

The British School of Costa Daurada

Carrer Mas de la Creu, 4, 43764 El Catllar, Tarragona

School's regional authorisation number: 43012745

Date of Inspection:

Friday 10th December 2021

Inspection Team:

Terry Binns (Lead Inspector)
Alan Taylor (Team Inspector)

Reason for the Inspection:

To authorise the educational provision for year 8 (12- 13 years) and 9 (13- 14 years).

Overall Recommendation:

The school is recommended for authorisation from year 8 to year 9 for a period of 2 years. The next inspection is due in December 2023. This must include a building inspection for the proposed new building before it is opened for use.

The school has an authorised capacity of 360 pupils

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N.B. A NABSS inspection does not infer membership of the Association. Authorised schools may apply for NABSS membership.

History and Context of the School:

The British School of Costa Daurada, formerly known as Jigsaw British School, was founded in May 2008 and moved to its current premises in January 2017. The school is located in Tarragona in the region of Catalonia in northern Spain. The school is privately owned.

There are currently 317 pupils on roll (with 20 students in the Year 7 cohort), the majority of whom are Spanish.

The school was last inspected in 2020 and authorised from Pre-Nursery to year 7. The purpose of this inspection was to authorise the planned educational provision for pupils in year 8 and 9, who are to be admitted over the next two academic years starting in 2022-2023.

Accommodation and Resources:

Overall the accommodation and resources are adequate for the current year 7, and adequate plans are in place for accommodation and resourcing through key stage three for when these pupils are admitted.

The school occupies a one-storey building on a large plot of land surrounded by forest.

All of the classrooms are bright and have a lot of natural light. They are sufficiently spacious for up to the current maximum of 20 students in each. They are suitably furnished with good provision of interactive displays. The building is clean and very well maintained. Displays are well focussed upon learning and model a good standard of student work.

An administrative area consists of six offices and there are three staff rooms which contain sufficient resources to support the teachers.

The canteen and toilet facilities are sufficient to accommodate the extended number of students.

The current Year 7 classroom is well laid out, including a traditional teaching area and a space with science benches within the same classroom. There is also access to the outside area and the classroom is well lit and with good ventilation. The room contains a large interactive television screen and projected whiteboard. There are a good number of quality textbooks that are well used.

The physical education (PE) facilities are adequate for the current year 7 and the provision will also be adequate for the new year 8 until the school completes its planned sports complex. Current resources are adequate for practical science, music and art and the school has detailed plans for developing both resources and accommodation as the key stage three cohort grows.

There is suitable outdoor and social space, but students would value more shade and social furniture for use at break and lunchtimes.

Health, Safety and Welfare:

The school provides a safe environment for staff and pupils. The premises are secure and access to the building is controlled and carefully monitored from reception.

Exit routes are clearly signposted. Smoke detectors and fire fighting equipment are in place. Fire drills are held regularly. However, evacuation time needs to be recorded as at the moment it is not.

A significant number of staff are first aid trained and first aid is administered in a designated medical room. The school has plans to train the adult who acts as the first point of contact.

The school has a thorough safeguarding and child protection policy and criminal record checks are carried out on all staff. A safeguarding team has been established. However, the safeguarding leads are not sufficiently well known by the students and not all leads have up to date training.

The school has suitable health and safety policies in place. The anti-bullying policy is effective. A recent cyber bullying incident was dealt with quickly by the school management team and reinforced by inviting the local police to outline the legalities and dangers of cyber bullying to the pupils.

Overall, the pupils behave well and are safe, and this adds to the positive environment of the school.

The Curriculum:

The curriculum is generally broad and balanced and meets the needs of the students. It fulfils the requirements of the English National Curriculum (NC) and of the local Catalan authorities.

The principal language of instruction is English and teachers work hard to maintain English in class. Where there are mistakes in English, the teachers generally correct students' errors

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is well delivered and supports British values. For example in one computing lesson, British values and stereotypes were explored as students created a document of their most admired person and linked their characteristics to their nationality.

The school provides enrichment opportunities such as Halloween and Christmas events. Also recently a trip to a local castle was used in an observed history lesson to reinforce the students' understanding of castle construction.

Staffing:

Staff are generally well qualified, experienced and effectively deployed the staff to student ratio is good. Staff retention and morale are also good. Staff feel listened to and the management team have the support of teachers and respond to points raised in consultation.

Teachers undertake training aimed at improving their teaching. This has included specific national curriculum training to support the delivery of the mathematics curriculum. However, at the moment there is no formal system in place for appraisal. As a result, practice is sometimes inconsistent, for example, in marking.

Teaching and Learning:

The quality of teaching and learning is usually good.

In good lessons the work was well planned to support individuals; students worked in groups in order to explore ideas and insightful questioning challenges students' understanding. Support staff are used effectively to ensure good learning and a good range of tasks and activities enthuse students.

The support staff are well deployed and support the students so that they are able to succeed. For example, in one lesson the support member of staff carried a laptop around while the student was on a video call, so that they were able to take part in the starter activity. Therefore the student was able to ask and answer questions of the other students and take part fully in the lesson. This meant that they were not left behind in terms of learning, even though they were self-isolating at home.

In another lesson, students were given specific roles as they worked together to monitor working and give feedback on each student's approach in solving real-life problems. This ensured that all made good progress and were able to correct any mistakes or misunderstandings.

Cultural and British values were also well incorporated into some lessons. For example in one computing lesson students explored role models and investigated, researched and wrote biographies of individuals. They then discussed the relationship between their chosen role model's personal characteristics, and school values.

However, in a few lessons, the pace was slow so students are not as motivated to learn as they could be. Ideas are not always extended and students are not sufficiently challenged. In a small number of lessons, opportunities to explore language and character in further depth are not used to extend understanding.

Overall, behaviour is excellent. Furthermore home learning is used effectively and homework was recorded well. On line learning for those who are self-isolating in Year 7 was incorporated well into the lesson.

Assessment:

Work is assessed and marked consistently, although the quality of feedback is inconsistent so students do not always know how to improve. Some marking is clear and detailed and results in action, but too often feedback is vague and consists merely of ticks and motivational statements like "well done"

The school has set up a system to monitor students' progress. This is intended to provide insights into areas of strength and improvement. However, students do not clearly understand the progress they are making and what to do next. The lack of analysis by the teachers also makes it difficult to assess progress across subjects

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:

This continues to be a strength. Students have an excellent attitude to learning. The house system has helped to develop and underline these attitudes and the school's values through the awarding and celebration of points for demonstrating positive attitudes in daily school-life.

Behaviour is outstanding and students are proud of the school and want to take responsibility. There are positive relationships between students and between students and staff

Students are happy and incidents of bullying are low. Where there are incidents, swift action is taken to resolve them.

Leadership and Management:

The leadership and management have a clear vision of how they want the school to develop and continue to grow

The head of school is effective: her passion, enthusiasm and the fostering of a family centered school is seen throughout the school in the classroom and from the attitudes of her staff team. She has begun to delegate key leadership responsibilities, such as the head of secondary, who has been effective in fostering the whole school vision in the developing secondary school. Leaders meet regularly as a team and they are starting to have an impact on learning through more rigorous lesson observations. However, the appraisal system is not yet sufficiently systematic.

Parents talk positively about the school and have confidence that it is well led and managed. They have particularly valued recent sessions aimed at helping them to support the learning of mathematics in key stage 1.

Recommendations:

To improve further, the school should:

- Make marking in all classes and subjects more informative to students so they know where and how to improve their work; and
- make the appraisal of teaching more systematic so that all teachers are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and of the characteristics of the good teaching in the school.