

# elc International School

## ISQM Accreditation Report

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Education Development Trust accreditation

The purpose of accreditation is to bring about school improvement. Although accredited status is often perceived as an end in itself, the process is underpinned by the principle that the school self-evaluation activities in which schools engage are of equal importance. In this sense, accreditation serves two goals:

- To provide a means by which parents and students are assured that the school has been judged by independent evaluators to meet rigorous quality standards;
- To support the school's development through moderation of its own self-evaluation.

The school improvement plan is crucial in ensuring ongoing development. The accreditation provides recommendations for the school, which should be incorporated into the school improvement plan.

#### Principles underpinning the accreditation model

- Accreditation criteria are rooted in high standards; they relate to international standards and benchmarks, and to other inspection regimes (for example, Ofsted (England) and, in the case of Thailand, ONESQA from the Thai ministry)
- It is a cost-effective means of providing quality assurance
- The model is developmental – it is grounded in self-evaluation with the school providing an evaluation of its own performance

#### Grades awarded

Judgements are made on a four-point scale as:

- Grade 1: Outstanding
- Grade 2: Good
- Grade 3: Satisfactory
- Grade 4: Unsatisfactory

#### Accreditation status

Gold accredited status is awarded when the school is given Grade 1 meaning **Outstanding judgements in all** of the following sections:

- Standards and achievement
- Teaching and learning
- Leadership and management

Silver accredited status is awarded when the school is given at least Grade 2 or higher meaning **Good judgements or higher in all** of the following sections:

- Standards and achievement
- Teaching and learning
- Leadership and management

Bronze accredited status is awarded when the school is given at least Grade 3 or higher meaning **Satisfactory judgements or higher in all** of the following sections:

- Standards and achievement
- Teaching and learning
- Leadership and management

## Evidence base

This ISQM verification inspection was carried out by a team of four Education Development Trust inspectors. Inspectors visited 63 lessons and attended 25 meetings. Inspectors looked at work in students' books and evaluated coursework. Inspectors also reviewed school documentation on students' progress, health and safety as well as safeguarding arrangements.

## 2. School context

elc International School is a private, family-owned co-educational day school. It was founded in 1987, moving to the current premises in 1997. It was one of the first international schools in Malaysia. The school is set in attractive and spacious grounds. The school is a smaller-than-average-sized school with 725 students on roll. The school accepts students from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures and religions. There are 33 nationalities represented across the school, with 50% of the school's population having a Malaysian heritage. The majority of students speak English as an additional language and are competent bilinguals. Many students start school at various times through each academic year.

In the early years, children follow the early years foundation stage curriculum. From Year 1, students follow the English national curriculum which is enhanced further, for example, by a project-based approach to teaching and learning. In Year 11, students sit International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) examinations. On leaving the school, almost all students attend places at higher education and frequently go on to attend universities in Malaysia, Australia, the United States of America and the United Kingdom.

There is approximately one teacher for every nine students. Staff are a mixture of Malaysian and expatriates, with a range of international experience. Staff and students are encouraged by the name of the school to strive for **e**xcellence, **l**oyalty and **c**ommitment.

The school is located at Jalan Sierramas Barat, Sungai Buloh, Kuala Lumpur.

## Report summary

### Accreditation status

elc International School is recognised as having met the required standards for accreditation.

The school has been awarded the Education Development Trust International School Quality Mark at **Gold level** which reflects the **Outstanding judgements** described within this report.

This accreditation is valid from 16 May 2018 to 16 May 2023.

## Overview of main strengths and areas for development

### Report headlines

- elc International School is an outstanding school which has significantly improved since the last accreditation in 2015. The school provides an outstanding quality of education and caters successfully for all students, particularly for the large proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- From starting points which vary when children start school in the early years, progress is outstanding in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). A number of students also start at various times during the school year. These students are

supported well and settle quickly into school life. As a result, they very quickly make the same outstanding progress as others in the school.

- By the end of their time in early years, children have developed skills which are above those typically expected for their age. Standards reached by the end of primary are well above curriculum expectations. Standards reached in secondary are also very high.
- Students are exceptionally proud of their happy and friendly school. The huge respect students have for one another and the staff is the hallmark of this outstanding school. From the youngest children in early years to the oldest in Year 11, students encourage one another to strive for excellence in all they do.
- Overall, the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is outstanding and teachers use their exceptionally strong subject knowledge to inspire students to achieve outstandingly well. Teaching is confident and lessons are planned very carefully. As a result, students love learning and are very keen to arrive at school and to lessons.
- There are many strengths within the outstanding curriculum, not least the way in which it enhances students' personal development and sense of self-worth.
- The school's care and support for the students are also remarkably strong. By the time students leave school, they have grown into well-rounded young people able to make a valuable contribution to society.
- The school's partnership with parents and the community is outstanding; parents speak exceptionally highly of the leadership of the school's chief executive officer, principal and senior staff. Students have an exceptionally strong sense of social responsibility and take a full and active role in school life and the wider community.
- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The highly effective senior leadership team, in partnership with the very well-informed board of directors, have led improvements with clarity of vision and relentless determination.
- Systems to monitor the work of the school are also well considered and firmly embedded into the day-to-day running of school life. As a result, self-evaluation is robust and accurate. Leaders acknowledge that the next step on the journey of development is to improve further the transition between key stage 1 and key stage 2 so it is even smoother and so the high standards and outstanding progress seen in Year 2 can be maintained.

### **Recommended areas for development**

- Improve further the transition between key stage 1 and key stage 2 so it is even smoother and the high standards and outstanding progress seen in Year 2 can be maintained.

### **Standard 1: The standards reached by students in their work and the progress they make in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT)**

#### **Highlights and recommendations**

- Progress in English, mathematics, science and ICT is outstanding.
- By the end of their time in early years, children have developed skills which are above those expected for their age and are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above curriculum expectations by the end of key stage 2.

- Students reach standards which are well above international expectations by the time they leave school.
- Standards across the school have been consistently high for the past three years.
- High standards are also prevalent in other subjects such as art, geography and history.
- Students who speak English as an additional language are supported exceptionally well.

Students' progress in **English** is outstanding. Children enter the early years with the skills expected for their age, although this is variable within each year group. In 2017, children's good level of development significantly exceeded the national average for England. Learning in lessons and in children's journals confirm the very strong progress they make. Children's speaking skills strengthen across early years due to their open discussions with each other and thoughtful responses to teachers' questions. By the end of Reception, most children can write letters and some write words and phrases from memory. Through well-planned, personalised opportunities for discussion, reading and writing, children's attainment and progress accelerates in all aspects of communication and language.

In 2017, students' attainment in the Cambridge Primary Checkpoint tests at the end of key stage 2 was very high, representing outstanding progress from students' various starting points. By Year 6, students are able to write accurately for different purposes, including biography, news reports and mythological story writing. They compose poetry with feeling in the style of a chosen poet and they use the language of critique to analyse literature. Exposure to different texts is developing students' evaluative and analytical skills well in Year 5. From the start of key stage 2, students use a variety of strategies to think about the quality of their writing such as grammar colour codes and planning pyramids.

Students continue to make excellent progress across the secondary phase. For example, in Year 7, students choose emotive language such as 'perturbed' and 'ominous' to convey atmosphere in a piece of gothic writing. In Year 8, students discuss the writer's tone in depth, defining it as 'the look on the writer's face when writing the text'. By Year 10, students' sophisticated use of language enables them to evaluate the subtleties of character portrayal, together with contradictions in the text. Students have a strong understanding of the requirements of the awarding body and they internalise this to drive forward their own learning in English.

Students' attainment in IGCSE English language and literature at A\*-A and A\*-C has been well above international averages for the past three years. In 2017, performance at A\*-A in English language was quite exceptional at 74%.

Students' progress in **mathematics** is outstanding. Children in the early years make excellent progress in measuring, recognising numbers and identifying various shapes. By the end of their time in the Nursery and Reception classes, they are exceptionally well equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful learners in Year 1. In 2017, the proportion of children who attained a good level of development was significantly higher than the average for England. Outstanding progress continues through key stage 1 so that, by the end of Year 2, students reach standards which are well above those typically expected for their age. For example, students are skilled at collating information, presenting it in bar chart form and are able to draw simple conclusions from their work.

Students' overall progress throughout key stage 2 is also outstanding and standards are high. In 2017, students' attainment in the Cambridge Primary Checkpoint tests at the end of key stage 2 was very high, representing outstanding progress from students' various starting points. For example, students in Year 4 know that a traditional kite shape has two pairs of lines and that a trapezium has one set of parallel lines with two acute angles and two obtuse. By the end of Year 6, all students can confidently multiply and subtract various fractions, reducing them to their lowest form and identifying common denominators.

At the end of Year 11 in 2017, 98% of students attained grades A\*-C in their IGCSE examinations. This is well about the international average of 68.1%. These high standards have been maintained for the past three years. Students in Year 11 are currently making excellent progress, as they prepare for their IGCSE examinations.

Students' progress in **science** is outstanding. When they begin the early years, children's understanding of the world around them is broadly typical for their age. They make excellent progress, for example, in learning how the lungs function and the impact of smoking on healthy lungs. They know that we breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide. Children are very well prepared to start Year 1. Students make strong progress in key stage 1, for example in understanding how molecules behave as ice melts and in asking questions such as, 'what actual temperature is room temperature?' By the end of Year 2, the proportion of students who reach standards expected for their age far exceeds that found in England and many work at a greater depth than these standards.

This outstanding progress continues throughout key stage 2 so that, by the end of the primary phase, students reach standards which are well above curriculum expectations. In Year 6, students are able to think scientifically, and ask appropriate questions. Their observational skills develop well, and they are able to make sensible predictions based on evidence, for example, that as the wire in a circuit lengthens, so resistance increases, and voltage decreases.

In secondary classes, students continue to make rapid progress in relation to their starting points. Students demonstrate the ability to analyse and evaluate information; and they show growing technical proficiency in laboratory skills. Students demonstrate excellent collaborative skills and are able to explain their methods and their conclusions. They can link what they learn to their own lives, and to other areas of the curriculum. Students make outstanding progress in chemistry; and exceptionally good progress in physics and biology, because they are skilled learners who have high expectations of themselves. In 2017, students' attainment in IGCSE biology, chemistry and physics A\*-C was well above international averages.

Students' progress in **ICT** is outstanding. Students start to learn the basics from early years. Young children use the computers confidently to practise addition and subtraction. Students develop their skills well across key stage 1 and, by Year 2, they are able to use email and some use spreadsheets. In a Year 3 lesson, students were keen to show their ability to create computer games using 'Scratch'.

Across key stage 3 and key stage 4, students' skills in computing and programming deepen as they understand the development of ICT over time and its impact on society. In Year 10, the depth of students' knowledge and understanding of programming is impressive. For instance, students think deeply and are able to identify the similarities between the 'IF' statements in pseudocode and the 'if' statement in Python.

This building of students' skills in ICT culminates in strong attainment in IGCSE computer science; in 2017, outcomes were well above the world average at both A\*-A and A\*-C grades.

## **Standard 2: Students' personal development**

### **Highlights and recommendations**

- Attendance and punctuality are excellent, which indicate how positive students' attitudes are, and how highly they value the opportunities offered.
- The behaviour of students in lessons and around school is impeccable.
- Students show high levels of mutual respect for, and tolerance of, one another; they are sensitive to others' feelings and opinions, and have a highly developed sense of right and wrong.
- Students and teachers have warm and cordial relationships, which are based on mutual respect and courtesy, and which support and enhance the learning environment.
- By the time they reach the end of Year 6, students are confident, mature and articulate, and prepared well for their secondary education.
- Students are aware of the needs of others who are less fortunate than themselves.

Students' personal development is outstanding. In all key stages, students are highly enthusiastic about all that the curriculum offers, both in lessons and in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. This is reflected in high levels of attendance at school. Behaviour is impeccable across all year groups, in response to teachers' quiet insistence on appropriate standards. Students are exceptionally polite and welcoming to visitors. Students form constructive relationships with their teachers and with each other.

Students reject all forms of hurtful behaviour, because they are aware of their responsibility to contribute to an inclusive school environment, and also because they are aware their behaviour affects others. In common with all members of the community, students have a clear commitment to the central values of the school of excellence, loyalty and commitment.

Students naturally collaborate in constructive ways in lessons and are considerate and caring. In the early years, children learn how to look after one another and work well together. As students move into primary and secondary classes, they work together to solve problems and they share in the organisation of community activities.

Students listen attentively to the views of others; this is a social attribute which also helps them make academic progress, as they can learn from others' views. Students value the religious and cultural diversity of the school community, which reflects the society in which they live. They have an open-minded and outward-looking approach to others.

The range and quality of extra-curricular activities which the school organises (two periods of 50 minutes each) makes a distinctive contribution to the students' personal development, including opportunities for showing resilience, teamwork and leadership responsibility. Carefully planned personal, social and health education (PSHE) programmes support effectively the development of these qualities. Similarly, the system of prefects, librarians, house captains, along with duties in primary classes, extend opportunities to lead, take responsibility, and make a contribution to the school community.

The school values students' talents just as much as their academic strengths, with all contributions welcomed and celebrated. Students are recognised in many fields through the 'star of the week' awards and house points for effort and progress. These contribute to students' high levels of self-esteem.

Trips out of school broaden the students' outlook, from a visit to the fire station in the early years to the Model United Nations in Shanghai for senior students. In the secondary year groups, students are quick to accept responsibility for initiating and organising activities, for example the international understanding day, prefect camp, and a student-led magazine, 'Scribes'. There is growing support for the Model United Nations and for the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award. Last year, through the Interact organisation, students raised RM40K for causes chosen by them, including spina bifida, palliative care and an orphanage. Students say that they believe that access to a good education is a privilege rather than a right, and it confers certain responsibilities, which they recognise and embrace.

### **Standard 3: Teaching and learning**

#### **Highlights and recommendations**

- Teachers are trained well and have an excellent understanding of how children in the early years, and students across the rest of the school, acquire knowledge and develop learning skills
- Teachers take advantage of internal and external professional development and training opportunities. They share regularly their exemplary practice with colleagues across the school.
- Teachers know their students exceptionally well. They plan lessons carefully, so that all students are constantly engaged. As a result, students make outstanding progress in a broad range of subjects.

- Teachers are expert in developing students' leadership skills, giving them the confidence to engage in meaningful dialogue with each other and to work independently.
- Teaching and learning take place within a climate of mutual respect. Teachers enjoy an exceptionally high degree of trust from students, ensuring that students' outstanding academic ability matches their personal and social development.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They take advantage of regular continuous professional development and training which enhance their performance and ensure that they are up-to-date with the most recent developments in their respective subject specialisms. Regular checks of students' work books, learning walks and lesson observations are highly effective. They provide heads of department and senior leaders with an in-depth and accurate view of the quality of teaching. Any areas of teaching, which are not quite as effective as they could be, are immediately identified and staff supported to improve.

Senior leaders have compelling information which reveals that the professional dialogue between leaders and teachers helps to maintain the outstanding quality of teaching evident in almost all classes. Teachers are especially appreciative of the opportunities they have to learn from best practice. They are confident to share 'what works', as well as aspects of teaching which are not as productive as expected, on their quest to continually improve.

Teachers manage time well, ensuring that learning moves forward at a brisk pace. Lesson objectives are always clear and shared with students. Teachers encourage students to check learning outcomes at the end of lessons and assess whether they think success criteria have been met. Teachers are expert at asking searching questions which encourage students to work closely with their peers, think deeply about their learning and discover new knowledge and information about the world around them. Teachers know students well and ensure that they are challenged consistently to achieve to the absolute best of their ability.

All teachers carefully apply assessment procedures and adhere to policies which require them to give considered feedback to students on their work. Teachers explain what students need to do to improve. This helps students to identify their strengths and know what they need to do to take the next steps in their learning. In addition, regular meetings between subject teachers and classteachers, enable them to provide tailored guidance and support for students. Such support is available to the most able students as well as those in need of help to 'boost' their progress.

Almost all students know exactly what they need to do to refine their skills in subjects such as mathematics and science, and enhance their writing in subjects including English, history and geography. This is because time is made available for them to complete 'reflection after units', engage in peer feedback, circle time, and consider their learning during homeroom time. Key stage 1 students manage their own learning journal checks, engage in peer marking and check to see if they have realised learning objectives.

Trainee teachers, who all hold university diploma or degree qualifications, provide additional support. They are deployed effectively and help to maintain high standards in all classes. Trainees help with reading in early years and with projects in key stages 1 and 2.

Teachers use information, including data, formative assessments and results from previous external tests to tailor their lessons and schemes of work. However, they are not afraid to adjust tasks, for example, if students are finding it difficult to grasp a new concept.

## Standard 4: The curriculum

### Highlights and recommendations

- The curriculum is designed well and meets the educational needs of almost all students, enabling them to make outstanding progress from their different starting points. This includes the most able as well as those who need support to catch up to their peers.
- The curriculum is modified appropriately to account for the local, international and culturally diverse context of the school. Students' traditions, cultural backgrounds and beliefs are respected and valued by all members of the school community.
- The school offers an extensive range of extra-curricular activities to students throughout the academic year.
- Education for students' health, well-being and personal development needs is outstanding.
- Students excel in their studies of the broad range of IGCSE subjects on offer.
- By the time students leave school at the end of Year 11, all are exceptionally well prepared for the next phase of their education.

The school's curriculum is outstanding. Children follow the early years foundation stage curriculum and primary students follow the national curriculum for England. In secondary, students prepare for the Cambridge IGCSE syllabuses. The curriculum is designed exceptionally well and meets the educational needs of almost all students, enabling them to make outstanding progress from their different starting points. The personal, social and academic needs of all students are catered for to a very high standard, this includes those who are most able, as well as those who need support to catch up to their peers.

The curriculum is appropriately modified to account for the local, international and culturally diverse context of the school. Students' various traditions, cultural backgrounds and beliefs are respected, celebrated and valued by all members of the school community. The school's approach to valuing diversity helps to ensure that all students learn in a cordial, studious community where mutual respect is given paramount importance.

Students' learning is developed exceptionally well through core subjects, including English, mathematics, science and ICT, and enhanced through a broad range of additional subjects, including art, music, physical education (PE) and business studies. The curriculum is enhanced further through an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. Students are encouraged to develop a sense of social responsibility. Many 'sign up' to become scouts and members of the St John's Ambulance service.

Students have won national and international competitions and acquired The Federation of British International Schools in Asia (FOBISIA) awards for many sports, including football, basketball and swimming. In 2016, the school won first place in the under-11 girls' football. Students also won the Asia Tigers' Cup (little league for under-12s) 2016, and many students have won both individual and/or team events in many of the FOBISIA mathematics challenges.

The curriculum provides many opportunities for students to showcase other talents. Recently, students from across the school organised a performance of traditional Chinese compositions by Yiruma, a renowned Korean composer; a computing day, which included a robotics demonstration, and various language competitions, including in Mandarin.

Senior leaders and departmental heads review the curriculum both rigorously and regularly, canvassing students' views on the quality of teaching and the content of the curriculum. Subject leaders' action plans outline the curriculum priorities to be addressed each year. Key priorities in all core and additional subjects are used to inform whole-school planning.

Highly effective programmes are in place to meet students' personal development, social and academic needs. All students in the secondary school have benefitted from teaching and support activities designed

to promote their well-being; recently, this has been rolled out to students in the upper primary school. All students benefit from a comprehensive personal, social, health and citizenship programme which allows them to engage in topical debate and develop their awareness of social issues such as homelessness and environmental issues.

Older students benefit from helpful careers advice and guidance. Students are also guided in writing CVs and personal statements. Classes are available to prepare them for the world of further education, training and employment. In 2017, all students who left school went on to study further education and A-level courses.

## **Standard 5: The quality and quantity of the school's accommodation and resources**

### **Highlights and recommendations**

- Leaders have created stimulating learning environments for all students. The water features, green spaces and trees create a sense of peace and tranquility in a lush landscape.
- Well-chosen improvements to accommodation enhance students' learning experiences, such as the early years and key stage 1 classrooms and the new performing arts complex.
- Resources are chosen judiciously for their potential in making a difference to students' learning experiences.
- Recruitment procedures are robust and enable leaders to select like-minded professionals for the school.
- A diverse range of professional development opportunities is improving the skills of all members of the school community.

The quality of the school's accommodation is outstanding. Leaders take every opportunity to create a peaceful, vibrant site, both indoor and outdoor, through plants, water features and brilliant displays and celebrations of students' work. The significant improvements to the early years and key stage 1 classrooms have created large, stimulating learning areas in which teachers provide opportunities for free-flow activities at different levels. This approach is developing well students' creative, physical and communication skills, together with their growing levels of independence. Covered areas allow students to socialise and eat outside.

Key stage 2 and secondary students also benefit from a range of resources to support their learning, including a well-stocked library and a new performing arts building. Sports facilities, staffed by professional coaches, are used well and include a large, grassed sports ground and two swimming pools. Resources are chosen well to support the academic progress of students in classes, including the 'working wall' displays which further enhance learning. Students' personal development is supported exceptionally well through the effective use of professionals such as a counsellor.

A rigorous approach to recruitment ensures that all staff are suited well to the school's philosophy and vision. All teaching staff are educated to degree level and have a teaching qualification or are working towards a professional qualification such as the Cambridge International Diploma in Teaching and Learning (CIDTL). Members of staff are committed to furthering their professional development through sharing good practice and the school's peer mentoring scheme. For example, in the early years and key stage 1 department, weekly training sessions are developing teachers' understanding of what strong teaching, learning and assessment look like through matching students' work to standards.

There is a very favourable adult-to-student ratio in most classrooms, allowing teachers and support staff to

meet the full range of students' needs.

## **Standard 6: How well the school cares for and supports its students**

### **Highlights and recommendations**

- Leaders are committed to providing high quality care and their persistent and proactive approach secures students' safety and welfare.
- Students' arrival to, and departure from, the school are organised well and warm greetings from teachers and security guards ensure a positive start to the day.
- There is a strong emphasis on the development of students' understanding of social responsibility, healthy living and keeping themselves safe.
- The school offers a broad range of internal and external professionals to provide high quality support and guidance to students of all ages.
- Students' views are sought through one-to-one discussions and through more formal procedures, such as the survey of their views of teachers.
- Leaders place high priority on ensuring the robust security of the school site and rigorous maintenance keeps the building safe.
- High expectations and robust systems for behaviour and conduct result in respectful and caring behaviour from students of all ages.

The school cares for and supports its students outstandingly well. Leaders place students' well-being, safety and welfare at the heart of all that it does. Child protection procedures are defined well and the escalation of referrals is made clear to all staff in the school's policy; this works well in practice. Information is held confidentially and there is strong liaison across all members of the pastoral care team. Students access a broad range of internal and external professionals, including the school counsellor, the school nurse and, where needed, the chief executive officer. The addition of the post of director of student welfare has enabled the coordination of the range of support and continual enhancement of the provision. As a result of high quality guidance, students feel safe and secure and they know where to go to discuss any problems, either academic or personal.

Induction procedures are strong and a warm welcome is extended to new students. For example, students join a class for two full days ahead of any decision about their full-time attendance. These visitors are embraced into classes by staff and students alike; as a result, they settle well.

Bullying is not tolerated at the school and instances are exceptionally rare; they are dealt with promptly and robustly. Students learn about the school's anti-bullying stance through assemblies, drama and posters. Leaders are now focusing upon the responsibility of 'bystanders' in any potential bullying incident. This is one way in which students develop a strong sense of social responsibility, but there is also a wealth of other opportunities on offer to them to make a difference. They not only fundraise but also visit the places to which they make a donation of money or things they have created, such as the local hospice.

The extensive site is secure and school guards are highly efficient and vigilant in their duties throughout the school day. Prompt maintenance through a 'repair not replace' policy, together with continual cleaning, ensures that school buildings are both safe and hygienic and that the verdant grounds remain attractive. Dining areas are clean and catering offers a range of nutritious food from which parents can choose for their children. This adds an extra layer of check on students' allergies. Breakfast snacks are on offer to all students upon arrival as some have had early starts to their journeys. Water is available for all students throughout the school day and covered areas keep students safe from the sun.

Scheduled robust checks are made on facilities including fire equipment. Termly fire drills take place, including one with local fire officers, so that students are very familiar with the importance of evacuation procedures. Highly effective systems and procedures for medical care are in place, including robust procedures for dealing with head injuries. The team of trained first-aid personnel includes older students. Medical and contact details are given at students' point of entry to the school. Further medical checks are made ahead of educational visits and there are rigorous systems for planning trips.

School transport systems are of a high quality. Regular servicing ensures that students are safe and comfortable when travelling to school; driver checks are completed. Vigilance by the guards for the arrival and departure of all vehicles ensures an orderly start and finish to the day. Teachers extend a warm welcome to students as they arrive and this sets the tone for the day.

## **Standard 7: The school's partnership with parents and the community**

### **Highlights and recommendations**

- Parents speak exceptionally positively about their children's experience of school life.
- The information parents receive regarding their children's achievements is of a high standard.
- Parents know that their views are valued by school leaders and any concerns are resolved quickly.
- Parents appreciate all the school does to help develop children's self-esteem and confidence to become mature young people.

The school's partnerships with parents and the community are outstanding. Parents say that they are able to communicate quickly and effectively with the school and that staff are, 'always quick to respond'. Parents also confirm that they are delighted their children enjoy school life and are keen to attend.

The school provides parents with a wide range of easily accessible, helpful information. This enables parents to access information about their child, including attainment, attendance, timetables and the curriculum. The school's electronic communication system (ECHO) provides parents with regular updates about what is happening in school.

The school has a complaints procedure in place and parents say that leaders are very responsive when dealing with any issues. There have been no formal complaints since the last accreditation. Parents report that the school's open-door policy makes it very easy for them to talk to someone about any concerns they may have and that the school deals with these quickly and effectively. Parents also state they, 'particularly appreciate the straight talking of the chief executive officer and principal. We are told when things are going well, but also if a mistake has been made and how things are going to be made better.' This openness is the hallmark of outstanding partnership.

The school has strong links with the community. Students regularly raise funds for a variety of local, national and international charities. Students are proactive and encouraged to take the initiative for themselves. Heart-warming examples were observed where even the youngest students were taking it upon themselves to support and encourage new children to the school, without being asked or prompted.

## **Standard 8: Leadership and management**

### **Highlights and recommendations**

- The leadership of the principal and senior leaders is outstanding. Leadership responsibility is distributed very effectively among the team. This has resulted in a great many improvements since the time of the school's last accreditation.

- Highly effective heads of divisions and subject leaders monitor the aspects for which they are responsible and have clear plans for further improvement.
- The passion and commitment of the highly experienced chief executive officer is also evident. The chief executive officer has a very clear vision for excellence as well as a drive and determination that ensure this outstanding school continues to improve.
- The principal and senior staff are exceptionally ambitious and consider carefully how this outstanding school can continue to improve. For example, they have already identified the need to press on with further improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in some of the Year 3 and Year 4 classes so transition between key stage 1 and key stage 2 can be even better.

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. Led by the inspiration and experience of the chief executive officer and the principal, senior leaders have a clear vision for excellence. Together, senior leaders have a shared drive and determination to make sure this outstanding school continues to thrive. Leaders at all levels have a shared belief that students should enjoy their time at school and have the very best start in life.

Leaders use assessment information effectively to measure the standards reached and the progress made by individual students. They then use this information to analyse where best to deploy additional resources so students make the fastest possible progress and reach their full potential.

Heads of department play an exceptionally important role in making sure students receive a well-considered education. Leaders have made sure that arrangements for managing the performance of staff are thought through carefully and are established well. Staff receive a wide variety of training and professional development opportunities. While staff turnover is very low, new teachers are made to feel welcome and induction arrangements are very good. Support and mentoring for staff are highly effective.

Excellent appointments have been made. For example, the highly experienced and visionary head of early years and key stage 1 has led a root-and-branch reform of provision in these phases. A significant building programme is now complete and all staff are delivering highly effective early years provision. The excellent quality of teaching, now extending into Year 1 and Year 2, is firmly established. Leaders have rightly identified the need to continue to improve the transition between key stage 1 and key stage 2 so it is even smoother and so the high standards seen in students' work and the outstanding progress they make in Year 2 can be maintained.

School leaders provide exceptionally positive role models for staff and students alike. The principal is a very positive presence around the school and is always available for whoever needs support, guidance or encouragement. One parent explained, 'the reason we brought our children to this school is because we know everyone thinks of our children as their own.'

The school is administered expertly by a board of directors. These visionary members are ambitious and highly effective in the management of finance, staffing, premises, admissions and staff appointments. The separate responsibilities of the board and the school's professional leaders are clearly understood and respected. The principal ensures the chief executive officer and board members are very well informed about the strengths of the school. Everyone is always looking for new ways to make this outstanding school even better. Leaders have been successful in fulfilling their vision of having an outstanding school with **e**xcellence, **l**oyalty and **c**ommitment at its heart.