

# Framework for ISI inspection in accordance with the British Schools Overseas accreditation scheme endorsed by the UK government

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ISI is approved by the UK government to carry out the inspection of overseas schools seeking or wanting to maintain BSO accreditation against British Schools Overseas: standards for schools (August 2023)

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## Introduction

### British Schools Overseas inspections

1. The Department for Education's BSO inspection scheme is voluntary for overseas schools. Overseas schools describing themselves as 'British' may choose to undergo a BSO inspection. Schools that meet the inspection standards are then officially recognised by the UK Government under this accreditation scheme and will subsequently be able to access the unique benefits of BSO accreditation.
2. The Department for Education has put in place arrangements for inspection against a common set of [BSO Standards](#) (referred to as 'the BSO Standards') which mirror the Independent School Standards in England.
3. All BSO inspection reports are available on the GOV.UK website for parents of current and prospective pupils to read, informing them about the quality of provision within the inspected school.
4. Any British school operating overseas wishing to achieve BSO accreditation can do so by having a BSO inspection every three years. To be accredited, the school must meet the BSO Standards<sup>1</sup>. An essential element of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for pupils and pupils' achievements.
5. By achieving BSO accreditation, participating schools will be able to demonstrate that they provide a British education with similar characteristics to education provided in an independent school in England.

### Interpretation of BSO Standards

6. The BSO Standards recognise that schools in different countries must produce and implement policies and/or take action, in accordance with local laws. The purpose of the BSO Standards is to provide a broadly comparable set of standards to those that apply to independent schools in England, so that overseas schools can be tested against them. Therefore, ISI will not generally be testing compliance with host country laws.
7. However, where a BSO Standard directly relates to a British law, it is in some cases impractical for international schools to be tested against that Standard. The BSO Standards, in places, are clear where schools should demonstrate that they are meeting the legal requirement as set out by the host country. If there is no equivalent law in the host country, ISI should be informed. The absence of a host country law will not prohibit accreditation.
8. On inspection, schools should provide evidence to ISI that each BSO Standard has been met. Where there is a conflict between the BSO Standards and the host country's laws, the laws of the host country take precedence. Any departure from the BSO Standards due to host country laws should be notified to inspectors for inclusion in inspection reports. Deviation from one or more of the standards due to host country laws will not mean the school cannot achieve BSO accreditation. If the school can provide evidence that it cannot lawfully meet the standard due

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<sup>1</sup> Subject to the proviso below regarding interpretation of BSO Standards (reflecting DfE guidance document August 2023: [Standards for British Schools Overseas](#))

to host country requirements and is able to demonstrate that it meets all other standards, it will still be considered by the DfE for accreditation.

9. Where this applies, the report will state: 'The school meets all the BSO Standards except those which it is precluded from meeting because of the host country's requirements.' In such cases, the school will be listed by the DfE on the UK government's website. An asterisk is added to the school's name on this list, to show those schools that are precluded from meeting the BSO Standards to some degree.

## What ISI does

10. This BSO framework and the handbook for inspections set out ISI's principles and method of inspection for BSO. Together they set out the approach ISI takes, and how ISI inspections evaluate and report on the quality of provision in British schools overseas. ISI inspection reports include a clear statement on the extent to which the BSO Standards are met. All reports include guidance for governors and leaders relating to recommended development activity following inspection. All reports state clearly whether the school's safeguarding practice meets relevant BSO Standards.
11. This BSO framework provides school leaders with a clear structure to demonstrate and articulate how they fulfil their existing responsibility to ensure that the BSO Standards are met. This includes, within the leadership and management standard, the overarching responsibility to actively promote the wellbeing of pupils. School leaders may choose to use the structure of the proposed framework to inform the school's own quality assurance of its provision and its impact, which in turn could inform the assurance process for governance.
12. The scope of evaluation for pupil wellbeing (as specifically defined in section 10(2) of the Children Act 2004) is set by reference to the existing requirements of the BSO Standards, which schools currently must meet to achieve BSO accreditation. Pupil wellbeing, as defined by the statute, is holistic and not a separate measure. Therefore, evidence of pupil wellbeing is found in all aspects of school life.
13. ISI is formally approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect British schools overseas that wish to apply for, or maintain, British Schools Overseas accreditation. ISI reports to the Secretary of State for Education on the extent to which these schools meet the BSO Standards. ISI publishes all BSO inspection reports on its website, and schools must also publish their inspection reports.
14. The Department for Education (DfE) publishes detailed expectations of independent inspectorates which must be met for continued approval. The Secretary of State's approval of ISI is set out in a formal letter and agreement.
15. Further details about ISI and its work can be found on the website.

## Principles of inspection

16. ISI has four inspection principles on which its inspection practice is built. These are:
- **Manageability:** ISI understands that inspection is a significant event for a school and will promote practices on inspection that, as far as possible, align with the day-to-day life of the school and do not cause unnecessary workload for the school or for the inspection team.
  - **Collaboration:** Inspectors will seek to work alongside school leaders and staff where appropriate to do so, discussing evidence and sharing emerging findings.
  - **Triangulation and typicality:** Inspectors will consider a range of evidence when forming evaluations on inspection. Inspectors will look for evidence of what would be typical provision for pupils at the school over time. Inspectors will consider a range of connected evidence, including school records and by confirming the context of what inspectors are seeing, hearing and reading on inspection.
  - **Proportionality:** When judging the extent to which a school meets the BSO Standards, inspectors will exercise their professional judgement. Where there are some relative weaknesses or minor errors that can be easily rectified, inspectors will take a proportionate approach. Inspectors will consider if those weaknesses amount to a failure to meet one or more of the BSO Standards. Weaknesses or errors which are indicative of systemic failings in the school's processes and/or provision will lead to a judgement that the relevant BSO Standards are unmet.

## Promoting effective quality assurance

17. ISI supports all schools in understanding the nature and reach of the BSO Standards, and how the assurance and inspection process works. As part of this framework, and to support ongoing engagement with, and understanding of the assurance process, ISI will continue to develop ways to disseminate its expert knowledge.
18. Through this BSO inspection framework, ISI aims to extend understanding of the assurance framework in a way that helps schools, their governors and leaders to embed effective quality assurance.
19. BSO Inspection forms a part of the wider assurance framework and should not be seen as the only form of quality assurance. Internal school-based quality assurance, captured in a dynamic self-evaluation and review format, can support schools in their pursuit of excellence and provide assurance to governors and relevant external agencies.
20. ISI is keen to work with schools to develop a clear and supportive self-evaluation format that will help schools to articulate their accountability. The proposed framework will support this as it contains all aspects of the BSO Standards.
21. Schools may choose to use the structure of the proposed framework for their ongoing self-evaluation of provision. Inspectors will consider a school's self-evaluation in any form that schools use for their own quality assurance processes. Inspection should always be a robust and rigorous independent external evaluation of the school's provision. ISI believes that this can work alongside schools' own internal processes and that there is benefit when internal and external systems speak to each other.

22. ISI supports even greater engagement with schools in developing their own internal ongoing assurance processes which are aligned to the external quality assurance process that inspection provides. ISI believes this will enhance strong provision and have a positive outcome for pupils across all aspects of school life.

## Promoting pupils' wellbeing

23. This BSO inspection framework places the responsibility of the school's leadership and management, and governance **to actively promote the wellbeing of pupils** at the centre of ISI's evaluation of the school.
24. This is because Part 8 of the BSO Standards (Quality of leadership and management of schools) places a duty on the proprietor to ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:
- (a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the BSO Standards are met consistently
  - (b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the BSO Standards are met consistently; and
  - (c) actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.
25. The meaning of 'wellbeing' for the purposes of the BSO Standards is defined by section 10(2) of the Children Act 2004 as relating to:
- Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing
  - Protection of pupils from harm and neglect
  - Pupils' education, training and recreation
  - Pupils' contribution to society
  - Pupils' social and economic wellbeing.

As a result, to meet the required leadership standard in the BSO Standards, the proprietor, leaders and managers must actively promote these five aspects of pupils' wellbeing.

26. This approach does not place any additional responsibility on schools or introduce additional requirements that are not already contained in the BSO Standards. School leaders are already required to 'actively promote the wellbeing of pupils'. The definition of 'wellbeing' is clearly articulated by statute and incorporated in the BSO Standards. Evidence of effective provision can be clearly demonstrated, as stated in the framework, across many aspects of school life which are covered by the BSO Standards.

## Involvement of pupils on inspection

27. This inspection framework promotes the active seeking of pupils' views, both on inspection and as part of the day-to-day life of a school. Pupils' views, wishes and feelings about their school experience should be considered by the school.
28. The proprietor and leaders and managers should enable pupils to communicate, develop positive relationships with staff, and make their views known. In the case of boarders, the proprietor and leaders and managers must ensure that BSO Standards relating to boarders' rights, advocacy and complaints are met.

29. Many schools have already developed very effective ways of listening to pupils, hearing from them and noticing what supports or hinders their flourishing. Inspection reports recognise where this is working well, and the school is actively promoting the wellbeing of pupils.
30. ISI promotes listening to children and young people on inspection to ensure that school inspections effectively hear the views of pupils.
31. Hearing the views of pupils is an important aspect of inspection practice and is triangulated with other inspection evidence. Inspectors will continue to be interested to hear from school leaders how pupils' voices are heard and acted upon by the school.

## The inspection framework

32. This part of the ISI framework details areas of provision that must be in place for schools to actively promote the wellbeing of pupils, as defined by section 10(2) of the Children Act 2004. This definition covers all aspects of school provision contained in the BSO Standards. The section headings below will also be the section headings of the inspection report.

## The emphasis and structure of the framework and reporting

33. This inspection framework uses the statutory definition of wellbeing as a starting point for its approach to school evaluation. Therefore, it supports school leaders in articulating the impact of their leadership by providing a structured approach to demonstrating how they meet the existing requirement to actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.
34. The framework and inspection reports start with a **summary of inspection findings**.
35. **Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance.** This framework emphasises that leadership and management refer to leadership throughout the school, as required by the BSO Standards and does not refer only to senior leadership in a school. Inspectors understand the distinction between the roles and responsibilities of governance and those of executive leadership/management.
36. **Section 2: Pupils' education, training and recreation.** The evaluation of the quality of education will contain clear reporting of pupils' progress and outcomes.
37. **Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing.** This section will refer to the relevant BSO Standards and any applicable statutory guidance.
38. **Section 4: Pupils' social and economic wellbeing and contribution to society.** This section will include evaluation of careers provision.
39. The final section on **Safeguarding** will form the concluding section of the framework and inspection report.
40. This framework takes an integrated approach to the different sets of standards which may apply to schools, depending on the individual school's context. This thematic approach recognises and promotes a holistic understanding of the complexities and interconnectedness of school life. The specific areas to be considered within each of the sections of the framework incorporate the

BSO Standards. A table showing how all of these standards map onto the structure of this framework is included in Appendix A.

41. In summary, the structure of the framework and inspection report is:
  - Summary of overall inspection findings
  - Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance
  - Section 2: Pupils' education, training and recreation, to include pupils' outcomes
  - Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing
  - Section 4: Pupils' social and economic wellbeing and contribution to society
  - Safeguarding.
42. Reporting on Part B of the BSO Standards for boarding provision will be included as applicable.

## Summary of inspection findings

43. The summary section of the report will provide parents and other stakeholders with an evaluative overview of the main inspection findings. It will summarise inspection findings relating to the quality of provision in each section of the framework. It will conclude with a statement on the effectiveness of the school's arrangements to safeguard pupils.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

44. Inspectors will evaluate and report on the impact of leadership at all levels in a school because the BSO Standards refer to the skills, knowledge and actions of those with leadership and management responsibilities at the school. Inspectors will consider evidence about how leaders at all levels demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role, and how they fulfil their responsibilities effectively.
45. Inspectors will consider a range of sources of evidence, including evidence of how those with governance responsibility assure themselves that leaders and managers are fulfilling their responsibilities to ensure that the BSO Standards are met.

## Skills and knowledge

46. The proprietor (to include those with governance responsibility) must ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities at the school ('leadership'):
  - have good and appropriate skills and knowledge<sup>2</sup>, and
  - fulfil their responsibilities effectively and consistentlyso that the requirements of BSO Standards are met consistently.
47. Leadership must ensure that the school's aims and ethos (including any religious ethos and/or boarding principles) are available in writing to parents and staff, and are known to pupils, and are seen to work well in practice.

<sup>2</sup> The breadth of what is considered 'appropriate skills and knowledge' for leaders and managers is therefore linked directly to the content of relevant BSO Standards which apply to the school.

48. Leadership should ensure effective self-evaluation<sup>3</sup> at the school of the effectiveness of leadership's delivery of the school's ethos and aims, so that pupils' wellbeing is actively promoted, and the requirements of the BSO Standards are met. Leadership must ensure that effective action is taken where necessary.
49. Leadership must ensure effective and consistent implementation of all policies and documents required by BSO Standards applicable to the school, and that policies comply with relevant legislation, have regard to applicable guidance, and are understood by staff and pupils.
50. Leadership must ensure that appropriate information is made available and provided in accordance with all relevant legislation, regulations and applicable guidance.
51. Leadership should promote effective links with other agencies to promote and benefit the wellbeing of pupils (including boarders) as applicable to the context in which they are situated.

## Understanding and management of risk

52. The proprietor must ensure that leaders and managers have the skills, knowledge and understanding to actively promote the wellbeing of all pupils through taking a strategic, comprehensive and inclusive approach to identifying and managing the risk of harm to pupils' wellbeing. As a result, leadership must safeguard and promote the wellbeing of pupils through effectively identifying risk of harm and taking appropriate action to reduce risks that are identified. Pupils' health needs must be met (including those of any boarders) and their physical and emotional wellbeing actively promoted.
53. This may include adapting existing risk strategies as necessary to identify and manage the risk to pupils' wellbeing arising from pupils experiencing harmful behaviours and attitudes. In some cases, these risks may be harder to spot, and less obvious to existing risk mitigation strategies. Therefore, leadership should have the appropriate skills and knowledge to ensure that they appreciate and understand the prevalence of potentially harmful behaviours and therefore do not consider avoidable harms to be unavoidable. Leaders and managers should understand their own influence and role in risk management, and the prevention of harm(s) which may negatively impact pupils' wellbeing.
54. In fulfilling their responsibilities effectively and consistently, leadership should be aware that positive feedback from the majority of pupils can mask smaller groups of pupils, or individual pupils who have harmful, but hidden, negative experiences. Leaders and managers should take a proactive approach, as indicated by the wording of the BSO Standards, to promote the wellbeing of all pupils.
55. Leadership must ensure that information is provided as required by relevant BSO Standards.
56. Leadership must ensure that a complaints procedure is effectively implemented as required by relevant BSO Standards.

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<sup>3</sup> There is no preferred method for the school's self-evaluation. It should be sufficient to assure the proprietor and leaders that the Standards are met consistently and that the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted.

## Section 2: Pupils' education, training and recreation

57. The quality of education, training and recreation, which includes pupils' progress, is fundamental to the evaluation of a school's provision for pupils. It is central in both the BSO Standards and the statutory definition of pupil wellbeing. Therefore, it forms a prominent part of the evaluation during the inspection and reporting process.

### Education and training

#### The curriculum

58. Leadership must ensure that all pupils' education and experience of the school's curriculum results from leaders' effective implementation of appropriate plans, schemes of work, and programmes of activities that are appropriate to pupils' needs in the following areas:
- linguistic
  - mathematical
  - scientific
  - technological
  - human and social<sup>4</sup>
  - physical<sup>5</sup>
  - aesthetic and creative
  - speaking, listening, literacy<sup>6</sup> and numeracy
- so that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
59. Leadership must ensure that pupils' experience of the curriculum takes into account pupils' ages, aptitudes and needs, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
60. For pupils below school age, leadership should ensure that pupils experience a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to their communication and language development.

#### Teaching, learning and assessment

61. Leadership must ensure that:
- Teaching
    - enables all pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability and does not discriminate<sup>7</sup> against pupils or promote partisan political views
    - does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  - A framework is in place to evaluate pupils' work and performance regularly and thoroughly, which refers to:
    - the school's aims as provided to parents, and/or

<sup>4</sup> Considered under Section 4: Pupils' social and economic wellbeing, and contribution to society.

<sup>5</sup> Considered under Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing.

<sup>6</sup> Where the principal language of instruction is not English, pupils must have lessons in written and spoken English.

<sup>7</sup> Contrary to Part 6 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)

- national norms.
62. Particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations must be made available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils.
63. Leadership must ensure that teachers at the school:
- plan lessons well
    - demonstrating good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught, and
    - with understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainment of pupils, gained from regular and thorough assessment of pupils' work
  - use effective teaching methods and activities
  - manage class time and pupils' behaviour well
  - use a range of good quality classroom resources well
- so that all pupils acquire new knowledge, increase their understanding, and develop their skills (make good progress) according to their ability in the subjects taught, and
- are interested in their work
  - apply intellectual, physical and creative effort
  - act responsibly
  - are self-motivated, thinking and learning for themselves.

### Special educational needs and/or disabilities

64. The BSO Standards apply to all pupils in a school. Therefore, if a school has pupils who are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)<sup>8</sup>, leadership must ensure that policies, plans, schemes of work, teaching and assessment take into account their needs. Details of the educational and welfare provisions for pupils with education, health and care plans (EHC Plans) and for pupils for whom English is an additional language, must be made available as required by the relevant standards.
65. The BSO Standards place a responsibility on the proprietor, school leaders and teachers to identify and meet the needs of all pupils and to plan the curriculum and teaching, taking into account their aptitudes and prior attainment. A school's processes for the identification and meeting of pupils' special educational needs will be considered on inspection.
66. Leadership must ensure that pupils are not discriminated against, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, and must proactively consider the need to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability.

### Recreation

67. Leadership must ensure that pupils above compulsory school age experience a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs. These activities should be well-thought-through, age-appropriate opportunities for all pupils to develop the daily living skills, independence, health and employment skills needed by them for their future lives, taking account of their age and needs.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs>  
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68. Recreation is one aspect of pupils' wellbeing. While there is no preferred method for providing recreational activities for pupils, the BSO Standards relating to boarding (which must be met in boarding provision) provide helpful principles for the proprietor, leaders and managers of all schools.
69. Leadership should ensure that pupils develop their emotional, intellectual, social, creative and physical skills through the accessible and stimulating environment created by the school.
70. All pupils should access a good range and choice of activities outside teaching time, including sufficient and suitably timed free time each day. Suitable risk assessments must be in place.

### Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

71. Leadership must ensure that the school's curriculum policy is implemented effectively through appropriate plans and schemes of work which:
  - reflect the school's aims and ethos
  - encourage mutual trust and respect for other people, particularly those with protected characteristics<sup>9</sup> (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation)
  - develop pupils' spiritual and moral knowledge and understanding
  - actively promote development of pupils' self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.
72. Leadership must ensure that all pupils' experience of the school's curriculum results from leaders' effective implementation of appropriate plans, schemes of work, and programmes of activities that are appropriate to pupils' needs in the following areas:
  - physical education
  - personal and health educationso that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
73. Leadership must ensure that pupils receive either **relationships education** or **relationships and sex education** (as applicable) as set out in the BSO Standards.
74. Leaders and managers must promote good **behaviour** by pupils and ensure that the school has a written behaviour policy drawn up that, among other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils' misbehaviour<sup>10</sup>. The behaviour policy should have regard to available guidance<sup>11</sup>.
75. Leadership must ensure that the behaviour policy is understood by staff and pupils and is implemented fairly and consistently. If applicable, standards relating to promoting positive behaviour for boarders must be met.
76. Leadership should ensure that any prefect system (or equivalent) gives prefects (or equivalent) suitable specific duties and responsibilities that are appropriate for them. The BSO Standards for boarding schools (which must be met in boarding provision) provide helpful principles for

<sup>9</sup> As set out in the Equality Act 2010.

<sup>10</sup> A record must be kept of sanctions imposed on pupils for serious misbehaviour.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/education/pupil-wellbeing-behaviour-and-attendance>

the proprietor, leaders and managers of all schools.

77. Leadership must ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is in place which actively prevents and minimises bullying at the school. They should ensure that any instances of bullying are dealt with effectively, and staff help children to overcome the impact of bullying. All staff must be trained to recognise and deal with bullying.
78. For pupils below school age, leadership must ensure that pupils experience an appropriate programme of activities which promotes their personal, emotional and physical development. Inspectors will refer to the early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework<sup>12</sup> as a helpful benchmark to guide their evaluation of early years provision.
79. Leadership must ensure that the provision and maintenance of **premises and accommodation**, including suitable accommodation to provide for pupils' medical and therapy needs, fulfils applicable standards to provide a safe physical environment for pupils, and that accommodation meets all applicable standards. All applicable BSO Standards relating to provision for boarders' health and wellbeing needs must be met.
80. Leadership must ensure that pupils are properly supervised through appropriate deployment of school staff.
81. Leadership must ensure that the school's admission and attendance register is maintained in a manner which conforms to host country laws.
82. Leadership must ensure that relevant health and safety laws, including relevant fire safety laws, in the host country are complied with and that a written fire safety policy is drawn up and effectively implemented.
83. Leadership must ensure that first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner.
84. Leadership must ensure that good quality sleeping and living accommodation is provided for boarders, which meets the requirements of the relevant standards, and that provision for boarders' possessions meets the required BSO Standards.
85. Where a boarding school provides food and drink for pupils, leadership must ensure that it meets the required BSO Standards, and that pupils with disabilities are provided with appropriate assistance to eat, in a manner which promotes dignity and choice.

## Section 4: Pupils' social and economic wellbeing, and contribution to society

86. Leadership must ensure that the school's curriculum policy is implemented effectively through appropriate plans and schemes of work so that pupils experience **human, social and economic education** which:
  - reflects the school's aims and ethos
  - encourages respect for other people, particularly those with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>  
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- actively promotes fundamental British values
  - develops pupils' **social and cultural** knowledge and understanding
  - gives pupils of secondary age (11+) access to accurate, up-to-date, impartial **careers guidance** so that they can make informed choices about a broad range of career options, and which helps them to fulfil their potential.
87. For pupils below compulsory school age, leadership must ensure that pupils experience a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to their social development.
88. Leadership must ensure that pupils are prepared effectively for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
89. Leadership must actively promote principles at the school which:
- Enable pupils to
    - distinguish right from wrong
    - respect the civil and criminal law of England
    - acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England
  - Encourage pupils to
    - accept responsibility for their behaviour
    - respect other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics
    - show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated, and to society more widely
    - acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures which furthers and promotes tolerance and respect between different cultural traditions
    - respect democracy and support participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England
  - Where political issues are brought to pupils' attention while they are in attendance at the school, and/or while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities (whether provided or organized by the school, or promoted at the school e.g. through the distribution of promotional material and taking place at the school or elsewhere), leadership must take reasonable steps to ensure that pupils are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views .
90. Leadership must ensure that the schools' curriculum and teaching does not undermine fundamental British values.
91. Inspectors will be particularly interested in the school's work to promote pupils' understanding and engagement with the international aspect of their education and prepare them for participation in global society.

## Safeguarding

92. The school should ensure that effective arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school in line with all relevant laws of the host country. The school should ensure that all staff are aware that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility throughout the school and, if relevant, the boarding facilities. It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The school's approach to online safety should be reflected in the child protection policy. The word 'safeguarding' will incorporate reference to the protection of pupils from harm and

neglect.

93. Inspection findings with regard to safeguarding are based on the evidence available to inspectors at the time of inspection. Inspectors probe and evaluate this evidence carefully and robustly, informed by applicable statutory guidance. However, inspection cannot provide absolute assurance that a school is safe.
94. The proprietor must ensure that leaders and managers have effective arrangements in place:
  - to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils which fulfil the requirements of the BSO Standards and any other safeguarding regulations applicable to the school
  - that promote the school's effective working with other partnerships and agencies to safeguard pupils and protect them from harm
  - to manage risk and protect pupils from harm, and to manage well any incidents that do occur.
95. Leadership must ensure that the school has effective arrangements, reviewed regularly, to ensure that pupils know how to stay safe while online.
96. Leadership must ensure that the applicable requirements of the BSO Standards relating to the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors are met.

## Early years

97. The inspection team will consider how effectively leadership actively promotes the wellbeing of all children in early years provision at the school when making judgements for the whole school.

## Boarding

98. Leadership must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils for whom the school provides accommodation (boarders), which meet the requirements of (as applicable) the BSO Standards relating to boarding provision.
99. The inspection team will consider how effectively leadership actively promotes the wellbeing of boarders at the school when making judgements for the whole school.
100. Inspectors will consider the relevant BSO Standards relating to boarding provision in the various sections of the report.

## Evaluation

101. The inspection team will use their professional judgement to report on the quality of provision at the school through evaluating outcomes for pupils. The inspection report will be evidence based and will reflect what inspectors saw, read, heard and noticed as part of the inspection. Evaluation will result from careful consideration of the inspection evidence. The report will be written in clear and unambiguous language.
102. Inspection reporting is evaluative, both in the text of the report and through identifying strengths and areas for development. Evaluation will be based on evidence of impact and

outcomes for pupils as a result of leaders' effective decision-making and planning.

103. Unless otherwise stated, inspectors will refer to standards, statutory guidance and UK government frameworks currently applicable to independent schools in England when evaluating provision under this framework, subject to the provisos regarding host country laws set out in paragraphs 6 and 7.

## The standard of provision

104. Inspection reports will reflect inspection findings regarding the complex and wide-ranging nature of school provision and the breadth of impact for pupils. Each section of the report (which correspond to the sections of the framework) will report clearly, and with supporting evidence, the extent to which the BSO Standards are being met.
105. The summary section of the inspection report will give a balanced evaluative overview of provision at the school. It will describe the main areas of strength and any relative weaknesses relating to all sections of the framework.
106. In the summary section, inspectors will:
- recommend next steps where standards are met, and/or
  - give an overview of areas for action where standards are not met.
107. Each section of the report relating to the four sections of the framework will describe more fully the strengths, relative weaknesses and, where BSO standards are not met, whether there are serious and/or multiple failings in the school's provision.

## Quality of decision-making at the school

108. The inspection team will evaluate the quality of decision-making at the school and its impact for pupils across all sections of this framework. The inspection team will include one of the following paragraphs in the summary section of the inspection report:

*Provision at the school meets all the requirements of the BSO Standards. The quality of leaders' decision-making and its implementation across all sections of the BSO Framework exceeds requirements. This results in demonstrable and highly beneficial impact for pupils throughout the school.*

OR

*Provision at the school meets the requirements of the BSO Standards. The quality of leaders' decision making and its implementation across all sections of the BSO Framework exceeds requirements in most areas (resulting in a demonstrable and highly beneficial impact for pupils in these areas) and meets requirements in the remainder.*

OR

*Provision at the school meets the requirements of the BSO Standards.*

OR

*Provision at the school meets the requirements of the BSO Standards with minor issues identified for improvement and/or the principle of proportionality has been applied.*

OR

*Provision at the school does not meet the requirements of the BSO Standards. As a result, there are areas for action relating to unmet standards. These areas for action must be addressed in full and confirmed by inspection before ISI can recommend to the DfE that the school may be accredited as a British School Overseas.*

109. The requirement to meet the BSO Standards is subject to the proviso regarding host country legislation set out above under [Interpretation of BSO Standards](#).

## Recommended next steps and areas for action:

110. All reports will include guidance for governors and leaders relating to recommended development activity following inspection. This will include recommended next steps and/or area/s for action (depending on whether standards are met or not met).
111. If the proprietor, leaders and managers have ensured that all BSO Standards are met consistently, recommended next steps will record what the inspection team reflect would be helpful development points for the school. Recommended next steps will be discussed with school leaders.
112. If the proprietor, leaders and managers have not ensured that all BSO Standards are met consistently, area/s for action will also be included in the report relating to the aspects of provision that have not met the requirements of the BSO Standards. Recommended next steps may still be included in the report relating to aspects of provision where standards have been met. Where BSO Standards are not met, areas for action will refer to those relevant unmet BSO Standard/s with a high-level overview of what needs to be improved so that those BSO Standards are met. Where any standards are unmet, areas for action will be shared with school leaders and, during final feedback, those responsible for governance.

## How schools will be inspected

### Frequency and type of inspection

113. There is one type of routine inspection, and each school should typically be inspected routinely once every three years in accordance with the requirements of the Department for Education for continuing BSO accreditation. The resulting report will follow the structure of this framework.

### Optional additional curriculum subject focus

114. The school may request at the time of booking the inspection that the inspection undertakes

additional curriculum subject focus on up to two subject areas<sup>13</sup>, which will be undertaken as part of the inspection visit.

115. If this is requested, extra inspector days will be allocated to the inspection, with related increase in the inspection tariff. The outcome of the additional subject focus area/s will contribute to the overall judgment of the inspection regarding whether BSO Standards are met.
116. Evaluation of additional subject focus areas will be written up separately to the inspection report. However, if inspectors find, because of undertaking additional subject focus, that BSO Standards are not met, this will be included in the main inspection report.

## Before inspection

117. Once an inspection has been booked, the school will receive an invitation to an online briefing with a senior member of staff at ISI. This briefing will explain the inspection process and answer any questions.
118. Between four and six weeks before the start of the onsite inspection, the allocated reporting inspector will contact the school and arrange a virtual meeting with the headteacher. This meeting will set out the inspection process, including the distribution of the online surveys, as well as answering any further questions that the headteacher may have. The reporting inspector will not visit the school prior to the start of the onsite inspection.

## On-site inspection

119. The focus of on-site inspection is to see the school in its day-to-day operation and to hear the views of pupils. Time will be spent with leadership to hear about strategic planning, but most of the time will be spent by inspectors undertaking planned inspection activities and ‘out and about’ in the school. Inspectors will speak with as many people as possible, including pupils, staff, parents, leaders, the proprietor/s, governors and the chair of governors. The reporting inspector will keep in touch with the headteacher frequently during the on-site inspection. At the end of the on-site inspection, the reporting inspector and team will give provisional feedback to the school on the emerging findings of the inspection. These findings do not become final until the publication of the inspection report.

## Inspectors

120. There are two types of ISI BSO inspector:
  - Reporting inspector (RI) who leads the inspection, directs the inspection team and writes the report.
  - Team inspector (TI) who is a member of the inspection team, evaluates provision at the school and contributes to the team judgement.
121. All inspectors will receive initial and regular update training appropriate to their role. Inspectors draw on their experience of the independent school sector and have appropriate specialist knowledge. All inspectors will have full background checks in place, including DBS or ICPC checks as appropriate.

<sup>13</sup> Curriculum subject areas only can be included as additional focus areas, with according increase in tariff.  
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## Conduct

### Code of conduct for inspectors

122. Inspectors must adhere to the code of conduct. Inspectors are required to uphold the highest professional standards in relation to all who are involved in the process of inspection before, during and after the inspection.

123. Inspectors will:

- act in the best interests of the pupils at the inspected school and prioritise the safeguarding and welfare of children at all times
- uphold ISI's values at all times and evaluate objectively in line with ISI's frameworks and regulatory requirements
- refrain at all times from any behaviour which might bring ISI into disrepute
- use their ISI inspector designation only in relation to their inspection work for ISI, unless previously agreed with ISI senior staff
- maintain up-to-date knowledge of ISI's inspection frameworks, handbook, policies and practice and associated regulatory requirements and guidance
- maintain strict confidentiality about the identity of the school to be inspected, the timing and scheduling of inspections and not divulge any information about the inspection (including, but not limited to, the region, the type of school or any identifying features) other than the fact that they are going to be deployed at that time
- declare all actual and perceived conflicts of interest and have no real or perceived connection with the inspected school prior to or following inspection, which could undermine the integrity of the inspection
- act promptly and in line with ISI guidance on any safeguarding or health and safety issues that may arise on inspection
- work with professionalism, sensitivity and integrity, treating all with respect and courtesy
- liaise immediately with senior staff at ISI if inspectors become aware that school staff are experiencing exceptional stress
- follow requirements and good practice in relation to the secure management of information
- be mindful of the additional workload that inspection can create, be sensitive to the needs of school staff and take reasonable steps to prevent undue anxiety and stress
- avoid any requests or suggestions that may cause undue disruption to business as usual for the school
- communicate regularly and productively with school leaders, and keep them informed of emerging findings and judgements clearly and honestly
- evaluate the work of the school objectively and impartially, supported by clear and secure evidence
- report fairly and without favour, ensuring that judgements are reliable
- respect the confidentiality of inspection evidence and judgements
- wear their ISI inspector identification badge at all times when on school premises.

## Guidance for schools

124. In order to facilitate a professional and positive working relationship, we request that school leaders and staff:
- treat inspectors with professionalism, respect, courtesy and candour
  - ensure any inspection surveys, or other communications with parents and pupils requested by the reporting inspector, are sent out promptly
  - engage with and facilitate the inspection process and enable inspectors to carry out their work in an honest and open way against ISI's BSO framework and the BSO Standards
  - provide access to evidence that will enable inspectors to evaluate the work of the school fairly and reliably
  - facilitate necessary meetings with proprietors, leaders, staff and pupils
  - work with inspectors to minimise disruption to the normal working school day
  - work with inspectors to minimise anxiety, stress or additional workload for staff
  - ensure the health and safety of inspectors while on school premises
  - maintain regular and productive communication with inspectors
  - raise any concerns promptly with the reporting inspector
  - respect the confidentiality of information about the inspection and inspectors.
125. If access to inspection evidence is not facilitated, inspectors may reasonably conclude that the Standards are not met.

## Quality assurance and complaints

### Quality assurance

126. ISI's internal quality assurance processes involve a number of different stages, all of which serve to ensure that our inspection findings are fair and reliable and that our reports are clear and based on robust evidence.
127. Inspectors are carefully selected and properly trained. They also receive regular updates about our work and any changes to regulations or requirements. Reporting inspectors are assessed for suitability at every stage of their recruitment and training before they lead inspections. As part of their training, reporting inspectors shadow inspections, they are supported by experienced reporting inspectors and are monitored for their suitability.
128. ISI has a process for monitoring the quality of the work of all inspectors. ISI has a group of experienced reporting inspectors who work as monitors. ISI gathers information from team and reporting inspectors, monitors and from those conducting quality assurance tasks. Following every inspection, we ask school leaders for their views about how the inspection was conducted. We feed this back and provide appropriate additional training and guidance when necessary. Where inspectors fall short of our expectations, we take action.
129. On inspection, evidence is gathered, recorded and evaluated by the inspection team. The inspection team share and discuss the evidence, agree on judgements and develop areas for action. Triangulation of evidence is key to the formation of the judgements. Judgements are

made corporately by the inspection team. A team of experienced inspectors is available on duty for support and these senior inspectors are available to give advice on any inspection. They regularly join inspections to check the quality and consistency of our work.

130. The reporting inspector writes the inspection report shortly after the end of the on-site inspection. All inspection reports are subject to our quality assurance processes. These involve ensuring that the evidence supports the judgements reached onsite. We also check reports to ensure that they clearly state the reasons for the judgements. A copy of the draft report is sent to the school so that leaders can check for any inaccuracies. This is called the factual accuracy check (FAC).
131. When the report is finalised, following quality assurance, a final copy of the report is sent to the school prior to publication on our website. At this stage, the school will be invited to give feedback on the inspection process. The final report is also sent to the DfE.
132. Where the school does not meet BSO Standards, ISI will share the provisional findings with the headteacher and the Department for Education, indicating the findings of the inspection and the details of BSO standards which are provisionally not met. There will be no published inspection report.

## Complaints

133. ISI has a complaints process which can involve an independent adjudicator.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.isi.net/about/who-we-are/make-a-complaint>  
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## Appendix A: Mapping of standards to framework

The BSO Standards are mapped for reporting purposes. This mapping indicates the sections of the report where focus areas are most likely to be reported. During inspection there may be overlap between the standards and areas of the framework. This aligns with our thematic approach to inspection.

The reporting of systemic areas contained in paragraphs 3 (teaching), 4 (framework for pupils' performance) and 5 (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development) may be reported under any of Sections 2, 3 or 4 of the report depending on the inspection evidence.

Inspectors will consider the relevant MSB requirements in the various sections of the report.

<b>Section 1: Leadership and management and governance</b>	
<b>BSO standards Part/Paragraph</b>	<b>Minimum standards for boarding (MSB)</b>
All parts and specifically:  Part 3, paragraph 16 risk Part 6 all paragraphs provision of information Part 7 all paragraphs complaints Part 8, paragraphs 34 (1)(a),(b) and (c) and 34(2) leadership	MSB 1 (Statement of boarding principles and practice) MSB 2 (Management of boarding) MSB 9.3–9.5 (Risk assessment and major incident) MSB 14 (Complaints)
<b>Section 2: Pupils' education, training and recreation to include pupils' outcomes</b>	
<b>BSO Standards Part/Paragraph</b>	<b>Minimum standards for boarding</b>
Part 1, paragraphs 2(1)(a) and (b), (curriculum stem) Part 1, paragraphs 2(2)(a),(b),(c),(f),(g),(h) curriculum Part 1, paragraphs 3(a),(b),(c),(d),(e),(f),(g),(h),(i), (j) teaching Part 1, paragraph 4 assessment	MSB 18 (Activities and free time)

<b>Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and wellbeing</b>	
<b>BSO Standards Part/Paragraph</b>	<b>Minimum standards for boarding</b>
Part 1, 2(1)(a) ,(b), (curriculum stem) Part 1, paragraph 2A RSE Part 1, paragraph 2(2)(d) personal and health only Part 2, paragraph 5(b)(i), spiritual and moral only (self) Part 3, paragraphs 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 behaviour, bullying, H&S, fire, first aid and attendance Part 5 all paragraphs premises and accommodation	MSB 4 (Boarding accommodation) MSB 5 (Boarders' possessions) MSB 6 (Food and drink) MSB 7 (Boarders' health and wellbeing) MSB 8 (Supervision and welfare) MSB 9.1, 9.2 (Health and safety) MSB 10 (Fire safety) MSB 11.1, 11.2, 11.3 (Induction, travel and staff support) MSB 12 (Contact with parents) MSB 13 (Securing boarders' views) MSB 15 (Behaviour) MSB 16 (Bullying) MSB 17 (Promoting good relationships) MSB 20 (Staffing and supervision) MSB 21 (Prefects) MSB 22.3 (Guardianship promotes boarders' wellbeing)
<b>Section 4: Pupils' social and economic wellbeing and contribution to society, to include careers education</b>	
<b>BSO Standards Part/Paragraph</b>	<b>Minimum standards for boarding</b>
Part 1, 2(1)(a) and (b), (curriculum stem) Part 1, paragraphs 2(2)(d), social and economic only Part 1, 2(2)(e) and (i) career and preparation for British society Part 2, paragraphs 5(a),(b)(ii),(iii),(iv)(v),(vi),(vii) social and cultural (self and society) Part 2, paragraphs 5(c) and (d) partisan views	MSB 3 (Inclusion, Equality and Diversity)

<b>Safeguarding</b>	
<b>BSO Standards Part/Paragraph</b>	<b>Minimum standards for boarding</b>
Part 3, paragraphs 7(a)and (b) safeguarding Part 3, paragraphs 8(a) and (b) boarding provision Part 4 all paragraphs suitability	MSB 8 (Safeguarding) MSB 11.4 11.5, 11.6 (Independent listener, contacts and advocacy) MSB 19 (Recruitment and checks on adults) MSB 22 (Educational guardians) (N.B 22.3 included in Section 3) MSB 23 (Lodgings and host families)

## Change log

Version date	Page and paragraph	Change
September 25	Page 25, paragraph 132	Text amended to clarify the next steps when a school does not meet the BSO Standards at the end of the inspection: '132. Where the school does not meet BSO Standards, ISI will share the provisional findings with the headteacher and the Department for Education, indicating the findings of the inspection and the details of BSO standards which are provisionally not met. There will be no published inspection report.'