

British College of Andorra

Ctra. de la Comella i de la Plana, S/N, AD500 Andorra la Vella, Andorra

School's regional authorisation number: N/A

Date of Inspection: 18th April 2023

Inspection Team:

(Lead Inspector) Sarah King

(Team Inspector) Alison Wylie

Reason for the Inspection: to evaluate the educational provision for pupils from year 10 to year 13.

Overall Recommendation:

The school is recommended for authorisation from year 10 to year 13 for a period of 4 years for 100 pupils.

The next inspection for these key stages will be due in the third term 2027.

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History and Context of the School:

The British College of Andorra opened in 2018. The school currently has 224 pupils on roll from nursery age to year 11. Thirty percent are Andorran and the remaining seventy percent are Spanish, British, American, Russian and Chinese, among many other nationalities. The school is owned by an Andorran company, British College Overseas SL..

The school is authorised as an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, to deliver the IB Diploma Programme from September 2023.

Accommodation and Resources:

The main school building has three floors with a lift to provide disabled access to all areas. This building houses the early years department and key stage 1. There is also a secondary library with a study or small group teaching area, a fully functional laboratory, a secure science preparation room where chemicals are stored, a well-resourced computer suite, an art room and various offices and staff work rooms. The dining room and kitchens are also in this building.

In the new buildings, there are secondary classrooms for humanities, languages, drama, mathematics and music.

A new covered football pitch at the bottom end of the site, as well as new picnic areas, means that there is plenty of outside space for the students. There is also a very large gym for inside sports lessons.

All secondary students from year 10 onwards are provided with a laptop computer. There are large interactive screens in every classroom and the school is generally very well resourced for these students.

An indoor climbing wall is used during physical education lessons and after-school activities. It is inspected and maintained regularly by specialists.

Good use is also made of the wooded areas which are adjacent to the school, and pupils use these regularly for outdoor learning across a variety of curriculum areas.

Health, Safety and Welfare:

The school accommodation is safe, and improvements have been made to ensure the environment is fit for purpose, for example by securing the stone wall outside.

There is a written health and safety policy, which aims to ensure that all pupils are safe and the school is fully compliant with fire standards and evacuation procedures.

There is a new treatment room, and the receptionist keeps a comprehensive record of accidents and any action taken.

Entering the school is safe with a member of staff on gate duty.

The school has a safeguarding and child protection policy and plans to write a safer recruitment policy to reflect current procedures which are thorough in making sure that staff appointed are safe to work with pupils.

All staff from outside Andorra are subject to an exhaustive process which ensures their suitability for working with pupils.

The Curriculum:

The curriculum offered in years 10 and 11, and for next year in years 12 and 13 is broad and balanced. There is a wide range of subjects for the pupils to choose from, including all three sciences, economics, business, spanish, french, history, geography, and art.

The teachers plan creative and motivational lessons. For example, in a year 10 history lesson, the teacher had taped out a four-by-four metre square on the classroom floor, to show the average size of an apartment for a family of four during Stalin's rule in the Soviet Union. The pupils were asked to arrange all their belongings into this small space to give them a very real experience of what life would have been like at this time and learnt in a very real manner, another aspect of life during this period of history.

The students are also given independent study opportunities to prepare them for the IB diploma in year 12. The year 10 students undertake personal projects, for which they have to submit their title suggestions to the tutor and then research and put together a 10-minute presentation about their chosen topic. The research skills, the learning about referencing and plagiarism and scanning and skimming for information, are all very useful tools to help the students' understanding.

The secondary pupils are given two opportunities during the week where they can all choose an enrichment activity to pursue from a list. These activities such as gardening, adventure, coding, singing, volleyball and drama, give all the secondary pupils a chance to build good relationships between the older and younger students and a chance for them to enjoy an activity that might not always be available on a standard secondary timetable.

These enrichment activities provide learning opportunities such as team work and challenge.

Staffing:

The staffing team is a strength of the school. The teachers are well qualified and experienced in both teaching GCSEs and the IB diploma. They have good subject knowledge and know their students well. This was seen in the relationships within the lessons and the challenge given to the more able students. Staff all have high expectations of the students' behaviour both in lessons and outside of the classroom.

New and experienced staff for mathematics, physics and English have already been appointed in readiness for the school expansion into year 12 and 13 next year.

Teaching and Learning and Assessment:

Teaching is mostly very good with some examples of outstanding practice. In outstanding lessons, teachers set work to match all abilities and have high expectations of the students. Lessons are creative and motivational. In one outstanding lesson, the teacher checked prior learning as part of their starter and then related this learning to an exam question. This gave the learning meaning and purpose. The work within this outstanding lesson was challenging and relevant and by the end of the lesson, all pupils had consolidated prior learning and learnt new skills and information in preparation for their exams.

The marking of the pupils' work and feedback are consistent, and students are clear on what they need to do to improve. However, there are missed opportunities within some lessons for students to discuss learning together and to give immediate feedback to students. Adding this element into more lessons would provide opportunities for teachers to extend the pupils' learning further and to ensure understanding of the current learning.

The school monitors progress and achievement across the school and uses external assessments to gain more information about students' abilities and potential in exams.

The newly appointed special needs coordinator is an excellent resource as they are monitoring and advising staff on the specific needs of students and supporting the staff with different methods to help these pupils. These pupils are monitored closely, with outside professional help brought in when needed. The exam arrangements for these students have been agreed by the examination board.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:

The school has recently appointed a counsellor who works with pupils who raise emotional and/or social concerns. A new personal, social and health (PSHE) scheme has been developed for pupils across the school and has been designed to target the specific current needs of the students, such as exam concerns and emotional and social well being. The school values are displayed around the school and are addressed in form times, assembly and PSHE lessons. Pupil behaviour and relationships are very positive.

The pupils say that there is no bullying and that they feel happy, safe and secure at the school. The pupils enjoy school and say that they particularly like the small class sizes and the teacher attention and care. They feel supported both academically and emotionally by their teachers.

The pupils also say that they would like more guidance about their futures and to know more about university courses, choices and requirements.

Leadership and Management:

The leadership team is clearly passionate about the school, its students and their progress and the effectiveness of their own roles on the learners.

The school's headteacher works closely with the IB coordinator and heads of primary and secondary sections in leading the school and to ensure the quality of teaching and learning. They observe teachers teaching and look at the work in books and at assessment results to check that good progress is being maintained. As a result of this progress is good and consistent and where it is not, action is taken. All leaders in the school are committed to school improvement and a good professional development programme is starting to be embedded into the school culture. The Head of Secondary leads a staff professional development programme currently based on formative assessment. The format is a whole staff session followed staff trialing one of the techniques, having an observation and then feedback and coaching session with the Head of Secondary. There is also a follow up meeting where staff share what they did, how it went and have a chance to give feedback to each other.

The school is fully aware of the progress that still needs to be made, particularly in terms of the use of formative assessment and continuing to prepare for years 12 and 13.

Response to the Previous inspection:

1. The second laboratory is still not completed. Photographs of the completed laboratory should be sent to the lead inspector before September 2023.

Conclusion:

The British College of Andorra is a very positive environment for pupils and staff. The school has a good grasp on the areas that they are performing well in and the areas that need further improvements. There is an atmosphere of calm and positivity in lessons and around the school, and students thrive there to meet their full potential.

The school is recommended for a four-year authorisation for year 10 to year 13.

Recommendations:

The school should now –

- Provide more careers and university guidance, particularly for students in years 11 upwards.
- Complete the second laboratory and send photographs to the lead inspector before September 2023.