingly being shared by staff, pupils and parents in order to identify any gaps in learning to be addressed in lessons and homework.
- 3.17 The teaching in Nursery and Reception is well tuned to the needs of young children. Children in the Preschool are supported sensitively in expressing themselves in English as well as Czech. They quickly learn English daily life vocabulary in the Preschool. Activities are imaginatively organised and children become absorbed in practising their skills. Basic skills for reading are taught systematically and with a light touch, providing good foundations for later learning. Children take delight in role play, as well as in physical activity and exploration of the natural world in their daily sessions outdoors.
- 3.18 English and mathematics are taught thoroughly and effectively throughout the school. Pupils are taught from the early stages to build words from the sounds of letters and this supports their progress in reading and spelling. Handwriting is taught consistently so that pupils develop a fluent style for both English and Czech. Teaching pays careful attention to the development of spelling, the acquisition of vocabulary and pupils' understanding of word meanings. Teaching in mathematics ensures that pupils gain a clear understanding and actively apply their learning. Pupils' work is marked helpfully and they are encouraged to evaluate their own work.
- 3.19 Teaching secures appropriate coverage of the curriculum by each age group in the primary and secondary years. However, lesson plans do not always consider in detail adaptations for different ages or abilities, or the pace of learning to be expected. On occasions, particularly when two year groups are taught together, lesson planning does not fully anticipate where teaching will be needed and where pupils can work independently. Teaching is sometimes acute in adjusting the pitch of work in the light of pupils' responses, although this is not always the case. Classes are generally well managed so that pupils work with concentration and enjoyment. Good use is made of resources to support purposeful, practical learning.
- 3.20 The teaching of cross-curricular themes is often lively and interesting. Pupils' curiosity is engaged and they are supported in seeking out information and carrying out practical investigations for themselves. Pupils record their findings, drawing together their learning in posters and presentations, but are rarely required to apply their literacy skills in writing at length. Pupils are taught by class teachers and by subject teachers.
- 3.21 Teaching is thoughtful and committed to meeting the needs of pupils, but they have limited opportunity to observe others teaching, or to evaluate the work of pupils in

other classes. This restricts the sharing of good practice and the pursuit of further improvement in teaching by staff working together.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Their personal development clearly reflects the school's aim that they should flourish as individuals, and become global citizens. Pupils develop spiritual awareness through appreciation of the world around them. Work in the curriculum, for example about rites of passage, broadens their perspective. In the Primary School an assembly takes place once every six weeks, but pupils' sense of belonging to a whole-school community with shared values is not explicitly underpinned on a more regular basis.
- 4.2 Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. They co-operate and show respect for each other. They are, for the most part, friendly, confident and considerate, though not always self-aware in recognising the impact of their behaviour on others. Expectations are routinely reinforced and modelled in the Preschool through daily gatherings. Pupils recognise importance in looking after the environment.
- 4.3 Children in the Preschool thrive in a homely, secure environment, where independence is safely encouraged. The children are sociable and co-operative in choosing, sharing and tidying up. Primary pupils respond well to a range of incentives that include 'golden time'. They value the 'gemstone' rewards for work and behaviour which are exchanged and subsequently traded for special items such as art and craft materials. All classes in the Primary School follow a simple set of nine rules that guide pupils' behaviour. Every pupil signs up to a contract that rejects bullying. Pupils often show a strong sense of responsibility in caring for others, as seen in their help for pupils who join the school with little English. Older pupils are paired up with younger ones as 'buddies'. They act as good role models and help to solve any difficulties at playtime and lunchtime. A school council, with elected representatives from each primary class, takes account of pupils' views and has secured some changes, for example to signage and decoration in the primary building. Pupils have learned how to chair and conduct meetings, gather suggestions and provide feedback. They are aware of the school's place within the local community, welcoming the city's vice mayor to open the school's book fair. They learn about those less fortunate and the impact on people's lives of circumstances such as drought and famine. They show enthusiasm and initiative in carrying out fund raising to support an international charity providing education for children in need. Pupils make regular visits to sing at a home for the elderly at Christmas.
- 4.4 Pupils learn about religious festivals, local traditions and customs from other cultures. A number of nationalities are represented in the school community and international days have focused recently on France and Japan. The global dimension included in all cross-curricular themes and pupils' awareness of different language backgrounds encourage respect for those of different cultural traditions.

4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety

- 4.5 Arrangements to secure pupils' welfare, health and safety are good. The quality of pastoral care reflects the school's aim to provide a family environment where pupils feel safe. The school places a strong emphasis on putting the child first, building confidence and self-esteem, and ensuring safety, trust and security. Relationships are positive between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves. Pupils are well known by staff who respect their individuality, and pupils turn readily to adults for help. The 'buddy' system adds an additional means of support for younger children.
- 4.6 The school has a well-developed electronic system for monitoring behaviour and progress, and for flagging up any concerns. It has clear procedures for promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying, and deals constructively with any unacceptable behaviour. The small number of responses by pupils to the pre-inspection questionnaire showed a good level of satisfaction with the school, the progress being made and the help they receive from teachers. A very few pupils questioned whether they are treated equally. Inspection evidence did not find this to be a significant concern.
- 4.7 The school has recently developed clear policies and procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety that are now becoming embedded in its practice. Risk assessments for the site and for outside visits, and the logging of potential hazards identified and the action taken, are very thorough. Effective fire safety procedures have been worked out to accord with local regulations and new procedures have been recently tested by carrying out a fire drill for the whole school.
- 4.8 Safeguarding arrangements are thorough and all the required checks are carried out to ensure the suitability of staff. The staff are well trained in child protection and in first aid. Staff have a good understanding of individual medical needs and there are clear procedures for the administration of medicines. The school provides clear guidance on the supervision of pupils throughout the day.
- 4.9 Admission and attendance registers are kept appropriately. The school is well maintained. Nutritious meals are provided for all pupils by the city authorities. Snacks at breaks are healthy and include herbal tea, fruit and juice. Pupils are given ample opportunity for physical exercise, including making full use of the outdoor area and the adventure play equipment.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 Governance is good. The two heads, as the company's executive directors, exercise joint oversight of the school's development planning and of its policies and procedures. They are supported by the non-executive directors who are a source of advice and help in considering the school's strategic direction. In addition, they draw on the financial and legal expertise of local advisers. A health and safety consultant oversees maintenance of the premises and compliance with Czech legal requirements in areas including fire safety and risk management. The school works closely with local child protection authorities. The directors ensure that policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensuring the suitability of staff are implemented effectively and regularly reviewed.
- 5.2 The directors are effective in securing appropriate accommodation and resources, as seen in the high quality of the Preschool building. They are working to extend partnerships with other schools, including opportunities for visits, and to build professional links through association membership and academic study. At present, sources of advice and support for the directors in exercising academic oversight and monitoring educational standards are somewhat limited.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.3 Leadership and management are good. Leadership has developed an ethos that fully reflects the school's aims. The school effectively secures good quality, all-round education in a family environment. It is successful in ensuring that pupils learn English and develop an international outlook, while respecting their own language and culture.
- 5.4 The heads of the Primary school and the Preschool provide a strong sense of direction and are committed to the school's continuing growth and improvement. This ambition is evident in a comprehensive school development plan, shared with all staff, that includes termly priorities and action plans. The school sets itself challenging targets for pupils' progress, as measured through well-developed systems of assessment.
- 5.5 The two heads each have clearly defined, multiple areas of responsibility that ensure the smooth running of the school as a whole, and of each part. Electronic systems are used extremely well for communication and administration, as well as for monitoring pupils' academic progress. The school's leadership is effective in securing suitable accommodation and educational resources of good quality, and in recruiting, retaining and developing staff. Good arrangements are made to check the suitability of staff and to provide appropriate training for their roles in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The staff are carefully deployed, and specialist teaching is arranged as needed to accommodate pupils' first languages and for the secondary subjects. All staff are trained in teaching English as an additional language.
- 5.6 The wider sharing of leadership responsibilities is a recognised priority, to give shared impetus in developing the curriculum and pursuing improvements. The school's leadership monitors teaching as part of a developing process of performance management, and staff meetings provide some useful professional development. However, the staff are not widely involved in evaluating what works

well and areas for improvement in teaching and learning across the school, or in considering best practice within or beyond the school. The leadership of provision for pupils with SEND is underdeveloped.

5.(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians

- 5.7 The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is good. Questionnaires completed before the inspection show that parents are generally well satisfied with the school. Parents were particularly positive about pupils' progress in English and the standards of behaviour. A significant minority did not consider there to be a good range of extra-curricular activities, or encouragement for them to be involved in the school's life and work. The inspection found that, though the number of clubs is small, pupils are well satisfied with the range of activities offered, including the after-school club. There has, as yet, been little interest in forming a parents' association, but many parents give active help where it is needed, and their support and involvement in events are warmly welcomed.
- 5.8 Parents are well informed about their children's progress. Detailed information is available through an intranet for parents about the work covered in each lesson, and any areas where further reinforcement at home would be valuable. In addition, parents receive a termly report card that gives an outline summary of attainment, and are invited to two parent-teacher consultations each year. Staff are readily accessible to parents at the start and end of the day. Parents are encouraged to initiate an external assessment of needs if pupils have SEND. They are not routinely involved with the school in setting targets, planning action and reviewing subsequent progress for these pupils.
- 5.9 Parents receive useful information about school life through the website and informative handbooks. Induction meetings inform parents about the transition between classes and school phases. The staff also hold workshops to explain teaching approaches and coverage of the curriculum. School policies and key information about the school are available to parents of current and prospective pupils on the school's website. The school has an appropriate complaints procedure. Any concerns raised by parents are addressed by the school in an open and transparent manner and so are usually resolved informally.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and staff, and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the directors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Joy Richardson

Reporting Inspector

Mr David Rose

Head, ISA school, UK