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part of Independent Schools Inspectorate

**British Schools Overseas**

**Inspection Report**

**New Cairo British International School**

**April 2025**

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## School's Details

<b>School</b>	New Cairo British International School			
<b>Address</b>	Road 17, 1st District 3rd Zone, 5th Settlement New Cairo Egypt			
<b>Telephone number</b>	+20 0127 269 9992			
<b>Email address</b>	paul.joseph@ncbis.co.uk			
<b>Principal</b>	Mr Paul Joseph			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Lotfy Badrawy			
<b>Proprietor</b>	Heliopolis Society for Cultural and Social Care of English Speaking Foreigners			
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 18			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	766			
	<b>Early years</b>	62	<b>Juniors</b>	352
	<b>Seniors</b>	263	<b>Sixth form</b>	89
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7 to 8 April 2025			

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 New Cairo British International School (NCBIS) was founded in 1978. The school is the sole operating activity of the Heliopolis Society for the Cultural and Social Care of English Speaking Foreigners (The Society), which is an independent, non-profit organisation established to operate and manage the school. Membership is open to all parents with children at NCBIS. The Society elects from within its membership the board of directors, who are thus all parents of pupils at the school. It is they who govern the school and are responsible for determining its strategic direction.
- 1.2 The school is divided into a primary school, which caters for children under the age of 5 and pupils in Years 1 to 6, and a secondary school, which caters for pupils in Years 7 to 11 and for sixth-form pupils in Years 12 and 13. The school also incorporates a small, separately managed Dutch School for pupils up to the end of Year 8, which is inspected separately. Since the previous inspection in October 2019, a new principal was appointed in May 2024.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to provide experiences that will enable all students to follow their passions and become successful, caring citizens and leaders in tomorrow's world. It strives to be a caring, internationally minded learning community guided by a commitment to continuous self-improvement and reflection.

### About the pupils

- 1.4 The school consists of expatriate pupils, representing around 60 nationalities, and dual-nationality Egyptian pupils. The school's own assessment data indicates that the level of ability of pupils, when they join the primary school or Year 7 in the secondary school, is broadly average in relation to those taking the same tests. The school has identified 177 pupils who have a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional support through the school's inclusive learning team. There are 92 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) and around 46 pupils, mainly in the primary school, receive additional support to enable them to access the curriculum. The school identifies pupils who are more able in a given area and seeks to provide additional challenge for them through the curriculum or other activities.

## 2. Inspection of Standards for British Schools Overseas

### Preface

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

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

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include: an exhaustive health and safety audit; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures; an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law; in-depth consideration of the extent to which the school meets the requirements of local law and custom.

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

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

Accreditation as a British school overseas lasts for three years. The school's previous inspection was in October 2019.

## Key findings

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

### Part 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 **The standards relating to the quality of education in paragraphs 1, 2(1)(a) and (b), 2(2)(a) to 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(e) to 2(2)(i), 2A(1)(a) and 2A(1)(c) to (e), 3 and 4 are met, but those relating to paragraph 2(2)(d)(ii) (encouraging respect for other people) and 2A(1)(b) (provision of sex education for secondary pupils) cannot be met because they are precluded by the host country's legislation.**
- 2.3 The curriculum is well planned and effectively takes account of the aptitudes and needs of pupils of all ages, including those who have SEND. For children up to the age of five, the school follows a programme based on the United Kingdom's early years foundation stage (EYFS). Children are encouraged to learn through play, pursue their own interests and begin to explore the world around them, thereby building their knowledge and skills. Pupils in the primary and secondary phases follow a broad and balanced curriculum which is based on the English national curriculum and which covers all the areas required by it. Pupils work towards iGCSEs at the end of Year 11 and then choose between A levels and the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma in the sixth form. Support for the large majority of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) is a key focus for the school. This includes the effective deployment of teaching assistants in the primary school and an emphasis on enabling pupils to acquire subject-specific vocabulary. One-to-one and small group sessions are effective in supporting those pupils who require additional help. As a result, pupils successfully master the content of the curriculum as well as the English language. Their understanding and use of spoken and written English are excellent, and the curriculum enables them further to develop their language skills from a young age by learning Spanish, French and Arabic.
- 2.4 Pupils perform well in iGCSE examinations, though the performance of pupils at iGCSE does not always culminate in equivalent success at IB or A level. Value-added data provided by the school shows that pupils taking iGCSE examinations make good and sometimes rapid progress from their starting points.
- 2.5 The school offers highly effective support for pupils who have SEND. Specialist staff work closely together to ensure that the provision is consistent across the primary and secondary phases. Individual needs are identified promptly, and appropriate strategies are shared with staff so that pupils can access the curriculum and make good progress. One-to-one and small group teaching, including sessions on study skills, as well as pastoral support and mentoring, are effective in building pupils' confidence and independence.
- 2.6 Pupils are able to explore and develop new interests and skills through an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. These include clubs relating to sport, drama, music, curriculum extension and areas of general interest. The programme offers a range of options for pupils in the sixth form, who can also volunteer to lead or support activities.
- 2.7 The school provides suitable careers guidance. From an early age, as part of the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme, pupils are encouraged to think about the jobs people do and possible career paths. Older pupils receive impartial advice when choosing iGCSE and A-level options and applying to universities in Egypt and beyond. The careers programme includes talks by visiting professionals and alumni in addition to individual counselling. The PSHE programme prepares pupils not only for life as possible British citizens but also for life as global citizens. Additionally, it teaches pupils about positive relationships and fundamental values. However, elements relating to the promotion of respect for peoples' protected characteristics and the teaching of sex education are precluded from being met because of the law in Egypt.

- 2.8 Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge. Effective planning incorporates suitable activities and teaching strategies to enable pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers provide and use a range of appropriate resources effectively and lessons are purposeful and productive. They challenge more able pupils and support those who have individual needs or areas of relative weakness. Teachers allow pupils to deepen their understanding by thinking and learning for themselves and reflecting on work they have completed in order to improve. Pupils appreciate the extra help that teachers are willing to give and their clear and patient explanations and advice. Teachers are successful in motivating pupils to aspire to improve and develop scholarship. In response to the pre-inspection surveys, almost all pupils said that their skills and knowledge improve in most lessons and that their teachers are supportive. Teaching ensures that British values are not undermined and does not discriminate against pupils due to their protected characteristics.
- 2.9 An effective assessment system is in place to track pupils' attainment and progress and identify where additional support is needed. Leaders and teachers make effective use of standardised data to produce regular targets. Marking and feedback are particularly helpful in setting out next steps for pupils' learning so that they know how to improve, as acknowledged in the pupil survey.

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

- 2.10 The standards relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, paragraph 5(a) and (b)(i) to (v) and (vii) are met, but that relating to paragraph 5(b)(vi) (encouraging respect for other people) cannot be met because it is precluded by the host country's legislation.**
- 2.11 The themes of nurture, community, bravery, integrity and self-reflection shape pupils' values and attitudes. A topic-based curriculum supports younger pupils' understanding of global goals and cultures around the world, including ancient and modern Egypt, and this understanding is further developed as pupils move through the school.
- 2.12 Through its PSHE programme and the curriculum, the school actively and effectively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This is supported by events such as International Day, Family Day and Model United Nations, as well as by a programme of assemblies which allow pupils to develop an understanding of public institutions in England. An effective pastoral system enables pupils to grow in self-esteem and self-confidence, distinguish right from wrong and accept responsibility for their behaviour. Pupils show respect for each other and for adults who work in the school. They actively contribute both to the school and the wider community through service, the fulfilment of leadership roles and charity work. Pupils welcome leadership opportunities and seek to improve the school through the student council and house system. This enables them to experience and enact democracy and put the responsibilities of citizenship into practice.
- 2.13 The school ensures that the United Kingdom's Equality Act (2010) is followed in so far as the law in Egypt will allow. Respect for the protected characteristics relating to disability, sex, marriage, age, race, religion and belief is actively promoted. However, the school is precluded by the host country's legislation from actively promoting protected characteristics relating to sexual orientation, same-sex marriage and civil partnerships and gender reassignment.

## Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.14 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16] are met.**
- 2.15 The school has robust safeguarding measures in place. Members of the safeguarding team undertake suitable training and apply United Kingdom statutory guidance appropriately to the context of the school. Leaders are held to account through regular consultation and reviews with the school's designated safeguarding governor to ensure that the safeguarding policy is implemented effectively. Clear communication systems allow early identification and resolution of issues. Child protection

records are detailed, clear and securely stored. Staff receive regular training so that they are able to recognise and address issues such as potential abuse, neglect and mental health issues. Training ensures that staff are not complacent about the possible occurrence of safeguarding concerns. Policies and procedures are clear and well understood by staff. They are vigilant to possible safeguarding issues in their day-to-day dealings with pupils and recognise the need to take prompt action to communicate or act upon safeguarding concerns when they arise. There are clear procedures for managing any allegations against staff that might arise.

- 2.16 There are appropriate and adequate channels for pupils to report concerns. Pupils are confident that they have a trusted adult who they can speak to if they have any worries, and that prompt action will be taken to support them. The school educates pupils effectively about how to stay safe, including online, a view supported by almost all pupils in the pre-inspection survey. Pupils feel safe in school. Appropriate network filtering and monitoring systems are in place in school, and leaders regularly check these for effectiveness.
- 2.17 Procedures to promote good behaviour and prevent bullying are known and understood by pupils and staff and are implemented effectively. The PSHE curriculum, assemblies and events such as anti-bullying week are effective in educating pupils about the importance of being kind. A suitable system of rewards celebrates pupils' success, efforts and achievements, and appropriate sanctions are applied where the need arises. In their survey responses, almost all pupils agreed that the school expects them to behave well and most believe the school takes bullying seriously. Detailed records are kept, enabling leaders to identify trends and patterns.
- 2.18 The school complies with local fire and health and safety requirements. Regular checks are made of premises, machinery and equipment. A robust maintenance programme, which includes fire detectors, alarms and extinguishers, is in place, and record-keeping is thorough, reflecting an effective overview of the school's procedures. Fire drills are carried out regularly and suitably recorded.
- 2.19 Pupils are appropriately supervised throughout the school day and on school trips. In the pre-inspection survey almost all pupils agreed that the school is a safe place to be. Arrangements for the supervision of children in the early years are robust. The school has a suitable policy for first aid and its effective implementation ensures that pupils who are ill or injured are treated by well-qualified staff in a timely manner. This includes staff with appropriate paediatric first-aid training and a fully qualified school doctor. Medicines are kept securely and their administration carefully recorded.
- 2.20 Admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained. Staff follow up any unexplained absences promptly. An appropriate risk assessment policy is in place and implemented effectively so that potential risks involving areas of the school, activities and people are suitably identified and mitigated.

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

- 2.21 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**
- 2.22 The school carries out the required checks on staff, proprietors and any other adults working at the school to ensure their suitability to work with children, in line with both local requirements and guidance issued to schools in the United Kingdom. These checks are carried out before the start of any adult's employment. A suitable single record of appointments is maintained, and staff files include all the required documentation. The school does not employ supply staff.

#### **Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools**

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

- 2.24 Appropriate toilet and washing amenities are provided for pupils of all ages. The school has a suitably equipped medical centre with appropriate washing and toilet facilities. The premises are maintained to an appropriate standard of safety and hygiene. Acoustic conditions and both internal and external lighting are suitable. The provision of drinking water is adequate. Ample space is available for physical education and general recreation.

## **Part 6 – Provision of information**

### **2.25 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**

- 2.26 All the information required by the Standards is provided or made available to current parents and the parents of prospective pupils. The contact details for the school, the principal and the chair of governors and a statement of the school's aims and ethos are published on the school website. Also published on the website are policies and particulars of arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions; provision for pupils who speak EAL; the procedure for complaints; the curriculum; arrangements to promote good behaviour and prevent bullying; and health and safety and the school's provision for first aid. Details of the provision for pupils who have SEND are provided on request, and the school provides parents with five written reports per year on their child's progress.

## **Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

### **2.27 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.**

- 2.28 The school has an appropriate complaints policy, which provides for a three-stage process with clear timescales, including an initial informal stage. If concerns are not resolved informally, parents are able to proceed to a formal stage by submitting a complaint in writing. If the concerns still remain unresolved, the school makes provision for a hearing before a panel which includes at least one person independent of the management and running of the school, which parents may attend, accompanied if they wish. The policy allows for the panel to make findings and recommendations and for a confidential record to be kept.

## **Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

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

- 2.30 The leadership and management of the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities so that the BSO Standards are met consistently and the wellbeing of the pupils is actively promoted.

### 3. Inspection Evidence

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

#### Inspectors

Mr Stephen Fox

Reporting inspector

Mrs Rebecca Layton-Short

Team inspector (Principal, Saudi Arabian school)