



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

British Schools Overseas

Inspection Report

Blanchelande College, Guernsey

October 2018



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School's Details

College	Blanchelande College			
Address	Les Vauxbelets St Andrews Guernsey GY6 8XY			
Telephone number	01481 237200			
Email address	office@blanchelande.sch.gg			
Principal	Mr Robert O'Brien			
Chair of governors	Mr Robert Hutchinson			
Age range	4 to 16			
Number of pupils on roll	369			
	Boys	112	Girls	257
	EYFS	16	Juniors	137
	Seniors	216		
Inspection dates	16 to 19 October 2018			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Blanchelande College is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged from 4 to 16. The school is Roman Catholic in its foundation, and is recognised by the diocese of Portsmouth. Originally founded in 1902, the school was re-established in 1992, moving to its present site in 1999. It is a non-profit organisation with three trustees and a board of governors who respectively oversee the finances and the educational work of the school. The primary part of the school consists of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), infant and junior sections. The senior part includes Years 7 to 11.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection in October 2014, the school has appointed a new principal and has admitted boys to the senior part of the school. It has established a new medical room and a dedicated centre for art, music and drama, and provided additional facilities for information and communication technology (ICT).

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 Blanchelande College strives for excellence and high achievement in all that it does by providing a stimulating, broad and balanced curriculum that is relevant to, and challenging for, each pupil. By nurturing pupils' potential, the school aims to identify and develop their unique skills so that they may grow in self-confidence, independence and compassion.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils are drawn from families in the wider community of Guernsey and reflect the social, economic, ethnic and cultural character of the island. The overall ability of the pupils is average but with a wide spread. The school has identified 109 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and provides 41 of these with specialist support for a range of needs including dyslexia, dyscalculia and autism. There are five pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) and one of these receives additional support. Pupils who are more able are provided with differentiated challenges in class and through project work.

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. It also takes account, where relevant, of compliance with any local requirements.

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.

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 October 2014.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets all the Standards for British Schools Overseas and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

Part 1 – Quality of education provided

2.2 The Standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers a suitable breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils of all abilities and needs from the EYFS onwards to make typically excellent progress, encompasses effective behaviour management, is supportive of fundamental British values, and is underpinned by educationally enriching resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the quality of the 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

- 2.5 The Standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**
- 2.6 Principles and values, including fundamental British values, are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of all pupils from the EYFS onwards as responsible, tolerant, democratic, law-abiding citizens. The pupils develop a good understanding of the legal and political institutions of Guernsey and of the United Kingdom. They are aware of the importance of maintaining balanced views of political matters. A small minority of senior pupils said in their questionnaire responses that they do not get good advice about their choices of subject or career. Because there is no sixth form, the school relies upon other schools and colleges on the island to provide at least some of the required guidance on available advanced courses to its pupils. The school provides suitable guidance on GCSE subjects and on careers, with work experience and aptitude tests supporting the latter. However, following the appointment of a head of careers, the leadership is aware that further improvements are needed.
- 2.7 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

- 2.8 The Standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16] are met.**
- 2.9 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils from the EYFS onwards by means that pay due regard to the current guidance provided to schools in England and in Guernsey; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements laid down by local regulations are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required by the States of Guernsey, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. The requirements of pupils with SEND are taken fully into account.

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

- 2.10 The Standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**
- 2.11 Noting the guidance provided by the DfE for schools in England, the school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, and its trustees and governors. A suitable register is maintained as required.

Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.12 The Standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**
- 2.13 Suitable toilet and changing facilities and appropriate accommodation for the medical and therapy needs of the pupils are provided. The improvements made to the medical accommodation for pupils meet the action point of the previous inspection. The premises located in historic buildings in a rural setting are maintained to a standard commensurate with local health and safety requirements; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Extensive outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

Part 6 – Provision of information

2.14 The Standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

2.15 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents and inspectors. This includes details about the trustees and governors, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for pupils with SEND or for whom English is an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is one of many policies posted on the school's website.

Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.16 The Standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

2.17 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a four-stage process, (informal, two formal, and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the fourth stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

2.19 The trustees and governors ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other Standards are consistently met within the context of a British-oriented international school in Guernsey, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.20 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the impact of leadership and management on the 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. Where the school's own names differ from those used in England, the details are given in the table below:

Key findings

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

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

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised in the context of excellent outcomes to make the following improvements:

- Develop the pupils' understanding of other faiths.
- Strengthen the involvement of pupils in decision-making within the school.

The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement

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

3.5 Guided by the Roman Catholic ethos of the school, the teachers and the leadership, with the strong encouragement of those governing the school, invariably treat the pupils as individuals, and the pupils in turn respond exceptionally well to the encouragement they receive. The pupils greatly enjoy their work in and out of the classroom, and participate with enthusiasm in the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them. The strong commitment of the pupils to the academic and wider life of the school enables them to flourish and achieve much success relative to their ages, needs and abilities. The vast majority of parents in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses agreed that the range of subjects provided by the school is suitable, that the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, and that the school meets the educational needs of their children effectively.

- 3.6 A flexible curriculum responsive to many individual needs contributes greatly to the success of pupils: for example, older pupils are able to take additional GCSE subjects such as further mathematics and ICT outside the normal curriculum; and teaching assistants in the infant and junior parts of the school provide targeted support for many pupils.
- 3.7 Senior pupils make excellent and often exceptional progress from their starting points in many subjects and especially so in English, English literature, French, and mathematics; however, the progress of senior pupils in the sciences is less marked. Pupils with SEND make exceptional progress in English. The school's GCSE examination results during the period 2015 to 2018 reflect this progress. Children in the EYFS and infant and junior pupils, in the classes observed and through the work examined, made rapid progress in all subjects with their development in English and mathematics being particularly strong. More able pupils are encouraged to make progress effectively through additional challenges in classes, in the work set for homework and through longer project work. Almost all pupils said in their questionnaire responses that the school gives them the opportunity to learn and make good progress.
- 3.8 Excellent levels of knowledge, skills, and understanding were seen in the classwork and homework examined, supported in part by the school's increasing use of specialist teachers for younger pupils including for art, physical education, and modern foreign languages. Pupils reach exceptional standards in art, English and their project work. Many outstanding examples of still-life drawings and paintings were seen. Similarly, many accomplished essays and projects were noted on a wide range of topics from Jane Austen's legacy to the negative impact of racist views in the USA. Physical skills seen in outdoor activities involving pupils from the EYFS onwards are typically very strong. Musical skills were demonstrated to excellent effect during performances by the junior and senior school choirs, the latter singing the Hebrew hymn *Al shlosha d'varim*, and by a Year 3 ensemble which combined readings, dance and song superbly well. Strong practical skills were evident, for example, when creating toys in design and technology and using microscopes in science.
- 3.9 Pupils showed the excellent development of their knowledge and understanding in a wide variety of ways, such as: when younger pupils looked for similarities and differences in the paintings of the artist Mondrian; when senior pupils showed an in-depth understanding of the principles of volcanic activity in helping societies to minimise the impact of earthquakes; and when older pupils demonstrated an extremely perceptive appreciation of a poem by Christina Rossetti. Pupils were observed rehearsing enthusiastically and with a keen appreciation of the script for a forthcoming production of *Lord of the Flies*.
- 3.10 Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those in the EYFS and those with SEND, demonstrate very high levels of communication skills for reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Reading skills are typically excellent, as noted in a drama class when preparing for the staging of the play *Waiting for Godot*. An annual reading challenge for junior pupils creates good reading habits. Written work is typically done extremely well, relative to age and ability. The high quality of writing is demonstrated to excellent effect by many pupils, for example by senior pupils in extended projects on Black history, and by junior pupils when describing landscapes. The creative writing and poetry seen was typically exceptional in the sensitivity and emotions conveyed. The pupils are articulate and confident when speaking, including during public events and acts of collective worship. Pupils in the senior debating club developed their own lines of argument to excellent effect during practice debates. Pupils spoke confidently and articulately during assembly presentations and when they led collective worship. Younger pupils demonstrated strong listening skills when being told a story about a family of skeletons. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. Infants during registration responded accurately in French and German to questions from the teacher. During a senior assembly, although a few older pupils found it hard to sustain their focus, the vast majority of pupils showed terrific concentration when listening to a piece of classical music.

- 3.11 Pupils enjoy working in mathematics from the EYFS onwards and achieve much success when doing so, from applying Pythagoras' theorem to real-life problems in a mathematics class to using graphs and charts to compare the heights of mountains during a geography lesson. The youngest infants demonstrate a clear understanding of numbers, for example when attaching a required number of 'spikes' (clothes pegs) to pictures of hedgehogs.
- 3.12 The active and interactive use of ICT by pupils across the curriculum is not fully developed, despite the availability of ICT in classrooms throughout the school. The teaching typically involves the use of ICT for presentational purposes and limited use was made of tablet and other personal technology. However, a number of notable exceptions were observed. For example: younger pupils used ICT most effectively to display their recipes for bread rolls and then elicit comments from the rest of the class; older pupils employed software skilfully when creating musical compositions; pupils with SEND were able to demonstrate rapid progress when using interactive dictionary software; and excellent collaborative work with ICT was also noted with senior pupils producing presentations on e-safety. The teaching does not always identify ways of enhancing learning through the application of ICT skills. Pupils who choose ICT or computer studies as a GCSE option make effective use of the resources available to them, including for coding.
- 3.13 Pupils develop excellent study skills from the EYFS onwards, with the challenges placed before them inspiring them to greater efforts rather than discouraging them. During the annual stretch-and-challenge project, many pupils produce first-rate independent research work, for example when relating the history of Guernsey during the German occupation. Senior school pupils demonstrate high-level skills, for example in their analysis of priorities in the causes of the industrial revolution. Exceptional work noted in the analysis of poetry in both junior and senior parts of the school demonstrated a perceptive understanding of poetical forms and expression. Pupils' project work included powerful descriptions of the impact of slavery on American mores.
- 3.14 Individual pupils enjoy considerable success across a wide range of sports and activities. Because of the relatively small size of the school, school teams do less well, but pupils nevertheless greatly value the opportunity to represent the school. Pupils represent the island in a wide range of sports, including hockey, sailing, football, netball, equestrian events, cricket, and swimming. Ten pupils have achieved scuba diving qualifications. Against stiff competition from sixth formers at other island schools, two pupils under the age of sixteen have won art bursaries to a major drawing school in England. Pupils last year achieved over twenty distinctions and merit awards in externally accredited music examinations. Accomplishments in poetry reading and other performance arts lead to much individual and group success in the annual Guernsey Eisteddfod. Other achievements include individual successes in the national Young Chef of the Year and Young Enterprise competitions. Pupils following the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) scheme have achieved much personal success at bronze level which is now being followed by the recently introduced silver award.
- 3.15 Pupils have excellent attitudes towards both their work and extra-curricular activities, responding exceptionally well and often enthusiastically to the guidance of their teachers as well as to each other when working collaboratively. They take great pride in the work they do. They do not shy away from competition but nevertheless find it easy to be mutually supportive; helping each other is part of their DNA. Pupils just get on with work; they do not need much prompting from teachers. They are comfortable in their relationships with teachers and with other pupils both within and across their year groups.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

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

- 3.17 Pupils demonstrate high levels of self-confidence, resilience, and compassion. They have a well-developed appreciation of their own and other cultures, and fully understand the importance of making effective contributions to others less fortunate than themselves. A large majority of parents agreed that the school promotes an environment which successfully supports the personal development of their children. The leadership and governance of the school are strongly committed to ensuring that this environment continues to develop in strength.
- 3.18 Pupils of all ages demonstrate, in almost all contexts, exemplary levels of behaviour. These high standards are encouraged in no small way by the junior school's code of conduct for pupils – their golden rules. In the senior part of the school, pupils have a strong sense of responsibility for their own actions. Pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and willingly accept their responsibilities as pupils within a mutually supportive community. All pupils in Year 6 have positions of responsibility through which they come to understand the importance of fulfilling expectations. Pupils relish positions of responsibility, both whole-school and house-based, and they demonstrate exemplary commitment to their roles. The vast majority of pupils said in their questionnaire responses that the school encourages them to behave well, and that they understand the penalties for poor behaviour. Almost all parents maintained in their responses that the school actively promotes good behaviour. The teaching observed set high standards of behaviour for the pupils, reinforcing the messages delivered by the leadership in assemblies.
- 3.19 Pupils work very naturally together within the strong, outwardly focused ethos of the school. They enjoy solving problems together in class, during activities, and in play. Pupils set their sights high and gain a very great deal from each other. Younger pupils love to work with each other – they are naturally collaborative, embracing newcomers to the school readily. They show excellent social development from the EYFS onwards. Pupils maintained during discussions that they enjoy the camaraderie created amongst those actively involved in the DofE scheme; living alongside each other in tents was, they said, a most instructive experience. Even though team sport is not strong in all areas, pupils love to participate and to support each other. Pupils display excellent social development enabling them to achieve common goals, for example through overseas trips, choirs, house competitions, and the recently introduced bush-craft activity.
- 3.20 Through the DofE scheme, overseas trips and visits, and other initiatives which encourage them to see life outside Guernsey, the social awareness of the pupils is very strong. The commitment shown by pupils through activities, work experience, community service, and charities is extensive. Care for others, developed through the guiding ethos of the golden rules in the primary part of the school, comes to complete fruition in the senior years. Pupils seek to assist those in need whether they are new arrivals at the school itself, elderly people living in residential care homes in Guernsey, or pupils attending schools with inadequate resources in Africa. The pupils are determined to make a difference. The pupils' collective contributions to the school and its wider community are excellent.

- 3.21 The pupils' respect and tolerance for others are excellent. Almost all pupils said that the school encourages them to respect others. There is a warm atmosphere of inclusion amongst the pupils. Their appreciation of their own culture is extremely well developed. Pupils widen their appreciation of other cultures during school trips to Spain and France, as well as to England. They demonstrate a firm understanding and appreciation of Guernsey culture through their poetry contributions to a national competition and through their visits to meet those who lived on the island during the years of German occupation. Pupils develop a keen appreciation of other cultures in the developing world, for example in food technology, when studying the impact of the food eaten on those cultures, and in their Mandarin activity classes.
- 3.22 The spiritual character of the school is determined in no small way by its Catholic ethos. Acts of collective worship provide an underlying rhythm for the daily life of the school. Pupils are actively involved in this life, but, as they grow older, not in all cases with obvious enthusiasm. The school has tried to accommodate the more sceptical mind by contrasting humanism with Catholic belief in its programmes of study for religious education, but some senior pupils are yet to be convinced by this. Several pupils in discussion appreciated the irony of their religious scepticism in a religious school. A small minority of parents said in their questionnaire responses that the school does not actively promote values of democracy, respect, and tolerance of those with other faiths. The school demonstrates a firm commitment to democratic principles through its personal, health, and education programmes, assemblies with guest speakers, and its own elections for the junior and senior school councils. Senior pupils demonstrated at best a basic understanding of faiths other than Christianity and Judaism, both of which are key elements of the GCSE religious studies course. Junior pupils, on the other hand, have a good awareness of non-Christian religious festivals.
- 3.23 There are other important dimensions in the spiritual life of the school, for example: through a vibrant approach to art, demonstrated in some exceptional work done from the infants upwards; through a strong commitment to music, exemplified in some inspirational choral singing; and, for many pupils, deep connections with the natural world around them in Guernsey.
- 3.24 Pupils demonstrate a great deal of self-confidence, including those with SEND, responding to the encouragement and support of both teachers and other pupils. This is a school in which pupils are determined to care for each other, leading to high degrees of resilience and self-discipline. Senior pupils said during discussions that they have a clear understanding of how they might improve their work despite the inconsistencies in some of the marking and also in the use of target setting in a few subjects. In their questionnaire responses, a small minority said they do not know how well they are doing in their subjects, with a new assessment system yet to be fully embedded. Younger pupils benefit from excellent oral and written feedback, enabling them to understand how they might improve.
- 3.25 Pupils in the junior part of the school have a good understanding of what impact the decisions they take in classes and in the wider life of the school will have upon their success. Those who take on leadership roles and responsibilities recognise the positive impact that these have upon their own development. The two school councils have been effective in promoting the views of pupils, especially with regard to charitable endeavours. Senior pupils, although appreciating the personal impact of the decisions they make about course choices and involvement in extra-curricular activities, have yet to be fully involved in whole-school decision-making processes, for example in the adaptation of the golden rules used to such excellent effect in the primary part of the school.
- 3.26 The pupils have excellent attitudes towards staying safe and keeping healthy. Almost all pupils in their questionnaire responses said that they understand how to stay safe online. Pupils in their final year of the junior school undertake a safety awareness course which includes the emergency services, online safety, and the appreciation of maintaining a healthy body through a healthy diet. High levels of fitness and stamina were demonstrated by pupils of all ages in games, physical education classes and sporting activities.

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, a trustee and the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended class 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

Dr Christopher Ray	Reporting inspector
Mrs Mary Allen	Team inspector (Former head of international middle school, HMC school, England)
Mr Andrew Gillespie	Team inspector (Director of studies, Society of Heads school, England)