



part of Independent Schools Inspectorate

British Schools Overseas

Inspection Report

Braeburn School

February 2025

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School's Details

School	Braeburn School			
Address	Braeburn School Gitanga Road Lavington Nairobi Kenya			
Telephone number	+254 (0) 722 685575			
Email address	enquiries.braeburn@braeburn.ac.ke			
Executive Principal	Mr Raja Ali			
Secondary Headteacher	Ms Liz Borwell			
Primary Headteacher	Mr Warwick Bailey			
Proprietor	Braeburn Schools Ltd			
Age range	3 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	1103			
Primary School	Early years	95		
	Juniors	483	Years 7 to 8	178
Secondary School	Years 9 to 11	249	Sixth form	102
Inspection dates	10 to 13 February 2025			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Braeburn School is an international co-educational day school. It was established in 1979 on the edge of a residential area on the outskirts of Nairobi. It is the founding school of a group of twelve schools across Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and South Africa. Originally providing education for children up to 11 years of age, the school now consists of a primary school for pupils from the early years to Year 8 and a secondary school for pupils in Years 9 to 13, each with its own headteacher. The school serves the Kenyan and international community. Braeburn School is owned by Braeburn Schools Ltd whose directors act as the governors of the school. The operational management of the school is the responsibility of the group's management committee.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to nurture a caring and supportive environment in which each pupil can flourish. It fully acknowledges the value and individual needs of all pupils and actively values and celebrates diversity. It seeks to provide an education of the highest quality to maximise academic, physical and artistic potential, whilst building positive and respectful relationships between pupils, parents, staff and the wider community. It strives to promote international and cross-cultural knowledge, interest, awareness and understanding.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from both expatriate and local families, with parents working in a range of businesses, organisations and professions. A wide range of cultures and faiths from around 80 nationalities and different ethnic backgrounds are represented within the school. Approximately one-quarter of the pupils are Kenyan, and one-tenth are British. The school has identified 187 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 155 of whom receive additional specialist help. English is an additional language (EAL) for 102 pupils, all of whom receive support for their English. Standardised test data provided by both the primary school and the secondary school indicate that the ability profile of the pupils is above average when compared to other pupils taking the same tests.

2. Inspection of Standards for British Schools Overseas

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting independent schools in England and overseas.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the Standards for British Schools Overseas (BSO). It also takes account, where relevant, of compliance with any local requirements. Schools may opt for an inspection of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE.

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: an exhaustive health and safety audit; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures; an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law; in-depth consideration of the extent to which the school meets the requirements of local law and custom.

This is a COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas. The standards represent minimum requirements, and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. In order to gain BSO accreditation, a school is required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report. If a school does not meet all of the standards, it may elect to be re-inspected once it has taken the required actions in order to gain BSO accreditation.

Headline judgements against the Standards for British Schools Overseas indicate that the standards have been 'met' or 'not met' for accreditation.

Accreditation as a British school overseas lasts for three years. The school's previous inspection was in May 2022.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets all of the Standards for British Schools Overseas except those which it is precluded from meeting because of the host country's legislation. The requirements of the host country take precedence, and no action points are, therefore, specified.

Part 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 **The standards relating to the quality of education in paragraphs 1, 2(1)(a) and (b), 2(2)(a) to 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(e) to 2(2)(i), 3(a) to (e), and 4 are met, but that relating to paragraph 2(2)(d)(ii) (encouraging respect for other people) cannot be met because it is precluded by the country's legislation.**
- 2.3 The curriculum across all sections of the school, including in the early years and sixth form, is well balanced and successfully meets the school's aims to provide a well-rounded education in an international environment. It provides pupils with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. Pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills whilst developing an excellent understanding of English, including those pupils who speak EAL, who typically make rapid progress from their starting points. Policies, plans and schemes of work are well developed in most subject areas and take account of the ages, aptitudes and needs of the pupils, including those who have SEND, for whom appropriate support is provided. In both sections of the school, the curriculum offers an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and provides many opportunities in sport, drama, creative arts and adventurous activities. Pupils are well prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life beyond school, which include pupils undertaking university courses throughout Europe, Canada, the USA and within Kenya, many with demanding entrance requirements. The pupils' school experience is underpinned by a good understanding of both British and Kenyan values, which closely reflect the values of the school and were evident during the visit.
- 2.4 Teaching throughout all school sections enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress, a view endorsed by most parents and pupils. Additional support is provided for the small number of pupils who join the school with more limited English. Teaching is characterised by well-planned lessons, which provide suitable challenge for most pupils. Most lessons employ effective teaching methods, use a variety of resources, and demonstrate good knowledge and understanding. Pupils are responsive and engaged in most lessons, and their behaviour is generally of a high standard. The curriculum is unable, without constraint, to include content and material relating to gender reassignment, civil partnership and same-sex unions as they are not recognised in Kenyan law and the promotion of any such related issues is precluded by Kenyan legislation. The curriculum and teaching are otherwise based on the English national curriculum.
- 2.5 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the quality of pupils' learning and achievements and the contribution that the curriculum and teaching make to these outcomes.

Part 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.6 **The standards relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in sub-paragraphs 5(a), (b)(i)(v) and (vii) are met but that in sub-paragraph 5(b)(vi) (encouraging respect for other people) cannot be met because it is precluded by the country's legislation.**
- 2.7 The school promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those who have different faiths and beliefs. It promotes principles that enable pupils to develop self-knowledge, esteem and confidence, distinguish right from wrong, accept responsibility for the behaviour, contribute to lives of others, and gain knowledge and respect for public institutions in England and for the responsibilities of Kenyan citizenship. Further, it

encourages tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions and a balanced presentation of political views and preclusion of partisan political views. The school encourages respect for other people with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in the UK Equality Act 2010, except where precluded by the country's legislation.

- 2.8 Although a small minority of pupils feel that their views are not always listened to, across all age groups pupils feel that they are encouraged to contribute views on the operation of the school and are able to raise concerns and complaints. Pupils have an awareness of changes that have been made in response to their concerns, including requests for an increased breaktime for pupils and improved washroom facilities. Primary pupils have close links with their homeroom teachers and secondary pupils can access drop-in sessions with the headteacher.
- 2.9 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the quality of the pupils' personal development and the factors which contribute to their development.

Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

2.10 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16] are met.

- 2.11 Appropriate arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and such arrangements take into account Kenyan law and have regard to current safeguarding guidance in the United Kingdom. The school ensures that staff training enables pupils to be listened to and provided with early help. The particular vulnerability of pupils who have SEND is acknowledged and allowances are made for them. The primary and secondary schools each have a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who are assisted by deputies (DDSLs), one of whom has responsibility for the early years. All of these safeguarding leaders have an up-to-date level of training for their roles. All teaching and auxiliary staff receive annual training appropriate to their roles from the DSL, supplemented by regular online training.
- 2.12 A member of the Braeburn management group oversees the school's safeguarding arrangements and undertakes an annual review of safeguarding procedures. The school adheres to local child protection regulations, including making referrals to the Ministry as required. All new staff receive appropriate induction training which includes the school safeguarding policy, information about the identity and role of the DSLs, the staff code of conduct, whistleblowing procedures and acceptable use of technologies. Pupils receive suitable guidance relating to issues that might affect their welfare, health and safety through the PSHE programme, assemblies and tutor time.
- 2.13 Procedures to promote good behaviour are well known and understood by pupils and staff and are implemented effectively. A suitable system of rewards celebrates pupils' success, efforts and achievements, and appropriate sanctions are applied if the need arises. There are high standards of behaviour across both the primary and secondary sections of the school. Most parents feel that the pastoral provision is a strength of the school. Records are kept of all behavioural issues, and these are effectively monitored in order to identify any trends. Bullying, including cyber-bullying, is prevented as far as is reasonably practical and records demonstrate that bullying incidents are rare and are well managed when they do take place.
- 2.14 The school complies with relevant health and safety laws and fire safety standards including those that apply in Kenyan law and those required by the Braeburn group. Record-keeping is effective and demonstrates that there is an effective overview of health and safety procedures. Fire drills are carried out regularly; the procedures are well known to the pupils and are suitably recorded. There is a suitable system for the provision and maintenance of emergency routes and exits and an effective maintenance programme for fire detectors, alarms and extinguishers. Pupils of all ages are appropriately supervised throughout the school day and on school trips. The premises are maintained to a high standard of safety and hygiene. Admission and attendance registers are appropriately

maintained and also meet the Braeburn group requirements for the registration of pupils and logging of attendance.

- 2.15 The school has appropriate policies for first aid, and they are implemented effectively. School nurses are available to pupils in the medical facility on both the primary and secondary school sites. A small minority of pupils feel that first aid treatment is not always prompt. However, pupil discussions and records show that pupils who are ill or injured are almost always treated in a timely and appropriate manner. A suitable programme of comprehensive risk assessments has been drawn up for all areas of the primary and secondary schools and any related activities pupils undertake. These are regularly reviewed and approved by the senior managers of the Braeburn group.

Part 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

2.16 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.

- 2.17 The school carries out the required checks on staff, proprietors and any other adults working at the school to ensure their suitability to work with children, in line with Kenyan local requirements and guidance for schools in the UK. All non-Kenyan staff are required to obtain an appropriate visa to work in Kenya, which results in the issue of a right-to-work permit once suitable checks are completed. In addition, all UK nationals are checked through the disclosure and barring service (DBS), which includes a barred-list check, as well as through the international child protection certificate (ICPC) checks. All staff are required to be vetted by the Ministry of Education before a work permit is issued, and a certificate of good conduct is required for locally recruited staff. All members of the Braeburn management group are subject to appropriate checks and, in addition, must be approved by the Ministry of Education to serve as proprietors of the school.
- 2.18 A suitable single central register (SCR) of appointments, which details the recruitment checks undertaken, is maintained appropriately. Staff files include all of the required documentation and are well maintained, reflecting good practice in recruiting all categories of staff.

Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.19 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

- 2.20 The school provides good-quality washing and toilet facilities for pupils of all ages, including those in the early years. There is appropriate changing accommodation for all pupils and both school sections include a suitable medical room to cater for the needs of pupils who are unwell or injured. The premises are well maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety requirements, including those required by Kenyan law. Identified issues are reported promptly and rectified accordingly. Acoustic conditions and both internal and external lighting are suitable. The provision of drinking water is plentiful as water dispenser units are located throughout the school sections. Pupils benefit from a generous school site with a large grass playing field and recreation area, and separate play and recreation spaces for the younger pupils. There is good provision of outdoor spaces for physical education (PE) and play across the school site, including hard-court play areas, hockey pitches, basketball courts, an outdoor swimming pool, and for the younger pupils an adventurous play area. Across the primary and secondary school sites, suitable overhead shading for pupils is provided to manage hot weather conditions. In addition, in the primary school there is the provision of separate play areas for the early years children.

Part 6 – Provision of information

2.21 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

- 2.22 All of the required information to comply with the Standards is provided or made available to current parents and parents of prospective pupils. The contact details for the school, the heads, the chair of governors and a statement of the school's aims and ethos are published on the school's website. Policies and particulars of arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions; provision for pupils who have SEND and who speak EAL; the procedure for complaints; the curriculum; arrangements to promote good behaviour and to prevent bullying; health and safety and the school's provision for first aid are also made available on the school's website. The school's policy on safeguarding pupils is published on the school's website and the school provides a written report on each pupil's progress and attainment on at least a termly basis.

Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.23 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

- 2.24 The school's complaints procedure is available on the school's website and applies to all sections of the school. It allows for concerns and complaints to be considered on an informal basis and a formal procedure for complaints to be made in writing both to the individual school heads and to the Braeburn group. Should parents remain dissatisfied, they may request a hearing before a panel, which includes an independent member, and allows for parents to be accompanied. The panel may make findings and recommendations and keeps a confidential record of the findings, including action taken by the school, whether or not the complaint is upheld. The school's records indicate that most parents receive prompt responses to any concerns, almost all of which are resolved informally.

Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.25 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

- 2.26 The leadership and management of the school, including members of the Braeburn group, demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities so that the BSO standards are met consistently, and the wellbeing of pupils is promoted. Members of the Braeburn management group have an operational base located on the school premises and convene regular operational meetings to ensure that they are kept fully informed on school matters. In addition, individual members of the Braeburn group have a focused overview of safeguarding, health and safety and staff recruitment, and all board members are required to undertake appropriate training. This arrangement ensures that there is effective oversight and monitoring of the school's policies and procedures. Members of the Braeburn group are well informed and have a clear understanding, as do the school staff, of how to safeguard children and promote their wellbeing.
- 2.27 There is a consistent drive amongst senior leaders to continually look at where improvements can be made, the majority of which are clearly focused on matters relating to pupils' mental health and wellbeing. The majority of parents express satisfaction with the leadership and management of the school. Pupils throughout the school express how the support offered by their teachers and the physical environment of the school enhances their learning experience.
- 2.28 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the impact of leadership and management on pupils' learning, achievement and personal development.

3. Inspection of Educational Quality

Preface

In addition to evaluating whether or not the school met all of the Standards for British Schools Overseas, this inspection evaluated the **quality** of the school's work, focusing on the two key outcomes for pupils:

- the quality of the pupils' learning and achievement;
- the quality of the pupils' personal development;

Headline judgements of educational quality include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'. In addition, the text identifies clearly the impact of the curriculum, teaching, pastoral care, leadership and management on outcomes for pupils.

As ISI inspections of British schools overseas are for the benefit of the pupils, inspections aim to:

- 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;
- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education.

The report refers to year groups in accordance with the system most commonly used in England.

Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement is good.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Ensure that systems and procedures in the primary and secondary sections of the school are better aligned to support the curricular and pastoral transitions for pupils.
- Ensure pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are consistently developed across the school.
- Strengthen pupils' learning in Years 3 to 11 by implementing teaching and learning strategies that consistently engage pupils and are matched to their abilities.

The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement

3.4 The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement is good.

3.5 The achievement of pupils is good overall, and, in some cases, the individual achievement of pupils is excellent, with some pupils being nominated as top performers at IGCSE and A level in Kenya and Africa as a whole. In addition, in their business BTEC award a number of pupils obtained outstanding learner awards in the 2024 examinations. Attainment of pupils across all age groups is good, including for those who have SEND, who make good progress because of targeted support that promotes their learning. Pupils who speak EAL receive additional targeted support, which results in them making rapid progress from their starting points.

- 3.6 Data shows that pupils' attainment in their core subjects in the primary and secondary schools, based upon standardised testing, is broadly average when they join the school, but increases significantly as they progress through the school. A significant percentage of pupils join the primary section in Year 5 and 6 and by the time they reach Year 8 they are reaching levels of attainment that are consistently above average in English, mathematics and science using the same assessments. This is because leaders focus on developing progress in the key core subjects during these years, supported by appropriate interventions.
- 3.7 Performance at IGCSE has shown consistent improvements over the past three years with a notable increase in A* to A results in 2024. Results at AS level in 2024 indicated top awards for pupils in AS biology, drama and French. A-level results have in this time remained consistently good with around a quarter of pupils obtaining grades of A* to A. An increasing number of pupils are successfully engaging in BTEC-level subjects with results in business and sports being above average in relation to worldwide norms.
- 3.8 Tracking and monitoring systems enable staff to identify where pupils are underperforming. Where these are used effectively and suitable interventions are put in place, they have a positive impact on pupils' progress. In the early years and in sixth form in particular, pupils make good and sometimes rapid progress as they are mostly fully engaged in their lessons. However, progress is slower in some Year 3 to Year 11 lessons in which pupils are not as fully engaged in their learning and where activities are not well matched to their abilities. In some lessons, particularly in the sixth form, high levels of engagement and challenge were observed. Older pupils have high aspirations and are successful in gaining places at universities, some with demanding selection criteria both in the UK, Europe and overseas, with an increasing number of pupils opting to study further afield, in the United States and Canada.
- 3.9 The development of pupils' knowledge and skills is good and in a number of subjects excellent, for example in English, music and art in the primary school and in art, business, sports and product design in the secondary school. Higher prior-ability pupils in a Year 10 product and design lesson were able to confidently explain the importance of creating and presenting an effective design to a potential client by using effective modelling. Primary pupils make good progress through the use of creatively fostered and engaging projects such as puppet-making. They additionally enhance their learning and leadership skills by taking part in debating and group discussions. Although a small minority of pupils do not agree that most lessons are interesting, inspection evidence shows that a great deal of the teaching in both sections of the school captures the interest of the pupils. In some lessons seen in the early years and in the sixth form, pupils achieve at higher levels as a result of open-ended opportunities that provide additional challenges for their abilities.
- 3.10 Pupils' communication skills are excellent. Most pupils are lucid and mature, often sharing and presenting ideas thoughtfully. This was seen in a Year 10 English lesson, when studying the text *Things Fall Apart*, during which nearly all pupils were confident and articulate in analysing their sources. From the early years, pupils are actively encouraged to develop strong communication skills and are provided with many opportunities during lessons to collaborate and share ideas and opinions. In parallel to their excellent command of English, all pupils develop good, and often excellent, fluency and confidence in Swahili and a range of other world languages, many pupils being bi- or trilingual.
- 3.11 In the early years, the development of pupils' communication skills is good as they build up a strong understanding of phonics and develop their core skills rapidly. Likewise, numeracy is excellent, as demonstrated by children using mathematical language when threading beads to make a bracelet, correctly estimating the number of beads to complete a full bracelet. End-of-year data in the early years shows strong academic progression in almost all areas of learning, which is in part due to their excellent attitudes to learning.
- 3.12 Pupils' achievement in numeracy is excellent in the early years and the lower primary, and good in the middle primary stage, improving steadily through the upper primary stage of Year 7, with strong

attainment in Year 8. Pupils effectively apply their mathematical knowledge across subjects, including science, geography and music, demonstrating real-world application of skills. Those who continue mathematics beyond IGCSE make particularly strong progress, and BTEC pupils benefit from the embedding of numeracy in practical learning experiences. Access to mathematics competitions and intentional cross-curricular planning contribute to pupil confidence and engagement. For example, Year 9 physics pupils successfully measure angles to analyse refraction, progressing from early confusion to competence with highly effective teacher support. Year 2 pupils are successfully able to apply their knowledge of coins and notes to a real-life situation, effectively using mathematical language to explain their findings.

- 3.13 The development of pupils' competence in ICT is good and improving. They are not always able to apply these more widely to other areas of learning from Year 1 through to 11. Cross-curricular ICT integration in the secondary school is developing and leaders are addressing the challenge of slow network speeds, which will support the plan to allow more year groups to bring their own devices to school. Primary pupils routinely use online platforms, interactive quizzes and subject-specific software when opportunities are made available to them. Older pupils are beginning to embrace artificial intelligence (AI) as a learning tool to support their work. This is enhanced by the effective use of online platforms to enable pupils to communicate with their teachers. The quality of BTEC and extended project work in the sixth form is a reflection of sixth-form pupils' strengths in this area.
- 3.14 Pupils develop strong study skills, demonstrating curiosity, critical thinking and self-reflection, which are embedded across the curriculum. Independent learning is encouraged through structured questioning, strategic lesson planning, and the encouragement of research skills, with BTEC pathways further supporting research and synthesis skills. Pupils express a desire for more opportunities to develop these skills in lessons. They are increasingly being encouraged to take the initiative in their learning. In the early years and Years 1 and 2, pupils' development is excellent, as evidenced in classes where pupils independently draw on a range of sources to create their own picture of a mangrove. More limited opportunities for pupils to develop higher order thinking skills were evidenced in Years 5 to 8 in cases where lessons were being directed closely by the teacher, thus limiting this aspect of pupil development. Collaborative and independent study habits are however actively promoted, with senior pupils taking responsibility for assessing their own productivity. For example, in Year 9 mathematics, pupils effectively used online resources to research and revise independently, demonstrating their ability to manage their own learning.
- 3.15 Pupils' achievements in the early years and primary sections in both academic and other areas are excellent overall. End-of-year data shows strong academic results in all areas of the early years and primary compared to national averages. Pupils' successes and achievements outside the curriculum are excellent in both local, national and international competitions. All areas of the curriculum are represented, from modern foreign languages to sport, drama, music and leadership. Secondary pupils achieve well in a broad range of academic and extracurricular activities, reflecting the school's commitment to nurturing talent. Sporting success is evident, particularly in team disciplines, athletics and swimming, with pupils regularly competing at national and international levels. Standards in the performing arts are high, with pupils receiving external recognition from the Kenya Academy of the Dramatic Arts. Pupils have won an increasing number of academic prizes through the international examination boards, particularly those on the BTEC pathway. The current transition arrangements from the primary into the secondary school post-Year 8 are currently less well defined and need further embedding to allow a more seamless and effective integration of the curriculum and pastoral needs of the pupils as they move between the two sections of the school.
- 3.16 Pupils' attitudes towards learning in the early years and the lower primary are excellent. Pupils willingly work collaboratively, as evidenced in a Year 5 science lesson in which pupils understood how to use a pulley to lift increasingly heavier weights efficiently. Pupils across the schools work well together and take leadership in what they are required to do, demonstrating excellent attitudes towards their learning and each other. Partner work is consistently used and is a strength of the school.

This is due to a well-planned curriculum, good resources and enthusiastic teachers and leaders. In the secondary school, pupils display positive attitudes towards their learning, demonstrating motivation, engagement and age-appropriate independence. They work collaboratively with enthusiasm, taking initiative in group tasks and developing leadership skills through structured opportunities such as prefect and senator roles. Teachers foster a reflective learning environment, and most pupils respond well to supportive interventions that enhance their self-awareness and academic progress. For example, Year 13 pupils showed leadership in their PSHE lesson by leading discussions and problem-solving activities on independent living, including practical tasks such as mending clothes and planning shared meals.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

3.17 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- 3.18 The school is highly successful in achieving its vision to enable every pupil to be a successful learner, confident individual and responsible citizen. Pupils across the school respond positively to the high standards and expectations set by the leadership, including the governors and staff, and there is a strong sense of the Braeburn values and a shared focus. Pupils are ready to learn and most have the high levels of self-esteem required to fully involve themselves in lessons and the extensive activities the school provides for them in the activities programme. Achievement is rewarded, as evidenced when a number of Year 5 pupils rushed into a classroom bursting with pride having been awarded merits for demonstrating resilience in sport. Older pupils are self-reflective and have an objective awareness of their strengths and weaknesses. They are self-disciplined and informally assess risk without being overly fearful in everyday life. This was demonstrated by Year 11 pupils in PSHE who presented some mature and insightful observations on coping with examinations, tests, studies and sport and how they deal with the associated stress and pressures. Such attitudes result from the leader's creation of a positive learning environment, high expectations of the pupils and excellent relationships between pupils and their teachers.
- 3.19 Pupils throughout the school have an excellent understanding of the impact of decisions they make on their own success and wellbeing, as well as that of others. This is supported by regular discussions about school values and the qualities possessed by successful people. When discussing how to be a good friend in a Year 2 PSHE lesson, pupils were able to reflect and consider what constituted a good friend. They understood their responsibilities to each other and challenged unkindness. Older pupils consistently demonstrate high levels of self-motivation and focus, taking ownership of their learning and making well-informed decisions about their academic progress and wellbeing. Through the structured guidance of teachers, including clear success criteria in lessons and comprehensive university and careers support, pupils develop a deep understanding of the pathways available to them and the importance of strategic decision-making. Year 10 and 13 pupils are able to confidently explain their educational journey and the rationale for their decisions regarding IGCSE, BTEC and A-level options, as well as university choices and career aspirations.
- 3.20 Pupils develop a deep spiritual understanding, demonstrating reflection, empathy and an appreciation of diverse perspectives through a range of subjects and school initiatives. They articulate their values, beliefs and opinions with confidence, engaging thoughtfully in philosophical discussions and creative activities that encourage introspection. In the early years and Years 1 and 2, all pupils participate in a winter celebration of religious festivals. Pupils talk with great pride about their fellow pupils' religious celebrations. Pupils' appreciation of the non-material aspects of life is excellent and evidenced by their support of charity events and their appreciation of music, art and nature. This was demonstrated by pupils making comments such as "the sky is so big and strong – is it sad today?". In a Year 13 class, pupils collaborated in groups and explored factors that can affect mental health, discussing with conviction the importance of thoughts, feelings, moods and behaviours. Such discussions are a result of the leaders' creation of a positive learning environment, high expectations of pupils and the confidence that pupils have to engage in open discussion.

- 3.21 Pupils across the school demonstrate high moral standards and have an excellent understanding of the concept of what is right and wrong, accepting responsibility for their own behaviour and their behaviour towards others. When mistakes are made, they quickly recognise them and most take responsibility for their actions. Pupils believe that the school rules are fair, and most adhere to them. In the early years, pupils discussed consequences and were challenged to find the 'evil peas' and send them to jail as they had broken the rules. In a Year 13 pupil-led tutorial on mental health, pupils started with a period of meditation and self-reflection. Pupils then reflected upon the moral challenge of 'truth or lie' and were then able to explore moral principles and to distinguish right from wrong in the context of their own behaviour. The success of such discussions reflected the excellent relationships between pupils and their teacher and the effective support systems in place at a pastoral level.
- 3.22 Pupils are very socially aware and are able to work very effectively with others, including in solving problems and achieving common goals. Pupils mostly work very well together in the classroom, in activities and during breaks, as seen in the extensive use of the playing fields for a wide range of recreational activities during breaktimes and lunch periods. Pupils clearly enjoy working and playing together and benefit enormously from doing so. From the early years through to primary, pupils are confident and effective when working together in class. They enjoy project work and activities when collaboration is needed, as seen in a Year 4 drama lesson when collaborating to learn the lines for their upcoming show. They were reflective, enthusiastic and, during the course of the lesson, they identified strengths and weaknesses and worked to improve in these areas. In the secondary school, senior pupils collaborated highly effectively to deliver a topical presentation in an assembly for pupils on 'safer internet day', which explored issues of staying safe and raising awareness.
- 3.23 Younger pupils' contribution to school life and the community is excellent. Pupils speak with great pride about the initiatives that they have implemented to help local schools by running 'book drive' and helping the environment through planting trees. Pupils confidently suggest ideas within school to improve the school community. This was evidenced by the pupils' ability to record any maintenance issues to help the maintenance team, in addition to the routine staff reports. Older pupils make a significant contribution to the school and wider community, demonstrating leadership, empathy and a strong commitment to social responsibility. They actively participate in charity initiatives such as bake sales, tree planting and educational outreach, while also working collaboratively with parents and local organisations to support meaningful causes. Leadership roles, including house captains, prefects and sports ambassadors, provide pupils with opportunities to motivate peers and represent the school in both local and international settings. For example, senior pupils lead a Saturday teaching programme at a local Islamic primary school, supporting younger learners in their education and fostering a deep sense of civic responsibility.
- 3.24 In the early years, children talk confidently about their emotions and are able to successfully self-regulate. They show strong resilience and recognise that if they practise, they will improve. For example, children in group work collectively commented that they may not be good at the task yet, but that they were together trying hard and would improve, with the teacher's help. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy, explaining that they should eat an apple for a snack and drink water to ensure that the brain works properly. Their day is very active with plentiful opportunities for exercise, which they find to be stimulating and, in most cases, exciting.
- 3.25 Pupils take great pride in the international nature of their make-up, particularly in terms of the international contribution afforded by the many nationalities represented in the school. Pupils demonstrate high levels of tolerance, open-mindedness, interest and acceptance of one another's cultures and traditions. The school actively seeks to promote cultural festivals and awareness so that pupils can widen their cultural horizons, such as celebrating International Mother Tongue Day, Diwali and Ramadan. As a result, pupils develop an appreciation for both their own and others' identities. Through PSHE lessons, assemblies and pupil-led discussions, they develop curiosity and sensitivity, ensuring that all members of the school community feel valued and respected. For example, a Year 12 pupil attended a 'Garba' celebration with an Indian friend, embracing the experience by wearing

traditional clothing and participating in the cultural festivities. Younger pupils talked with delight about 'cultures day', during which pupils parade in their home culture dress. In discussions, pupils show tolerance and sensitivity for those of different backgrounds. This was well illustrated before a residential trip left the school, when pupils commented that they must ensure that they take a compass so that their friends who need to pray will know in which direction they should turn to pray.

- 3.26 Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and maintain both physical and mental wellbeing, demonstrating a strong commitment to leading a balanced lifestyle. Through PSHE lessons, school-wide initiatives and structured support from staff, they develop key knowledge in areas such as online safety, nutrition, exercise and mental resilience. Year 13 pupils in a tutorial session through self-reflection and discussion demonstrated a good understanding of the idea that their decisions are often determinants of their own wellbeing and discussed the impact of their decisions on themselves and on lower year groups. This knowledge enables pupils to build connections between how they think and the importance of their mental health.
- 3.27 School leaders actively promote a culture of wellbeing, offering extensive extra-curricular sports opportunities, a dedicated counselling team and pupil-led initiatives that reinforce the importance of self-care. The high level of involvement in the wide-ranging activities programme beyond the curriculum provided by the school demonstrates that whilst being academically ambitious, pupils also want to achieve a balance in their lifestyle. The school site, with its extensive grassed areas for play and recreation facilities, is much valued by the pupils. The school site and its immediate environment contribute highly successfully to enhancing pupils' experience of school life.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with members of the Braeburn group, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick and injured pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, pupils and staff to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Tony Halliwell	Reporting inspector
Mr Michael Clack	Team inspector (Regional head of schools, COBIS, UK)
Mr Barnaby Sandow	Team inspector (Principal, international school, Ireland)
Mrs Clare Turnbull	Team inspector (Former principal, HMC school, United Arab Emirates)
Mr Marcus Wild	Team inspector (Assistant principal, BSO school, Spain)