



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

Modern English School

Cairo

Egypt

Date
Inspection number

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1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education (DfE) has put in place a voluntary scheme for the inspection of British schools overseas (BSO), whereby schools are inspected against a common set of standards that BSO can choose to adopt.

The inspection and this report follow the DfE schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas.

The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's management on the overall effectiveness of the school, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent schools in the United Kingdom. The inspection and report will cover the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation; the school's complaints procedures; and leadership and management. If appropriate, there is a separate section on the quality of boarding provision. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for pupils and pupils' achievements.

This inspection was completed by Penta International. Penta International is approved by the British government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the DfE on the extent to which schools meet the standards for BSO.

During the inspection visit, over 90 lesson observations took place. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were seen in lessons, and discussions were held with the staff, parents and informally with students. The inspection took place over three days.

The lead inspector was Colin Dyson. The team members were Lesley Birtwell, Jessie Joubert, Shujahat Munir, Kate Plumb and Tania Raduta.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection, the school has shown that it meets the standards for British schools overseas, except for those that cannot be achieved legally in the host country.

These pertain to aspects of the UK Equality Act 2010. The relevant standards are:

Part 1 – ‘2(2)(d)(ii)- encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation as set out in the Equality Act 2010;’

and

Part 2 – ‘5(b)(vi)- encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. The school actively promotes tolerance and a respect for all human differences, within the confines of the law. This is embedded in the culture and ethos of the school. This judgement is endorsed by the British government and is valid for three years. The inspection process is quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED).

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

Modern English School Cairo (MES) is a school demonstrating exceptional leadership, effective strategic planning, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including:

- MES takes exceptional care of both students and staff, ensuring a supportive and nurturing environment.
- The school successfully fosters a family-oriented atmosphere that meets the holistic needs of all.
- The students consistently achieve high standards of attainment and personal development.
- Students serve as excellent ambassadors, representing the school with pride and integrity.
- The broad curriculum, extensive extracurricular activities, and exciting trips enrich students' educational experiences.
- MES emphasises student personal development by offering outstanding leadership opportunities.
- Parents and stakeholders feel the warmth of the supportive and inclusive school community.
- All staff demonstrate incredible loyalty and are respected by students, teaching and non-teaching members of the school and parents.
- MES staff are committed to continuous reflection and development, striving to be a beacon of excellence.
- The entire community takes pride in maintaining an outstanding learning environment that celebrates growth and achievement.
- The dedicated staff work collaboratively as a team to create an inspiring educational experience for all students.
- The whole school takes pride in the strong reputation and respected standing they have within the wider community.

3.2 Points for improvement

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following development points:

i. Enhancing parental engagement in assessment practices

- Strengthen partnerships with parents to improve their understanding of assessment methods and their impact on student progress.
- Provide clear and accessible communication about how assessment data informs student achievements and guides future learning.

ii. Ensuring consistency in creative and student-led learning, and in language development

- Promote the sharing of best practices across different phases to maintain a unified approach to creativity, student autonomy, and independent learning.
- Encourage collaboration among staff to ensure continuity in student-led learning experiences.
- Increase the visibility of subject-specific and technical vocabulary in classrooms and home learning materials to support language retention.
- Build on successful strategies used in Key Stage 2 by encouraging students across all year groups to actively define and discuss technical terms during lessons.

iii. Recognising and showcasing commitment to well-being and professionalism

- Pursue external accreditations, such as the Carnegie Mental Health Award for Students or Investors in People, to validate and highlight the school's dedication to well-being and professional excellence.

4. The context of the school

Full name of School	Modern English School Caro				
Address	South of Police Academy New Cairo P.O Box5 Tagamoa, Khamis, 11835				
Telephone Number/s	+20 226 189600				
Website Address	www.mescairo				
Key Email Address	mescairo@mescairo.com				
School director	Ms Melanie Midwood				
Chair of board/Proprietor	Mrs Sawsan Dajani				
Age Range	3-18 years				
Total number of pupils	2,426	Boys	1,282	Girls	1,144
Numbers by age	0-2 years	0	12-16 years	710	
	3-5 years	206	17-18 years	342	
	6-11 years	1,161	18+ years	7	
Total number of part-time children		0			

Modern English School (MES) Cairo, established in October 1990, is a leading British curriculum international school located in the eastern suburbs of Cairo, Egypt. Initially founded with 28 students, it has grown to accommodate over 2,000 students, primarily of Egyptian nationality. MES offers a comprehensive educational pathway, beginning with the Early Years curriculum and progressing through the national curriculum of England in primary, with adjustments made to reflect the local context. In secondary, students can choose from three pathways: the British curriculum leading to IGCSEs and A-Levels, the American curriculum leading to a High School Diploma, or the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme.

Relocated in 2000 to a purpose-built campus, MES boasts modern facilities, including subject-specific classrooms, sports complexes, and green spaces. The school strives to maintain a strong British identity through its curriculum, faculty, and cultural activities such as netball and Remembrance Day. With a focus on care, challenge, and inspiration, MES has earned a reputation for academic excellence and holistic development, preparing students for global opportunities. Despite its predominantly Egyptian student body, MES remains deeply connected to its British roots and aims to provide a world-class education in Egypt.

4.1 British nature of the school

Britishness within MES Cairo is embedded throughout the school's ethos, curriculum, and broader school culture, aligning closely with BSO expectations. The school actively promotes values associated with British education, including democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. These principles are not only taught explicitly but are also demonstrated through school policies, student engagement, and day-to-day interactions within the school community.

The curriculum is structured to reflect a British educational framework, with subjects taught in a way that mirrors UK teaching methodologies. The use of British examination boards for IGCSE, A-Levels, and the IB Diploma ensures that students are prepared for further education in the UK or other international institutions. British educational values are evident in lesson planning, with a strong emphasis on inquiry-based learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Students are encouraged to develop independence and confidence, skills that are fundamental to a British-style education.

Beyond academics, the school fosters an environment that promotes British cultural traditions and civic values. School assemblies often incorporate themes related to British history, democracy, and cultural events, allowing students to develop a sense of global awareness while appreciating the UK's influence in shaping modern education and governance. British celebrations such as Remembrance Day and key UK historical moments are acknowledged within the school, reinforcing a connection to British heritage. Students also participate in Model United Nations and debate clubs, which reflect the British value of democratic discussion and respect for different viewpoints.

The school environment itself mirrors the appearance and structure of a British school. Classrooms, libraries, and common areas are designed to create a setting that aligns with UK educational institutions, offering a familiar and structured learning experience. The presence of British-trained staff and leadership further strengthens the connection to British educational standards. Teachers implement best practices seen in UK schools, ensuring that students receive an authentic British-style education.

Respect for diversity and inclusion is a cornerstone of the school's approach to Britishness. MES Cairo promotes an atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance, ensuring that students from various backgrounds feel valued and included. The school actively encourages discussions on social responsibility, ethics, and multiculturalism, which align with the British tradition of open dialogue and global awareness. Students are taught to appreciate cultural differences while maintaining a strong sense of identity and belonging within a diverse school community.

A key aspect of British education is student voice and leadership, which is well-established at MES Cairo. The school council operates similarly to student governance systems in the UK, allowing students to have a say in decision-making processes. This fosters a culture of responsibility and active participation in school life, ensuring that students experience democratic values in action. Peer mentorship programmes and leadership initiatives further enhance students' ability to contribute to the school community while developing their confidence and public-speaking skills.

Extracurricular activities further reinforce Britishness within the school. Sports play a significant role, with students engaging in traditional British sports such as football, netball, and rugby. House competitions, a hallmark of British schooling, encourage teamwork and camaraderie while instilling a sense of pride and healthy competition. Drama productions often include classic British literature and theatrical works, further exposing students to British cultural influences.

MES Cairo maintains strong links with the UK through educational exchanges, teacher training programmes, and collaborations with British institutions. These connections help maintain a high standard of education while keeping the school aligned with evolving UK educational practices. Students are encouraged to consider higher education opportunities in the UK, with guidance on university applications, UCAS processes, and visits from British university representatives.

The commitment to Britishness is also evident in pastoral care and well-being initiatives. The emphasis on safeguarding, mental health support, and pastoral programmes reflects the comprehensive support systems found in British schools. The school's policies align with UK safeguarding expectations, ensuring that student welfare remains a top priority.

Overall, Britishness at MES Cairo is deeply integrated into every aspect of school life. From curriculum design and teaching methodologies to student leadership and cultural celebrations, the school successfully upholds British values and traditions. This commitment not only meets BSO expectations but also provides students with a well-rounded, internationally respected education that prepares them for future success in the UK and beyond.

5. Standard 1

The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided is outstanding, MES Cairo provides an excellent curriculum, high quality, innovative teaching, which leads to very high academic results. The quality of education provided meets the standard for BSO and is outstanding.

5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding and fully meets the standard for BSO.

The curriculum at the school is broad, balanced, and well-structured, aligning closely with BSO standards. It provides a strong academic foundation while fostering holistic student development through an extensive range of subjects, interdisciplinary learning, and a rich selection of extra-curricular opportunities. The curriculum is designed to challenge students at all levels, promoting critical thinking, creativity, and personal growth. Additionally, international exposure through programmes such as the Model United Nations (MUN) and student conferences allows students to develop a global perspective and leadership skills.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), children make significant progress in their learning journey, with the vast majority meeting the Early Learning Goals by the end of Foundation Stage 1. The curriculum balances guided activities that develop critical thinking with opportunities for exploration and experimentation. Children engage in practical, hands-on activities that enhance problem-solving skills and creativity. For example, in Foundation Stage 2, students were observed designing book covers, constructing boats to test buoyancy, and engaging in imaginative play with clay and paper cut-outs. Language development is strong, with children demonstrating high levels of involvement in discussions, asking thoughtful questions, and expanding their vocabulary. Phonics instruction follows the *Little Wandle* programme, ensuring that students develop essential early literacy skills in both reading and writing.

The Key Stage (KS) 1 curriculum fosters enthusiasm for learning through a well-planned and engaging approach. Students benefit from a rich language environment and a broad selection of subjects that support their emotional, social, physical, moral, spiritual, and academic development. The curriculum ensures that students acquire strong speaking, listening, literacy, and numeracy skills, enabling them to articulate ideas confidently. Teachers create a stimulating learning environment using working walls and high expectations for spoken English. Collaboration in lesson planning ensures adaptability, allowing teachers to tailor learning to the needs of their students. Beyond the classroom, a variety of extra-curricular activities further enrich

students' educational experiences, providing opportunities to explore creative, cultural, and academic interests.

At KS2, strong subject knowledge among teachers ensures that lessons are engaging, structured, and focused on developing essential skills across the curriculum. Inquiry-based learning is a key feature, allowing students to explore concepts through practical applications. For instance, in Year 5 science lessons, students used their knowledge of measuring and area to construct parachutes of different sizes, applying concepts of air resistance and friction. In Year 6 music, students explored the life and works of Beethoven, gaining a deeper appreciation of historical and cultural influences. The curriculum promotes meaningful cross-curricular connections, as seen in Year 6 students using their study of earthquakes and volcanoes as a stimulus for both art projects and balanced argument writing tasks.

The secondary curriculum continues to uphold the principles of breadth, balance, and academic rigour, aligning closely with British curriculum expectations. Students benefit from subject specialisation while maintaining opportunities for interdisciplinary learning. High-quality teaching, particularly in the sciences, ensures that students engage deeply with the material, fostering independent learning and problem-solving skills. Lessons in subjects such as biology, chemistry, and physics are enriched by hands-on experiments and the integration of digital learning tools, such as *Seneca*, which enhance conceptual understanding. In a KS3 science lesson, for example, the use of a visual timetable helped structure transitions between lesson phases, keeping students engaged and ensuring clarity in learning expectations.

The English curriculum at KS3, 4 and 5 is well-structured and aligned with both British curriculum and International Baccalaureate (IB) standards, providing clear progression across year groups. The most effective lessons incorporate engaging texts and dynamic teaching methods that develop students' analytical and critical thinking skills. Creative writing tasks are particularly impactful, allowing students to explore imaginative expression and refine their ability to articulate ideas effectively. However, a more consistent application of structured reading engagement strategies across all lessons would further enhance literacy development and comprehension.

In KS4 and 5, subject-specific expertise and strong pedagogical practices ensure that students are well-prepared for their external examinations. Science lessons in these key stages effectively integrate interactive learning platforms to support deep understanding of complex concepts. Teachers employ higher-order questioning techniques, particularly in subjects such as biology, to encourage critical thinking and academic independence. In IBDP chemistry, for example, students were guided through success criteria for answering enthalpy questions, equipping them with effective examination strategies.

Beyond academics, the curriculum places a strong emphasis on student leadership, collaboration, and character development. Co-curricular initiatives such as student

mentoring, the Pioneers programme, and leadership roles within the student council provide students with opportunities to develop teamwork and organisational skills. These values are reinforced through group work and discussion-based learning across academic subjects. Strengthening the integration of leadership principles into the core curriculum would further enhance student engagement, independent learning, and critical thinking skills.

Overall, the curriculum successfully meets BSO standards, offering a well-rounded educational experience that combines academic excellence with character development. It provides students with the skills, knowledge, and global awareness needed to thrive in higher education and beyond. While the curriculum is already strong in many areas, further enhancements in structured literacy strategies, classroom resources for technical vocabulary, and the integration of leadership development into academic learning could further elevate its impact.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding.

The quality of teaching and assessment at the school is strong and reflects a commitment to high standards of learning. Across all key stages, teachers demonstrate subject expertise, effective classroom management, and a focus on student engagement.

Teaching in EYFS is particularly effective, with an emphasis on fostering curiosity and independent learning. The curriculum in EYFS is well-structured, and formative assessment is seamlessly integrated into daily activities. Children are encouraged to explore their environment, ask questions, and engage in problem-solving. A strong behaviour-for-learning culture is evident, with students demonstrating enthusiasm and a willingness to participate. Teachers effectively use assessment to adapt learning experiences, ensuring that students' individual needs are met. The learning environment is engaging and well-resourced, both indoors and outdoors, allowing for independent and guided learning opportunities.

In KS1, teaching is engaging and well-structured, supporting students in acquiring foundational literacy and numeracy skills. The use of phonics in literacy is particularly strong, with interactive lessons that build students' confidence in reading and writing. Teachers routinely share learning objectives and success criteria, which helps students understand their learning goals. Behaviour management strategies are used consistently, ensuring a focused learning environment. High-quality questioning techniques encourage students to think critically and articulate their ideas. The use of group discussions enhances speaking and listening skills, allowing students to build confidence and express their thoughts effectively. Working walls and displays in classrooms reinforce key learning concepts, providing a visual reference for students. However, differentiation strategies in lesson planning, while evident, are not always consistently applied to support all learners fully in some lessons.

Teaching in Key Stage 2 is highly effective, with well-planned lessons that cater to students' varying abilities. Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure engagement, including inquiry-based learning, group discussions, and hands-on activities. In mathematics, teaching assistants provide targeted support, ensuring that students receive the necessary scaffolding to develop their skills. The 'bring your own device' initiative allows more able students to work independently on extension tasks, promoting self-directed learning. Students are encouraged to recall previous learning and apply it to new concepts, fostering mastery of the curriculum. In science lessons, students confidently use technical language and engage in experiments that develop their critical thinking skills. The use of questioning and extended talk strategies in mathematics encourages students to explain their reasoning, deepening

their understanding. However, while most classrooms have vocabulary lists and reference materials, their consistent use to support spelling and subject-specific language could be further enhanced.

In secondary education, teaching remains strong, with high levels of student engagement and academic challenge. Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and use effective questioning techniques to extend students' understanding. The most successful lessons are well-structured, interactive, and promote independent thinking. In subjects such as science and mathematics, lessons often include practical applications, ensuring students can connect theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios. Digital technology is integrated effectively into lessons, enhancing learning and supporting assessment for learning strategies. In a Year 9 physics lesson, peer assessment was used successfully to provide immediate feedback, helping students reflect on their progress. Similarly, in English, creative writing activities allow students to explore imaginative ideas while refining their analytical skills. In some lessons, there is an overreliance on teacher-led instruction, limiting opportunities for student-led discussions and collaborative learning.

Assessment practices across the school are generally strong, with a clear focus on tracking student progress and using data to inform teaching. In the most effective lessons, teachers provide timely and detailed feedback, helping students understand their strengths and areas for improvement. Peer and self-assessment strategies are used effectively in many lessons, fostering a sense of responsibility for learning. In an AS-level economics lesson, detailed assessment outcomes were evident in students' books, demonstrating clear progression over time. There are inconsistencies in the application of assessment policies across subjects. In some cases, feedback is not always actionable, and students do not have sufficient opportunities to respond to teacher comments. The school's marking policy needs more consistent implementation to ensure that all students receive high-quality feedback that supports their learning journey.

At Key Stages 4 and 5, students benefit from high-quality teaching that prepares them well for external examinations. Lessons are well-structured and challenging, encouraging students to think critically and develop problem-solving skills. In IBDP Chemistry, for example, teachers use structured success criteria to guide students through complex topics, ensuring they develop strong analytical abilities. The use of interactive learning platforms, such as Seneca, supports independent learning and revision. In the best lessons, students are given opportunities to collaborate, critique, and refine their work before progressing. Effective questioning techniques are evident across both Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5, helping students deepen their understanding. In some subjects, there is an opportunity for greater differentiation to ensure that all students are appropriately challenged.

Beyond the classroom, the learning environment is well-maintained and supports student achievement. Corridor expectations are clear, and staff presence ensures a safe and structured atmosphere. The school library plays an important role in supporting literacy development, offering dedicated sessions on research skills, citation techniques, and academic integrity. Displays linked to the curriculum help reinforce learning, providing students with additional opportunities for engagement outside of lessons. The integration of digital resources, such as Google Classroom, enhances access to materials and promotes independent study.

The school's assessment policies align with best practices, incorporating a range of strategies to track student progress. External assessment data, including IGCSE and IB Diploma results, indicate that students achieve well above UK and global averages. The systematic use of assessment for learning ensures that teachers can adapt their instruction to meet students' needs. In the best practice examples, students are encouraged to review their progress against learning objectives, fostering self-reflection and goal setting. There is scope for further development in ensuring that all teachers use data consistently to inform their planning and differentiation strategies. Greater emphasis on actionable feedback and opportunities for students to engage with their assessments would further strengthen student outcomes.

The overall quality of teaching and assessment meets high standards, ensuring that students are well-prepared for further education and future careers. The strengths of the teaching staff lie in their subject expertise, their ability to engage students, and their commitment to student success. The school's emphasis on academic rigour, inquiry-based learning, and the integration of technology supports a dynamic and effective learning environment. Continued professional development opportunities for teachers, focusing on differentiation, student-led learning, and assessment consistency, is planned to further enhance teaching quality.

5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

The standards achieved by students are outstanding.

The standards achieved by students at MES Cairo are outstanding and align with BSO requirements, reflecting high levels of attainment across all key stages.

Despite the majority of students having Arabic as their first language, they make significant progress from the EYFS through to secondary. A structured approach to data analysis, incorporating CAT4, PASS, internal assessments, behaviour tracking, and board exam results, ensures that student achievement is closely monitored and supported over time.

The curriculum is designed to build progressively on foundational skills acquired in EYFS. An evidence-based approach, particularly through the use of systematic synthetic phonics, has resulted in high attainment in early reading and writing. Students' progress is carefully tracked against Early Learning Goals (ELGs), with transition data guiding the next steps in learning. Additional 'moving on' activities on *Google Classroom* further support students as they prepare for the next academic year. Observations from FS2 demonstrate that in the best lessons, students' reading and speaking skills exceed expected levels.

In primary, external assessments and internal tracking data show that most students achieve or surpass age-related expectations in English and Mathematics. Lessons are planned to provide both age-appropriate content and opportunities for additional challenge. By Year 6, students are writing at length across various formats, though some still lack a fluent, joined handwriting style. Assessment tools such as *No More Marking*, *Head Start*, *White Rose*, and *NFER* provide consistency and reliability in measuring progress. The percentage of FS2 students achieving a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD) increased by 23% from 2023 to 2024, further highlighting the school's commitment to early literacy and numeracy development.

MES Cairo students perform exceptionally well in external examinations. Despite sitting the IGCSE board exams a year earlier than most schools, their overall attainment consistently exceeds UK averages. A-level results also surpass UK benchmarks, and IB Diploma students score between 2-4 points above the global average, with a 100% pass rate recorded annually. The school's academic success is further reinforced by students receiving Cambridge Outstanding Learner Awards for exceptional performance in external assessments.

The school's assessment policy ensures that student progress is regularly reviewed. The best practices observed involve students actively reflecting on their learning objectives through frequent self-assessment, either in their notebooks or on *Google Classroom*. While teacher marking is evident, there is room for improvement in

providing regular next-step feedback. In-depth feedback is scheduled at the end of each unit, adhering to the marking and feedback policy. Parents expressed interest in more opportunities to collaborate with the school in understanding student data and assessments, which could further support student progress.

Beyond academics, MES Cairo places strong emphasis on holistic student development. Initiatives such as the 5Rs and 'Ready, Safe, Respectful' in EYFS and primary, along with the MES Cairo Graduate Profile and PRIME Elements in secondary, aim to develop students who are respectful, tolerant, and globally minded. Assemblies, themed days, community events, trips, and student-led projects further reinforce these values.

Attendance is consistently monitored, with an average of 96.4% recorded during the BSO inspection. While variations in teaching quality across subjects impact some areas of student progress, overall, MES Cairo students achieve outstanding standards, particularly in structured learning environments where assessment is well-integrated, and engagement is strong. The school's commitment to academic excellence, rigorous assessment, and holistic development ensures that students are well-prepared for future educational and professional endeavours.

6. *Standard 2* Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The provision for students' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development at the school is outstanding and a key strength of the educational experience.

Students exhibit a deep sense of curiosity and engagement in learning about themselves, others, and the world around them. The curriculum effectively incorporates opportunities for self-reflection, ethical reasoning, and cultural awareness, ensuring that students develop a well-rounded understanding of global and local issues. Religious education is aligned with Egyptian Ministry of Education requirements, providing Islamic and Christian studies, with the flexibility to introduce a 'World Religions' curriculum upon parental request. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced *PRIME Time* lessons, a bespoke PSHE curriculum incorporating *Unifrog* to support career development. This initiative has been widely praised by parents of older students, who appreciate the structured and realistic university guidance and career counselling. Students receive individualised support in subject selection, university applications, and future career planning, ensuring they are well-prepared for their next steps.

The school has a strong emphasis on moral development, with a behaviour policy that has been recently updated based on evidence-based research. Positive behaviour management strategies encourage students to take responsibility for their actions through restorative practices rather than punitive measures. The promotion of ethical values is embedded throughout school life, with initiatives such as champion boards in primary, good news celebrations in primary, and prime light in secondary reinforcing positive behaviours. These systems ensure that students are recognised for their efforts and achievements, fostering a culture of respect, responsibility, and integrity.

Social development is embedded through numerous leadership and engagement opportunities. Students actively participate in the democratic process, with student council elections involving well-organised campaigns. The elected student council members meet with senior leadership to advocate for meaningful changes, such as the decision to use an Egyptian water brand to support sustainability and national identity. A variety of leadership roles are available to students, including peer mentors, house captains, pioneers, wellbeing ambassadors, senior student mentors, and members of the national honour society. These leadership pathways allow students to develop confidence, communication skills, and a strong sense of responsibility. Social cohesion is further strengthened by an in-school community service programme where secondary students mentor younger peers and lead after school activities. Senior student leaders also take an active role in organising themed assemblies, such as internet safety day, promoting awareness of important social issues.

Annual school-wide events play a crucial role in fostering a sense of social responsibility and collective engagement. The 24-Hour Run raises funds for the children's cancer hospital foundation, while the 'Keep Egypt Warm' campaign involves collecting food and clothing

donations for underprivileged communities. Other initiatives, such as the workers' iftar bake sale, encourage students to show appreciation for school support staff by hosting a fundraising event. The student-led learning conferences provide an opportunity for students to take ownership of their learning by presenting their progress to parents. These initiatives not only strengthen the school's community ethos but also instil a strong commitment to service and social justice in students.

Cultural development is actively promoted through a diverse programme of educational visits, residential trips, and international experiences. Students participate in trips to destinations such as Italy, Spain and Cyprus, broadening their global perspectives. The school's pioneers programme is particularly valued by students, as it encourages social responsibility through service-based achievements. For example, students work towards the entrepreneur badge by developing initiatives to support disadvantaged communities. Older students also engage in the International Award programme, preparing for outdoor expeditions through after school activities that involve learning essential survival skills such as tent assembly and meal preparation. These experiences foster resilience, independence, and teamwork, reinforcing the school's commitment to holistic student development.

Parents have highlighted the school's effective management of transitions between primary and secondary education, noting that students develop increasing levels of independence and responsibility as they progress through the school. Information sessions and guidance workshops are provided to parents and students to ensure a smooth transition, with additional English support recommendations available where needed. Graduates of the school are well-prepared for life beyond secondary education, demonstrating high-order personal and social skills developed through their involvement in global perspectives and the creativity, activity and service (CAS) programmes. Community engagement initiatives ensure that students contribute positively to society, while the structured leadership pathways prepare them for university and future careers. Many students gain admission to prestigious institutions, such as York University for computer science, and maintain strong connections with the school as alumni, returning to inspire and support younger students.

The school's SMSC provision ensures that students develop into responsible, reflective, and globally minded citizens. By embedding moral reasoning, social responsibility, and cultural awareness into daily school life, the institution effectively nurtures students who are well-equipped to navigate the complexities of the modern world. Senior secondary students have expressed a desire to expand their mentoring and leadership roles by supporting younger students with reading and academic guidance, indicating their willingness to contribute positively to the school community. This further exemplifies the success of the school's SMSC programme, as students are actively engaged in their personal development and demonstrate a strong commitment to ethical leadership and lifelong learning.

7. *Standard 3* The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for welfare, health and safety is outstanding.

The well-being of students is at the heart of daily operations, with an environment that fosters safety, support, and care. Students themselves affirm the positive atmosphere, expressing that they feel valued and protected by staff who genuinely care about their welfare.

A robust safeguarding framework underpins the school's commitment to student welfare. A comprehensive array of policies, procedures, and risk assessments ensures that safeguarding is not only a priority but also an integral part of the school culture. This structured approach extends to regular professional development for staff, reinforcing their ability to handle safety and well-being concerns effectively.

Student behaviour within the school is exemplary, supported by clear policies and procedures that are consistently enforced. The role of peer mentors is particularly commendable, providing students with an additional layer of support in resolving conflicts and fostering a culture of mutual respect. Instances of bullying are rare, and students have confidence in the adults around them to intervene when necessary.

Education on safety is woven into the curriculum, ensuring that students develop awareness and skills to protect themselves in various situations. This includes online safety, cyberbullying, and maintaining healthy lifestyles through informed choices about nutrition and physical activity. Such an approach not only safeguards students within the school but also equips them with essential life skills that extend beyond the classroom.

Medical and first-aid provisions within the school are exceptional. The availability of well-trained staff ensures that medical emergencies are handled with efficiency, both within the school premises and during trips. There is a strong awareness of students with medical conditions and allergies, with designated staff ensuring that dietary requirements are met safely. This level of attentiveness demonstrates a proactive approach to student health, reinforcing the overall sense of security within the school environment.

The school also places emphasis on the safe and orderly arrival and departure of students. Well-supervised transport services and vigilant staff, who are easily identifiable in high-visibility jackets, contribute to a seamless and secure transition between home and school. Additionally, playtime supervision is carefully managed, with organised activities such as the friendship club providing inclusive opportunities for social interaction.

Attendance and admissions are meticulously recorded in compliance with local regulations. The school actively promotes good attendance through various strategies designed to support

punctuality and address attendance concerns. This focus ensures that students receive consistent educational opportunities while reinforcing a culture of responsibility.

Pastoral support is another key strength of the school, ensuring that students have access to emotional and psychological care. A single central register for safeguarding checks guarantees adherence to UK safeguarding standards. Additionally, a well-structured referral system is in place for addressing behavioural and well-being concerns, with parental involvement in more complex cases.

The medical team, led by an experienced doctor, provides comprehensive physical and mental health support. The presence of an on-site psychologist and a dedicated school counsellor within the secondary, further enhances the availability of mental health resources. This structured provision ensures that students facing challenges have access to necessary interventions and referrals.

Staff welfare is equally prioritised, with a strong emphasis on professional and emotional support. A staff welfare program offers teacher support groups, cultural integration activities, and professional development opportunities. New staff members are well-supported, reinforcing a strong culture of care within the institution. Teachers also have access to medical support and counselling services, reflecting the school's proactive stance on staff well-being.

The school's safeguarding culture is reinforced by a visible security presence, including CCTV, trained gate security, and structured safety drills. Emergency procedures, such as fire and lockdown drills, are regularly practiced ensuring preparedness. A secure transportation system further contributes to student safety, with bus assistants and drivers playing a critical role in monitoring students during transit.

Students also benefit from structured well-being initiatives, including peer mentoring, access to counsellors, and designated safe spaces such as the library and clinic. These measures help foster a nurturing environment where students feel supported academically, socially, and emotionally.

Through a combination of well-structured policies, a strong safeguarding framework, comprehensive medical and mental health support, and an inclusive culture of care, the school ensures that students and staff thrive in a secure and supportive environment. The school's outstanding commitment to well-being is reflected in its students' confidence in the system and their appreciation for the dedicated care they receive.

8. *Standard 4* The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The suitability of the proprietor and staff meets the standard for BSO.

The governance and leadership of the school are exemplary, with a strategic vision that is clearly defined and effectively communicated. The proprietor ensures strong oversight and accountability through regular performance evaluations and transparent reporting mechanisms. This structured approach allows the school to continuously assess its progress against set targets, ensuring that high standards are maintained.

Leadership within the school, under the direction of an experienced and dedicated school director, is characterised by a commitment to continuous improvement. Professional development is a priority, with frequent training sessions and workshops designed to keep staff updated on the latest educational trends and best practices. This focus on ongoing development ensures that teachers remain motivated and equipped with innovative teaching strategies that enhance student learning.

Staff morale is exceptionally high, fostered by a supportive and collaborative work environment. Open communication, mutual respect, and inclusive decision-making processes contribute to a positive atmosphere in which staff members feel valued. Regular team meetings and an open-door policy allow for constructive dialogue, encouraging teachers to contribute ideas and take an active role in shaping the school's direction.

The recruitment process is rigorous, ensuring that only highly qualified and passionate educators are selected. New staff members undergo a structured induction program, which includes mentorship from experienced colleagues and ongoing support to ease their transition into the school community. This approach ensures consistency in teaching quality and aligns new staff with the school's ethos and values.

Communication among the proprietor, leadership team, and staff is strong and effective. Regular updates and feedback loops keep all stakeholders well-informed and aligned with the school's objectives. This clear and cohesive structure of governance and staffing significantly contributes to the overall success of the school, reinforcing its ability to provide a high-quality education in a well-managed and professional environment.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The quality of premises and accommodation is outstanding.

The school provides a purpose-built, well-maintained, and safe environment that supports both academic excellence and extracurricular enrichment.

The school has invested significantly in ensuring that its infrastructure aligns with British educational standards, offering specialist classrooms for subjects such as Music, Art, Drama, and Science. Additionally, state-of-the-art computer suites, including a dedicated Mac lab, further enhance digital learning opportunities. The provision of three age-appropriate libraries for KS1, KS2, and secondary fosters literacy development and independent learning, reinforcing the British curriculum's emphasis on reading and research.

Sports and physical education are integral to the school's ethos, with an extensive range of facilities that include a multi-purpose hall, an athletics track, football fields, basketball and netball courts, a gymnasium, and a swimming pool complex. The school encourages outdoor learning, mirroring UK educational practices that promote inquiry-based education. For instance, A2 biology students engage in quadrat sampling activities, providing hands-on applications of their studies.

Recent infrastructure upgrades reflect the school's proactive approach to maintenance and development. These improvements include resurfaced gymnasium flooring, upgraded basketball courts, renovations to yard 4 and secondary areas, and fully refurbished bathrooms. The air conditioning system in the gymnasium has been enhanced, and new dressing rooms have been constructed for stage productions. The outdoor tartan track is also maintained annually, with a full replacement every three years, demonstrating a commitment to long-term facility upkeep.

Safety and emergency preparedness measures exceed regulatory requirements, with robust fire safety mechanisms in place. A water reservoir beneath the field is connected to fire extinguishers and hydrants, ensuring an additional layer of protection. Fire drills are conducted at the beginning and end of each academic year, and emergency lockdown procedures are well-established. Earthquake preparedness measures further reinforce the school's focus on risk management.

Hygiene and sanitation standards are rigorously maintained, with drinking water regularly tested by the Ministry of Health. The canteen operates in compliance with ministry regulations and holds a valid medical license, ensuring food safety and hygiene.

Security operations are managed through a central hub at gate 4, with CCTV monitoring across key areas while respecting student privacy in classrooms and bathrooms. Student safety in

transportation is a priority, with CCTV installed on buses, strict clearance procedures in place before departures, and a dedicated rented garage for secure parking.

MES Cairo also ensures compliance with external regulatory bodies, with chemical laboratories adhering to Ministry of Education regulations and undergoing inspections to meet international safety protocols. Annual compliance audits further ensure that safety, security, and academic standards remain aligned with best practices.

Looking ahead, the school plans to expand air conditioning systems in primary and upgrade fire hydrant pipes as part of ongoing safety improvements. These initiatives reflect a forward-thinking approach to maintaining a high-quality learning environment. Overall, MES Cairo provides a safe, secure, and inspiring space for students and staff, reinforcing its commitment to excellence in both infrastructure and student well-being.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents, carers, and the wider community at MES Cairo is excellent. The school has successfully fostered strong communication and engagement between the school and families. Parents feel well-informed and connected to their child's education, with multiple communication channels in place to facilitate the exchange of information. These include email, phone calls, link books for all primary students, *Google Classroom*, and formal meetings, ensuring that parents remain up to date with their child's academic progress and school activities. The *MESsenger* magazine, student planners, and senior yearbooks further serve as valuable resources for ongoing communication.

Regular parent meetings are held, particularly in primary, where families have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress every six weeks. Parents appreciate the school's open-door policy, noting that teachers are approachable, responsive, and effective in addressing concerns in a timely manner. The feedback parents receive through school reports is comprehensive, detailing student progress and providing clear next steps for improvement. Additional study materials are available during vacation periods upon request, further supporting students' academic growth beyond the classroom.

A key feature of MES Cairo's engagement with parents is student-led conferences, which take place for all primary students, where parents can visit classrooms and gain direct insight into their child's learning experience. This interactive approach strengthens the relationship between home and school, allowing parents to take an active role in their child's education. The admissions process at MES Cairo is highly structured, with competitive entry assessments and interviews ensuring that students are well-suited to the school's rigorous curriculum. Parents appreciate the clarity and organization of the admissions process, which sets clear expectations from the outset.

Following the disruptions caused by the pandemic, parents expressed gratitude for the return of in-person events such as school productions, assemblies, sports days, and special celebrations. These opportunities allow families to actively participate in school life, creating a sense of community and reinforcing the importance of parental involvement in education. Additionally, the school provides information sessions and workshops on relevant topics such as digital learning platforms, healthy eating, and effective study habits, equipping parents with the tools to support their child's development at home.

The school also benefits from a strong alumni network, with multiple generations of families continuing to enrol at MES Cairo. Parents have acknowledged the school's ability to adapt to generational changes while maintaining high standards of discipline, well-being, and academic expectations. The proactive approach to student well-being is particularly valued, with staff reaching out to parents if there are noticeable changes in a student's behaviour or attitude, demonstrating the school's commitment to pastoral care.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school's procedure for handling complaints meets the standard for BSO.

The complaints procedure at MES Cairo aligns with BSO standards by ensuring accessibility, transparency, and impartiality in addressing concerns from students, parents, and staff. Designed to foster trust within the school community, the process is structured to handle complaints efficiently and fairly. It is readily accessible through multiple platforms, including the school website, printed copies in the office, and during induction sessions, ensuring that all stakeholders are aware of their rights and the steps involved in raising concerns.

A well-defined process guides complainants on how to submit concerns, whether via email, in person, or through an online form. Clear communication about who to contact and the expected timeline for resolution prevents misunderstandings and unnecessary escalation. Confidentiality is maintained throughout, ensuring discretion and encouraging openness while protecting the privacy of those involved. To ensure impartiality, a designated complaints officer or an independent staff member oversees the investigation process, preventing bias and ensuring fairness.

Timely responses are a critical aspect of the procedure, with all complaints acknowledged promptly, followed by regular updates throughout the resolution process. This approach reassures complainants that their concerns are being taken seriously and addressed systematically. The goal is always to achieve a fair and reasonable resolution, with clear communication of outcomes and any actions taken to address the issue. If a complainant remains unsatisfied, an escalation process allows for further review, including the involvement of external bodies if necessary.

Continuous improvement is an integral part of the complaints procedure. Feedback is collected to refine the process, and all complaints are documented for review and compliance purposes. Regular staff training ensures that complaints are managed professionally and consistently, reinforcing the school's commitment to maintaining high standards. By upholding an accessible, responsive, and fair complaints system, MES Cairo fosters a supportive and transparent environment in line with BSO expectations. The school has demonstrated a consistent commitment to resolving issues in a manner that prioritises student development and well-being. The overall provision of information for parents at MES Cairo aligns with BSO standards, ensuring a well-structured, transparent, and supportive communication framework that enhances the educational experience for both students and families.

12. Standard 8

Leadership and management of the school

The quality of leadership and management at MES is outstanding.

Leadership and management are highly effective features of the school's success, ensuring a high-quality educational experience that aligns with BSO standards. The outstanding leadership team, led by a highly effective school director and senior leadership team (SLT), has established a clear vision that fosters an environment where both staff and students can thrive. The leadership's focus on strategic planning, commitment to professional development, and emphasis on continuous improvement prioritising excellence in both education and well-being and are a vital key to the success of the school.

A key feature of the leadership at MES is its strong focus on staff development, particularly through a well-structured continuing professional development (CPD) programme. Teaching learning assistants (TLAs) are provided with targeted training in areas such as questioning techniques, ensuring that they are equipped to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. This investment in staff training not only meets but exceeds BSO expectations, reinforcing the school's commitment to maintaining the highest teaching standards. The SLT's ability to identify key areas for growth and implement effective training programs demonstrates a proactive and visionary approach to leadership.

Strategic planning at MES Cairo is another area where leadership has a highly effective impact. The SLT has a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and future aspirations, using data-driven insights to inform decisions and improve learning outcomes. The school's collaboration with Cambridge International, Pearson and the Oxford Examination Board reflects a forward-thinking approach that broadens the curriculum and provides students with globally recognised qualifications. This progressive mindset ensures that MES Cairo continues to evolve, offering students a well-rounded and academically rigorous education.

Recruitment and retention are also key indicators of effective leadership at MES. The school has established a comprehensive induction process, ensuring that new staff members transition smoothly into their roles. The HR team plays a crucial role in supporting new employees with essential logistical aspects such as banking, insurance, and housing, demonstrating a strong commitment to staff well-being. The low attrition rate at MES is a testament to the positive working environment cultivated by the leadership team. Staff members choose to stay at the school not only because of the professional growth opportunities but also because of the supportive and collegial atmosphere that leadership has nurtured.

From a management perspective, MES exemplifies operational efficiency through meticulous record-keeping and strategic resource allocation. The HR systems are consistently updated, and the open-door policy implemented by leadership fosters transparent and effective

communication. Long-term planning is evident in the school's infrastructure improvements, such as upgrading air conditioning in the primary section and enhancing fire safety measures. These initiatives demonstrate a leadership team that is not only focused on immediate goals but is also deeply invested in the long-term success and sustainability of the school.

In every aspect, MES showcases exemplary leadership and management. The school's commitment to professional development, strategic planning, effective recruitment, and resource optimization collectively creates an educational environment that meets the highest BSO standards. The combination of strong leadership and efficient management ensures that MES remains a place where students excel, teachers thrive, and the entire school community benefits from a culture of continuous improvement and excellence.