

## **International School of Catalunya, Maresme**

Carrer Carles Flotats, 14, 08360 Canet de Mar, Barcelona

Avinguda dels Llimoners, 34, 08360 Canet de Mar, Barcelona

**School's regional authorisation number:** 08076832

**Date of Inspection:** 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020

### **Inspection Team:**

Andrew Beavon (Lead Inspector)

Sheena Stalker (Team Inspector)

### **Reason for the Inspection:**

To evaluate the school for authorisation as British from Nursery to Year 12.

### **Overall Recommendation:**

The school is recommended for authorisation from Nursery to Year 10 for a period of 4 years for 180 students.

The next inspection is due in November 2024.

The school is recommended for authorisation from Year 11 to Year 12 for a period 2 years for 36 students.

The next inspection is due in November 2022.

*Schools are **authorised** by regional authorities after **inspection** by NABSS (or another recognised inspection service) and **certification** by the British Council.*

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*N.B. A NABSS inspection does not infer membership of the Association. Authorised schools may apply for NABSS membership.*

## History and Context of the School

International School of Catalunya (ISCAT) Maresme is located in the coastal town of Canet de Mar in Catalunya. It is part of a small group of privately owned schools in the region. It opened in September 2019.

The current roll is 52 students. The majority of students are Spanish, then Russian and British. The purpose of this inspection is to assess whether the school can be authorised as British from Nursery to Year 12. This is the school's first inspection.

## Accommodation and Resources

The school consists of two buildings. A former residential property has been converted to house the primary classes and there is a new building to cater for the expansion into secondary. Both provide a very good standard of accommodation for students.

All rooms are adequate in size and furnished with desks and chairs appropriate to the age of the children. They are equipped with interactive display screens which are used creatively to support teaching and learning.

In some classrooms and common areas, displays celebrate students' work but elsewhere, good quality displays are limited or lacking.

There are specialist facilities for art, music, computing and science as well as a sensory room for the younger students. A stair lift has been installed in the primary building as classrooms are on three floors. Staff facilities are appropriate for the number of teachers in the school. Toilet facilities for students are suitable for a school of this size.

Printed, digital and practical resources support the delivery of the curriculum and are used imaginatively by teachers. The school library is large and well stocked. Laptops and tablet computers are available for primary classes. Secondary students bring their own devices from home to use in school. The school makes good use of its digital learning platform to share resources and activities. The range of secondary science resources is limited and should be improved to allow for more hands-on learning. Storage facilities for chemicals are inadequate.

Facilities for sports are excellent. In addition to an indoor multi-purpose space, there are outdoor sports pitches, playgrounds and a swimming pool. The school also has a large wooded area in the grounds. This is well used with planned activities following the forest school approach. In some of the outdoor areas, restricted shade limits the times when they can be used.

There is a separate dining room with meals brought in by an external caterer. Students eat in an organised, clean and well-maintained environment.

## Health, Safety and Welfare

The site is secure and access is controlled. The school provides a safe environment for staff and students. Key policies are in place for curriculum, health and safety, anti-bullying, child protection and safeguarding.

Students comment that they feel safe and enjoy coming to school. They know who to speak to if they have a problem and they trust the staff to deal appropriately with any concerns they may raise.

Fire and evacuation procedures are displayed around the school and in the classrooms. Evacuation drills take place once a term. Most staff are first aid trained, and accidents or illness are recorded appropriately.

Criminal record checks from Spain have been obtained for all staff, although not for all staff who have previously worked in other countries.

## The Curriculum

The curriculum is broad and balanced and clearly based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and English National Curriculum. Appropriate time is allocated to the teaching of National Curriculum subjects enabling students to learn and make progress. Suitable weight is given to English subjects and Spanish/Catalan. The principal language of instruction is English.

The school's curriculum policy is clear and planning is consistent across the school. It is supported by appropriate schemes of work. Differentiated tasks for different abilities are planned, and students with a special educational need are identified. Detailed information in the form of an individual educational plan is provided to help teachers to support targeted students.

In the EYFS, children's interests are catered for effectively by in-the-moment planning. Topic-based learning for the foundation subjects is well planned for primary students. These lessons are stimulating and engaging, and they help develop students' speaking and listening, questioning and thinking skills.

At Key Stage 4, students are currently offered a free choice of subjects in addition to the compulsory subjects of English, mathematics, science and Spanish/Catalan. The school plans to offer a similar range of A level subjects as it expands into Key Stage 5.

## Staffing

Most staff are UK qualified and suitably experienced to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) programmes of study and the National Curriculum. Teachers are effectively deployed in their areas of specialism.

There is a core of staff who have worked within the same group of schools for several years. This ensures continuity and consistency. All staff from the first year of operation have been retained.

There are good staff-to-student ratios in all classes, with a maximum of 18 students per class, although all classes are currently much smaller. In addition to teachers, classes in the EYFS and Key Stages 1 and 2 have assistants who are deployed well to support teaching and learning.

Staff demonstrate good subject knowledge and practice, and this is supported by a programme of in-service training in school and online throughout the year. The impact of recent training on the use of questioning was evident as this was applied effectively by teachers in many of the classes observed.

## Teaching and Learning

Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. Overall, it is very good. Lessons are generally well-structured, have clear learning objectives and are interactive and engaging. The more able are challenged, while support is given to those requiring it. In a small number of lessons, a lack of structure inhibits the progress of students who are not always aware about what they are learning.

Students are confident when talking about what they are doing and what they are learning, and they make good progress in most lessons. Spoken English is generally insisted on and the quality of written English is good.

Teachers know their subjects and tailor learning to the needs of their students. The use of questioning by teachers to enhance understanding is a strength. In a lesson about the Victorians, targeted questions were skillfully used to develop students' understanding about the importance of different inventions from the period. In some lessons, students work collaboratively and share their ideas in group and class discussions to produce good results. Students think, discuss, explain and apply their knowledge.

The teacher-student relationships are positive and contribute to a purposeful and inclusive learning environment. Students are focused, attentive and motivated. Good behaviour is evident in most lessons. House points are awarded in recognition of good behaviour and work, and children's achievements are celebrated in weekly assemblies.

## Assessment

The school's systems for assessment are robust. Marking, written and verbal feedback are used to drive improvement in the students' work. Students select significant work they have done to create a personalised record of achievement of their time in the school.

Planned opportunities for students to respond to feedback are timetabled throughout the week and recorded. Tutor time is used for discussion about targets and students are aware of how well they are doing and what the next steps for improvement are.

Standardised summative tests are used to gauge students' attainment each term and the results are used alongside formative class assessment data to

inform planning and teaching. Student achievement is tracked consistently against National Curriculum objectives.

## **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is integral to the school's ethos and organisation. The Unicef Rights Respecting School programme is at the centre of the school's curriculum. The school's values (Respect, Honesty, Kindness, Cooperation, Responsibility and Unity) are reinforced with displays and posters around the school.

Students enjoy coming to school, they feel safe and valued. There are plans to hold elections this term to select representatives for the student council to increase involvement in the future development of the school.

Independent learning and autonomy are developed through an extensive programme of external school visits and the use of outdoor learning areas for activities following the forest school curriculum.

## **Leadership and Management**

The Headteacher has established a clear vision for the future direction of the school since taking up the position in February 2020. The recently appointed Head of EYFS and Primary and the Head of Secondary use their leadership time well to develop their departments and provide good support to the Headteacher, alongside the school's owner, and the Director of the ISCAT group of schools.

Good leadership and management are evident in the consistency of expectations across the school, notably in marking, assessment and behaviour, and these areas are strengths of the school. The leadership team has been successful in sharing their vision with the rest of the teaching staff, and as a result the staff work together to achieve the school's priorities. Teaching staff are extremely positive about the school.

Established channels of communication allow both staff and students to participate in the planning and decision-making processes. There are weekly meetings to discuss and plan the school's priorities and review progress. This has resulted in a thorough school development plan.

The quality of teaching and learning is monitored through regular classroom observations as part of the school's performance management programme. Teachers meet with their line manager at the start of each school year to set performance targets and to identify professional development needs. These are then reviewed later in the year.

## Recommendations

The school should:

- improve the range of resources available for the teaching of science in secondary and provide better storage facilities for chemicals; and
- maintain the strengths already achieved in the good quality of marking, assessment and the pupils' positive attitudes to learning, and bring the few satisfactory lessons up to the very good standards of the majority.