

British School Monaco

Lead Improvement Partner:

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The findings and next steps of this report reflect the work of the Lead Improvement Partner.

The Compliance visit took place between
15-19 April 2024.

The visit was online.

Student Numbers: 40

Compliance is valid for 5 years.

The next Compliance check is due in April 2029.

Contents

COBIS COMPLIANCE REPORT

1.0 SAFEGUARDING AND SAFER RECRUITMENT	4
2.0 STUDENT WELFARE	8
3.0 FACILITIES	13
4.0 GOVERNANCE	19
5.0 ETHOS AND VALUES	23
OVERALL OBSERVATIONS & PRIORITY NEXT STEPS	26

COMPLIANCE REPORT

British School Monaco successfully met standards one to five of the COBIS Compliance system.

1.0 SAFEGUARDING AND SAFER RECRUITMENT

The school places a high priority on the safeguarding of students and staff, including child protection, and the safe recruitment of appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

1A

STANDARD

The school recruitment process is fair, thorough and transparent and applies to all appointments consistently.

COMMENTARY

The safety and quality of recruitment in the school is robust and effective. The process is clear, and everything is underpinned by a comprehensive and well-crafted policy. Those involved with recruitment have undertaken safer recruitment training.

Impressively, the school insists on recruiting teaching staff with a UK background wherever they apply from. As with other elements of the school's practice, educational values are front and centre. It is important that successful applicants embrace and espouse the school's principles as net contributors.

Unsurprisingly, the allure of the South of France and Monaco attracts many applications but the school's absolute attachment to employing like-minded individuals is commendable.

The school uses the TES as its funnel for applications and as such draws on generic application and reference request forms. During the visit, the school immediately carried out two recommendations to make it clear that one of the two professional referees should be the current or most recent headteacher as opposed to an employer and to add a question on the application form about any name changes and the reason for them.

There are a small number of existing staff who did not fill in application forms in the early days of the school. These should be completed retrospectively for record-keeping and as signed declarations of the veracity of their contents.

The school carries out all the requisite professional background and police checks. Going forward, the school should also carry out ICPC checks on any appointees moving from another country who have lived or worked in the UK and request checks for existing staff retrospectively. This is a requirement for Compliance. The school had set wheels in motion immediately on this last

recommendation. Police checks for staff – the *casier judiciaire* – are carried out annually in both Monaco and France depending on where the staff member lives. It is refreshing to see the screening process includes a birth certificate check.

The SCR consists of an overview and individual staff files with all the requisite documentation digitally scanned. This is thorough and well-organised. As part of their regular meeting programme, the DSL and DGS will look at the SCR at the end of the school year.

One interesting feature of recruitment is that the school is obliged by the Monegasque authorities to advertise all posts – whether local or international – for three days for Monaco residents.

This is not an easy region to live in for colleagues arriving from abroad. As the school has grown so has the support for new staff who now benefit from a settling-in allowance and return flight before they start formally along with support with bureaucracy including the all-important *carte de séjour*. Staff also benefit from the provision of health insurance and an annual flight home.

Tax returns can be complicated and labyrinthine, and it is reassuring for staff that the school provides support for this annual task.

Induction lasts a week and includes safeguarding and first aid training. The 90-day probationary period is both rounded and supportive and includes self and peer review elements. There is a parallel and different process for administrative and operational staff.

All-in-all, the process of safer recruitment is consistent, supportive and wedded to high quality appointments.

NEXT STEPS

- To enhance the already thorough background checks, request ICPCs for all staff who have lived and worked in the UK retrospectively and ensure this is part of the process moving forward for future applicants. **This is a condition for Compliance. August 2 update - final ICPC received and viewed by Director of Accreditation.**
- Staff who did not fill in application forms originally should do so retrospectively.

1B

STANDARD

All staff within the school including volunteers and supply staff meet high standards of child protection and the safeguarding of students.

COMMENTARY

In common with the school's other policies, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is clear and comprehensive. It is reviewed both annually and whenever there is a need to during the school year and that has happened. Clear guidance and procedures are set out for staff to share and report concerns and there are two suitably secure drives for information traffic and

storage.

The safeguarding team consists of the DSL and the ADSL in Primary. Both are suitably trained. They would certainly welcome and benefit from face-to-face training opportunities. Next year, two new officers will be appointed in secondary which will not only strengthen the team but also help to build the safeguarding culture across the school still further. These colleagues are committed to their roles and have time on Wednesday afternoons and, when necessary, on other occasions, to get together. They also meet with the Designated Governor for Safeguarding twice a term. Meetings have agendas and are minuted.

The safeguarding officers do have other responsibilities so it would help to explore the possibility of installing a dedicated safeguarding package like CPOMS or My Concern. The school is preparing to use iSAMS as an MIS, but these safeguarding systems would help with more secure storage and analysis of child protection information. Staff are confident and forthcoming in sharing concerns. One of these pieces of software would make this even easier. On iSAMS, the reporting tool refers to 'wellbeing' rather than 'welfare' which can lead to confusion and conflation.

It might be mutually beneficial to perhaps work with ISM and other schools in the region to build connections and to consider drawing upon the support and international experience of the Safeguarding Alliance through membership which, amongst other benefits, offers 24/7 phone consultation.

Staff receive online training which is supplemented by a follow-up discussion session in the induction week at the beginning of the year. Safeguarding sits on every staff meeting agenda along with health and safety.

To develop provision further, including short and planned safeguarding sessions in staff meetings as well as safeguarding updates would keep staff consciousnesses high. These would be particularly beneficial for administrative and operational staff. 'Short and often' and at, or near, the start of meetings usually works best and perhaps involving anonymous case studies and scenarios. Staff are very comfortable about sharing concerns and know their children very well and so it would be reasonable to expect a high level of receptiveness. All this would keep the safeguarding pot simmering.

Sessions for parents would also add to the growing safeguarding culture. Perhaps short presentations could be injected into the Friends' coffee mornings given the challenges of getting parents together. Parents interviewed welcomed this idea.

COMMENDATION

The commitment of the staff and safeguarding team along with their determination to see the culture build and strengthen.

NEXT STEPS

Consider the benefits of a dedicated safeguarding programme such as CPOMS or MyConcern.

Explore ways in which more case study and scenario sessions could be woven into staff meetings.

Develop further opportunities to enhance safeguarding knowledge and awareness of operational and administrative colleagues.

Offer more coffee morning information sessions to parents which might well include aspects of safeguarding.

Consider ways of providing face-to-face and interactive professional learning opportunities to safeguarding officers, perhaps in conjunction with other schools in the Principality and the South of France.

2.0 STUDENT WELFARE

The school provides a safe and supportive environment for all young people.

2A

STANDARD

The school provides a pastoral structure that meets the needs of all students and promotes their personal development.

COMMENTARY

Evidence from all perspectives point to a school where children receive effective wrap around care and are safe and secure in school. Happiness is in abundance. Parents interviewed were effusive about how well their children were supported and looked after and children supported this opinion from their angle.

Parents talked about how nurturing the school was and how the experiences fed the imagination. Children spoke of working together, the friendliness and kindness of the place and enthused about the school's atmosphere. They called the school 'amazing', 'the best' and, rather enigmatically, 'wise'.

There is a genuine sense of togetherness exuded by the children interviewed. However, one learner interviewed spoke about how she felt that Years 1-3 felt a little separated from Years 4-6 because they had different breaks and learned on different floors, in spite of the times they are together, say, in assemblies or for house competitions.

Naturally each section of a school, like each class, carves out its own identity, particular to the age and stage of the children. However, with the opening of the secondary school on a different site, this feeling of separation will be something to watch and manage.

Later in the report, there is mention of how comfortable the children are about sharing anxieties as well as challenging uncomfortable situations with their peers. This, in part, derives from positive relationships. Small numbers allow staff to get to know the children very well. Children arrive from different places with a range of needs and circumstances. Some had found it difficult to fit into other systems or bigger schools. At the British School Monaco, they have not only found their place but their home from home.

Teachers communicate with parents through Class Dojo. Parents interviewed were very satisfied with this system. Communication is straightforward and staff are accessible and both responsive to parents and ready to contact them with any issues.

Communication is not always easy in practice. Given the profile of the school's families, parents travel and sometimes leave the children in the care of

nannies or other staff. One advantage is that there is invariably someone available to pick up children when they are ill.

Staff realise that, given the generally privileged backgrounds, much is done for the children and so they are keen to encourage self-reliance, responsibility, carefully managed risk and some adventure. Many are whisked from home to school by car so even the walk to and from the breaktime areas gives children a taste of normal life as well as some exercise and fresh air.

The encouragement and development of learner and human qualities and attributes which form the basis of the school's core values – like kindness, generosity, respect for others and personal integrity and responsibility – all help the children to grow and learn and infuse the sense of community and togetherness.

Aspects of PSHE are taught in class and in themed assemblies and children can deposit thoughts and messages in a worry box. Staff encourage human attributes like kindness and consideration for others. Conflicts and arguments do arise on occasions and staff address these quickly and sensitively. Global issues are tackled. War is not far away in the minds, say, of Russian and Ukrainian children, and the school addresses issues in the wider world neutrally and squarely.

The school operates a house system and holds events and competitions. There is a current Head Boy, but the Head Girl has recently left the school and so the search for a successor is underway. There is also a team of older monitors who meet with the Principal fortnightly and carry out various duties around the school and set the example for younger children.

There is certainly clear scope for developing leadership and responsibility further and for the establishment of a student council. Getting older children together with their younger counterparts is complicated by their different breaks and lunchtimes but, with the advent of the Secondary School, this is one of a number of potential vehicles for promoting vertical action and service across the age range.

Overall, there is delightful family feel and an atmosphere of togetherness to the school which the owners and leaders are determined to protect and promote. The admissions process which makes expectations clear and determines families' understanding of, and commitment to, the school's values certainly promote strong triangular relationships with parents and children.

COMMENDATION

The quality of individual care provided for children across the school around their personal and educational welfare.

The family feel and the quality of relationships across the school. The size of the school community enables staff to know the children well.

NEXT STEPS

Consider how service and responsibility could be expanded further, especially through the establishment of a student council which would encourage vertical interaction and strengthen a sense of one-schoolness.

Keep an eye on the balance between sectional identity and whole school cohesion and, as mentioned above, seek out ways of promoting vertical relationships and activities.

2B

STANDARD

The school has provision for the physical and mental health, and safe supervision, of all students to allow them to flourish in the school environment.

COMMENTARY

The medical room is housed on the ground floor of the school. All incidents are recorded and stored. The school intends to introduce iSAMS as a management information system next year which will improve the efficient storage and security of medical information. The room contains a bed, and members of staff supervise any children in this area until they are collected and/or medical teams arrive.

Given breaktimes are unusual and involve a walk from the main building, staff always carry a special first aid bag, including an epi pen. All staff have been trained in its use.

There are two options for first aid training, depending on the role and responsibilities of staff. By the end of the year everyone will have been trained through one of these two programmes and it is the intention to include first aid training as part of the induction process.

NEXT STEPS

None noted.

2C

STANDARD

The school ensures that through positive behaviour management students are supported in their learning and safety.

COMMENTARY

The school places great emphasis on respect and kindness to others as well as oneself. The evidence gathered during the process supported this. Children were extremely well-behaved and well-managed. The walk to and from the breaktime play area was a good example of how children are taught to be safe and considerate on pavements.

There are plenty of staff on-hand at the start and end of the school day to manage arrivals and exits safely and warmly.

COMMENDATION

The behaviour and conduct observed during the visit which was exemplary and impressive.

NEXT STEPS

None noted.

2D

STANDARD

The school ensures that off-site activities are appropriate and safe.

COMMENTARY

Backed by a clear policy, there is an equally clear procedure to apply for and plan a visit which includes a risk assessment. First aiders must accompany all ventures beyond the school walls.

It is still early days at the school and the size of the student roll has tempered plans for residential visits, although they remain very much in the pipeline as the school grows further. It should be noted that a trip into neighbouring France would require the dual consent of both the Monaco authorities and the French Ministry of the Interior through a single application form. That permission can take six weeks and so forward planning will be necessary. It also means spontaneity is much reduced for opportunities outside Monaco.

There is plenty to do in Monaco, however, and children have enjoyed visits to the well-regarded Oceanographic Museum and the zoo, once the private preserve of the royal family and which is now open to the public. The Oceanographic Museum organises nature trails around the Principality and the school has devised one of their own. A trip to the Irish Library – founded by the late Princess Grace – was also valuable and well-received.

The school's first football fixture is just around the corner and has created excitement from girls as well as boys. Rather pleasingly, the youngest children will be the pathfinders of team sport outside the school.

The foundations are in place and the potential is clear to expand the

repertoire of the school's day and residential trip programme in the future as the school grows in size and numbers. The school is looking into a range of possibilities. Clearly there is an all-round enthusiasm and commitment to widen opportunities in this area.

NEXT STEPS

Continue to explore and take advantage of opportunities to expand children's horizons and experiences through residential trips, excursions, projects and sports fixtures.

3.0 FACILITIES

The school provides all students with access to an environment conducive to learning and that keeps them safe.

3A

STANDARD

Accommodation supports the learning needs of all students.

COMMENTARY

The primary school is housed on the street-level ground and lower floors of the building which is shared with other businesses and residents. However, these floors are not open to other users of the building, including the lift which is controlled by staff fobs.

There is no easily accessible outdoor space to play and learn in. This is a fact of Monegasque life where space and land are at a premium. However, the school makes use of nearby spaces for play and recreation. Although they have to walk a short distance to their recreational and play area next to the Modelex site associated with the school, this space belongs to the British School and is recognised by the authorities as such.

Children, clad in hi-visibility blue jackets, are supervised in either a local park, or the Terrace at the Modelex site, at breaktimes by staff who are equipped with special bags which contain first aid kits and epi pens which they are all trained to use.

Generally, the school does lack natural light and children have less access to outdoor spaces than is common in schools. Circumstances make it difficult to solve in the immediate future but the lesser access to outdoor spaces, especially for primary-age children, reduces learning and play opportunities. The school and the staff do their best, however, to give children fresh air, exercise and play space.

There is an air-conditioning system across the school as well as the facility for providing fresh air into indoor spaces. To boost light, lower floor ceilings have illuminated panels featuring natural scenes.

The school does have access to a swimming pool and local stadia for PE, but these sessions involve transport. Nevertheless, children were able to enjoy athletics in the Olympic stadium on a professional running track. Schools close on Wednesday afternoons in Monaco but access to local facilities is limited. The Monaco authorities stipulate how much curriculum time should be devoted to certain subject areas, including PE. As a result, children enjoy two healthy and generous slots in the week for sport.

In September 2024, the school will open a new secondary site for, initially, Year 7 and 8 students, some 500 metres uphill from the current primary school. That 500 m is further than might be imagined since the new site will sit atop a cliff next to the Jardin Exotique. Fortunately, a new and expensive free lift has been recently constructed. This means the trip from primary to secondary will take just 10 minutes

to reach the summit in total.

The project has received government approval to renovate and redesign part of an existing building. Unlike the primary school, this site does have direct access to some outdoor space. In the next academic year, a Compliance onsite visit to the secondary school will be necessary.

Children are divided into Year 1-3 and Year 4-6 floors, with the younger children naturally housed on the ground floor. Classrooms are surprisingly spacious and are generally of similar size, if differently shaped. This adds a certain character and identity to each of the year group classes. They are designed for up to sixteen children. The current roll offers spacious and flexible learning spaces for children and staff. All classrooms are equipped with whiteboards and interactive smartboards.

Class sizes are small which allows staff to really individualise support and learning for each child and to offer flexibility. For example, there are three Year 7 age children in Year 6 for whom the teacher has been able to provide an appropriate Year 7 programme of learning. These children will go straight into Year 8 next year. Staff clearly take a pride in their ability to support children on such a personalised basis in a variety of different ways according to need. Parents interviewed saw this individual support as a core asset of the school.

As well as Year 4-6 classrooms, the lower floor includes a common space which is used flexibly for a variety of purposes including dining, assemblies and display. Displays around the school, both in classrooms and in other areas, are attractive and stimulating.

There is also a Wellbeing Board and another section which celebrates togetherness and teamwork. A small seating area with a tv screen is available in the lower floor too.

The library is also situated in this area. It is well-stocked and relevant to the curriculum and to the needs of children whose first language is not English. The school is trying to add texts in the children's first languages, but some are more easily obtainable than others. Comfortable seating adds to the attraction of the area at break and lunchtimes for staff and children alike. Books are also housed in each classroom.

The plan to invest a large amount in books from next year's budget signals the importance the school places on literacy and on promoting the love of reading.

There is also a trophy section with house cups and the Golden Book. This enticingly bound volume with parchment-like pages contains citations for notable achievements, contributions and conduct. Older primary children were quick to point out that a mention in the Golden Book is harder to obtain the older one gets.

Opposite the entrance to the school is a new and large government development which will provide a range of facilities to the local area including much-needed parking spaces. These will be of greater benefit to parents rather than staff who generally prefer trains, buses or walking to cars.

The school's values, vision and mission are on clear and prominent display around the

building starting in the entrance.

COMMENDATION

The current and planned expansion of the school's library stock which is an investment in literacy and the promotion of reading for pleasure as well as supporting learning.

The thoughtful and judicious use of space around the school.

NEXT STEPS

Consider what more can be done to increase access to outdoor spaces for learning, play and wellbeing for primary children.

3B

STANDARD

The site provides a secure environment for students, staff and visitors.

COMMENTARY

Helpfully, Monegasque regulations around fire and lockdown requirements and procedures are tight and supportive. Fire exits and routes are clearly marked, and the school is obliged by law to have two emergency exits from the building.

The school carries out regular drills and, in each case, is obliged to inform the fire service. The school gathers at a designated assembly point away from the school. Evacuation practices begin with walk-throughs and advance in sophistication through planned and unannounced exercises to ones which involve complications like blocked stairways. This is exemplary practice. In addition, awareness and practice have been strengthened by all staff undergoing fire training.

The school carries out lockdown practices annually. A special noise announces the start of the procedure. Staff have the opportunity to feed back in debriefs after both fire evacuation and lockdown drills.

All visitors are required to sign in at reception where they are given a blue lanyard and accompanied at all times by staff. Access either side of the desk to the adjoining corridors and classrooms is via a key fob.

The school is planning to improve its key fob protocols in conjunction with the opening of the Secondary section to allow very limited access outside school hours. It is also worth noting that the fire brigade has access to the building at all times in the event of a fire in the evenings, at weekends or during holidays.

The reception area is protected by two locked glass doors facing the street outside at

the main entrance. The school has developed a system of identifying recognised and registered staff members who work for wealthy families. Each family has a safe word.

The School Secretary, who amongst other roles, manages the entrance is as impressively vigilant as she is welcoming. However, the reception area, for all its security features, is potentially an area of concern. The area is only visible from the street, not from inside the school and it is, in effect, not a public area like many school receptions. The School Secretary has a phone and a horn which she can sound in a difficult situation but an emergency button, perhaps connected to the police, would provide extra reassurance and beef up security further.

The school is looking into this for both the current and future secondary reception areas. It is comforting that the Monaco police are pledged to arrive at an incident or emergency anywhere in the Principality within two minutes.

COMMENDATION

The exemplary practice around fire evacuation.

The punctilious security and safety of the premises.

NEXT STEPS

Install extra security measures in the primary and secondary reception areas as part of a critical incident protocol.

3C

STANDARD

The fabric of the school provides an effective and safe working environment.

COMMENTARY

In spite of its urban location and the aforementioned building project underway opposite the school, extraneous heat and noise is blocked through effective insulation. What the school loses on the outdoor space swings, it gains on the insulation roundabout. Security is also enhanced as a result of the building's structure: everything is housed on two floors.

Lunches are brought from an outside supplier and heated up on the premises in conjunction with local regulations which also cover the suppression of food cooking smells in the building which is shared with commercial businesses and residents. Ingredients are healthy and the menu always include salads which seem unfeasibly popular with children in Year 1 and 2.

Lunches are staggered so Years 1-3 eat at a different time to Years 4-6. This means that breaktimes are also at different times. This is due to the available space in the dining area. The atmosphere was calm and considerate of others.

Children with medically diagnosed allergies or dietary issues are granted PAI licences under Monegasque law to bring in meals provided by their families. The food is kept in a separate fridge and heated up on the premises.

The current menus offer plentiful food, and the school is wise to limit portions with the option to get second helpings to reduce food waste. Staff receive free meals. In spite of the quality of the food, the school will switch to a new caterer for the coming academic year which is more suited to providing school meals. Coloured recycling bins accept plastic, paper and food separately.

The school is very clean, well-maintained and litter-free. Cleaning materials are stored in a locked area along with the school safe. Toilets examined were spotless.

COMMENDATION

The cleanliness of a well-maintained school.

NEXT STEPS

None noted.

3D

STANDARD

Overall facilities meet the needs of all students, including those with additional educational needs and/or a physical disability.

COMMENTARY

As the schools expands, so the need for specialist EAL and Additional Educational Needs support will grow alongside. Staff feel they need this specialist training now. The school currently has only one TA who has other responsibilities and another will be arriving in the Summer Term.

There are reading and maths interventions. Project X materials support those children for whom English is not a first language. Yet children come from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Children with little or no English often have latent learning needs which may not have been diagnosed or be obvious in early interactions. As class sizes grow, teachers will inevitably have less time to spend with individual children than they do now.

It will be interesting to see how provision has developed when the Accreditation visit takes place and how diagnostic tests, assessments of need and family interviews work during the admissions process.

With two floors in operation, there is a lift which is off-limits to children, but which can be deployed where there are temporary mobility issues like a broken leg. Key fobs provide staff access.

NEXT STEPS

Appoint EAL and AEN specialist staff to support learning.

Offer staff specialist training in EAL and AEN.

4.0 GOVERNANCE

The school's governors work to support students and to provide strategic direction for the school.

4A

STANDARD

All governors / proprietors meet all the requirements for adults with access to young people reinforcing the importance of safeguarding within the school.

COMMENTARY

Board members have undergone safeguarding training and, where needed, safer recruitment training too. All checks have been carried out.

NEXT STEPS

None noted.

4B

STANDARD

Measures are in place for governors to register interests and to manage any conflicts of interest.

COMMENTARY

The Board Manual makes provision for dealing with conflicts-of-interest. There is a register of members' interests.

NEXT STEPS

None noted.

4C

STANDARD

There are written procedures / protocols for the remit of the work of the governing body.

COMMENTARY

Currently, the Board comprises the proprietors, the Principal and the Director of Finance and Administration. There are plans and provision to expand the Board as the school grows, but in a gradual and careful fashion so the right people with appropriate credentials are invited and accept the responsibilities for the right reasons.

Having members who are representative of staff and parents as well as external – both from Monaco and/or further afield – will bring wider and different perspectives to the table as well as areas of experience which will enhance discussions and decision-making. Such areas might include members with a local legal background, marketing and admissions and British international education. The outgoing Founding Principal will serve as an ex-officio adviser to the Board. This is a shrewd and appreciative move and recognition of all he has achieved in a short space of time. The current Board is rightly emphatic that whoever joins the Board in the future will be required to not simply act on the best interests of the school, but also genuinely embrace and embody its values.

The Board Manual is comprehensive, clear and reviewed annually. It is an impressive document which provides guidance and is underpinned by principles and sensible practice and procedure. As the school grows and the composition of the Board expands, committees will emerge. The manual has already set out the framework for these to be established in time.

The founders of the school have a clear mission. The establishment and development of the school feels like a labour of love and the fulfilment of a dream. Certainly, the owners' approach involves unusual dedication, integrity and steadfast attachment to values. They invest ethically and purposefully in the school. Their principled commitment is relatively rare in the for-profit regions of the educational world. They do not simply invest money but, it seems, their whole selves in this project. At the same time, they are open to alternative ideas and perspectives and are genuinely in the business of positive professional partnership.

All that is as commendable as it is unusual in proprietorial schools internationally.

COMMENDATION

The informative, comprehensive and clear Board Manual which is suffused with the school's guiding principles.

The principled and wholehearted commitment of the school's owners.

NEXT STEPS

Carry out the planned expansion of the Board to bring in other perspectives and areas of experience and expertise.

4D

STANDARD

There is appropriate support for new governors.

COMMENTARY

This expansion has not yet taken place. However, there is provision for supporting the induction of new members.

NEXT STEPS

None noted.

4E**STANDARD**

Governors have a commitment to their own training and development.

COMMENTARY

Board members have undertaken safer recruitment training as well as safeguarding. They have also taken part in a recent ECIS governance foundation course.

The school will join AGBIS and, along with COBIS and ECIS membership, will offer more opportunities for professional development online and face-to-face at conferences.

NEXT STEPS

Take advantage of new opportunities for governor development training and networking through online sessions and conferences.

4F**STANDARD**

The governors provide records of meetings and decisions which show evidence of active and committed governance.

The profiles and contact details for the governors are available to parents along with key policies.

COMMENTARY

The Board meets regularly and communication between the owners and the senior leaders is productive, philosophically attuned and forward-looking. This relationship is central to the school's success. The strategic and the operational sides are both respected and suitably separated.

Parents interviewed felt Board members are accessible and approachable.

Parents receive a termly update from the Principal on behalf of the Board and

there will be an annual overview report from the owners at the end of the academic year.

The nascent Friends group will form the basis of a parent association. Articles of association have already been drawn up. It will be interesting to see how it has developed by the time of next year's Compliance follow-up visit.

COMMENDATION

The healthy, productive and positive relationship between the owners and the school's leadership.

NEXT STEPS

Develop the parent association and apply the articles of association.

5.0 ETHOS AND VALUES

The school has an evident British educational ethos, is outward-looking and promotes international mindedness.

5A

STANDARD

British educational ethos and values are at the heart of a holistic approach to learning and to the development of learner qualities.

COMMENTARY

The school's ethos, mission and vision statements are all set out in clearly in separate documents and centre around learner qualities and creating the conditions in which children can develop these attributes: integrity and responsibility for oneself; generosity and respect for others; and courage and curiosity in life. They complement each other.

These ethical and aspirational statements in the School Ethos document also set out not just how the school wants children to be and become, but also how it wants them to learn. These statements are commendable.

With the establishment of the secondary school just around the corner and with the school approaching the end of its second year of operation, this would be a good moment to revisit these documents. For example, 'Ethos', 'Mission' and 'Vision' sit in separate documents but all three sit together in 'Ethos'. This feels like unnecessary duplication.

Likewise, the learner profile contains four attributes, but others can be found in the Ethos document.

This need not involve major pruning because the statements are impressive. Just a little trimming would aid clarity and guidance, reduce any slight confusion and help everyone see the wood from the trees a little more clearly.

The school's values are genuine and are played out in everyday interaction. This is a significant strength of the school. Even expenditure is infused by principle. New families are interviewed with the school's educational values front and centre and expectations are clearly conveyed to prospective families.

The collection of policies is impressive. Supported by strong and well-thought-out principles, policy statements are clear, separated from procedure and horizontally aligned. It is apparent that they guide practice and underpin procedure very effectively. They are model documents.

This is an area which can be explored in greater depth if the school decides to proceed with COBIS Accreditation, but that commendable and principled approach to admissions pays dividends and forms the basis of positive triangular relationships with families from the start.

COMMENDATION

The strength of the school's complementary Ethos, Mission and Vision statements which are palpable and played out on a daily basis.

The clarity and quality of the school's policy portfolio. Policies are applied, support practice and are underpinned by principles and values.

NEXT STEPS

Carry out some small tweaking of the values statements so they are clearer and more cohesive.

5B

STANDARD

The school has an outward-looking perspective promoting its values via a wide curriculum and through opportunities to develop awareness of other cultures and global issues as far as this is permissible within the host country.

COMMENTARY

Children have taken part in 'No Finish Line' for the past two years. This is a charitable money-raising project which was conceived in Monaco, and which has spread worldwide. The 1.1km track is open for 24 hours a day, 8 days non-stop. The money raised - 1 Euro per one lap - is donated by sponsors of the event. The school is also involved in a charity called Mothers of Africa for which the school has raised money in various ways, including a movie night. An outside speaker came in to talk to children. There are also Christmas and Harvest Festival donations.

As with all aspects of school life, it is early days and there is certainly considerable potential to expand horizons around charity and service learning, to develop leadership and organisational skills and to make these projects learning opportunities, perhaps with a whole school focus.

Next term the Eco Warriors Club will start. Recycling initiatives and perhaps an application for Green Flag status is on the cards. Again, this project offers plentiful opportunity to raise awareness, build responsibility around waste and sustainability and develop qualities and skills.

There are a number of clubs and activities available to children including chess, Latin, art, music, model-making and gardening. There are also inter-house competitions and events.

PSHE and assemblies raise global issues, address cultural differences and nurture a willingness for children to understand and accept differences and recognise shared values.

Tackling differences and disagreements help children to feel included, safe and respected. Teachers report that children are confident in approaching adults with concerns as well as telling one another about something which makes them uncomfortable.

The school has created the conditions and the kind of environment where this kind of healthy interaction and willingness to challenge words and behaviour that might cause upset are encouraged and supported. It is a clear and impressive example of the quality of relationships in the school. The school's educational ethos and values

help greatly in all of this.

COMMENDATION

The conditions in which children are confident and comfortable in sharing concerns with staff and willing and able to challenge words and actions in others which are causing discomfort.

NEXT STEPS

Consider ways in which charitable projects and service work can become more enriching learning opportunities and vehicles for developing skills and human qualities.

Explore ways in which outward-looking projects and initiatives can provide further leadership opportunities for children.

5C

STANDARD

The school teaches the majority of subjects through the medium of English.

COMMENTARY

Children are supported in small classes by teachers with time and space to devote to individuals. One very happy parent interviewed spoke of how much progress her daughter had made in two terms having arrived with no English. Reading interventions also take place and the library offers supportive materials for children whose first language is not English. More first language books would be welcome to support and nurture those languages.

However, specialist input is needed, whether in the form of EAL-trained – as opposed to TEFL or TESOL– colleagues, or specific professional learning for class teachers and TAs; or, ideally, both.

NEXT STEPS

Consider ways of enhancing English language acquisition through EAL specialist staff and training for teachers and TAs.

OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

There are two international schools in Monaco and there is space for both since they offer rather different experiences. This means that they can co-exist without the usual rivalry and competition seen elsewhere. The British School's size means that they can provide more personalised and flexible support and learning even as the school grows into its Secondary phase. Numbers will remain low for the foreseeable future. There is capacity for the Primary School to rise to 96 children and, with the eventual establishment of a Sixth Form, to 250 students.

With fees at the level they are, the school can afford largely to maintain this kind of individual support for learners, but more specialist EAL, AEN and learning intervention staff will be needed along with an attendant and more systematic and robust approach to the diagnoses of needs at the point of entry. On the one hand, with smaller numbers, staff can support individual learning effectively and offer comfort and inclusion to children who find bigger schools daunting; on the other, a one-form entry course could set up pitfalls in the 14-18 curriculum in terms of choice and the critical mass of students.

Smaller schools still have to deal with the same elements as larger schools. They often have fewer people to delegate to or share the load. As a result, staff often carry multiple responsibilities. The Board and school leaders understand this and are working to balance responsibility with opportunity as the school grows further.

The Board are working to build confidence in the school's reputation and quality. This will require time and shrewd nurturing. It will not involve growth at any price. Families are expected to embrace the school's principles and accept what it offers – and, indeed, what it does not provide. Staff appreciate that these are early days and that the school is encountering issues for the first time. Equally they acknowledge that the Board and leadership are responding and working to improve areas as best they can. One example is the improvement in supporting new staff on arrival, another is the promise of a CPD budget for staff.

They are building confidence in the school. Monaco is a small close-knit community. Word of mouth is an especially powerful agent. The advent of the secondary school will both attract those who are waiting and seeing and will also generate new interest.

The narrative of the school is unfolding daily. Its strengths are palpable and impressive. The power and clarity of the school's principles which underpin its policies and procedures and infuse daily interaction; the positive and supportive relationships which abound; the tremendous potential BSM enjoys in many areas; the uncompromising insistence in high quality appointments; and the happiness and joy around learning will all carry the school to ever new heights of success.

The school's policies, attendant procedures and principles are extremely impressive. Values inform practice and influence daily interaction and decisions. They are commended in the report, but they have the potential to be considered for Beacon School status when the follow-up Compliance mini-visit to the secondary school and,

hopefully, the Accreditation process takes place next year in June 2025. We will need to see them in deeper and wider action before any award can be recommended to the COBIS Board and Membership and Accreditation Committee.

For a school which is under two years old, the award of eleven commendations across all Standards is remarkable and impressive. They reflect the substance and effectiveness of what the school has achieved and established so quickly and, significantly, so carefully and thoughtfully.

The openness and sense of professional partnership with which the school has approached and supported the Compliance process is appreciated, along with its flexibility and adaptability when the on-site visit had to be cancelled on the day of travel because of unfortunate railway problems in the UK. The switch to online interaction was seamless and illustrative of the relationship between the school and COBIS.

It will be fascinating to see how much further the school has travelled during the follow-up visit to see the new site in action, at least, and possibly a COBIS Accreditation visit.

The owners and school leaders are committed to keeping that family feel and that palpable sense of togetherness which will be central moving forward as the school grows. COBIS wishes the British School of Monaco every success for the opening of the new secondary school in September.

PRIORITY NEXT STEPS

- Ensure that all current staff who have ever lived or worked in the UK obtain an ICPC before September retrospectively and that this step is added to the safer recruitment process moving forward, as applicable.
Completed and verified - August 2nd 2024.
- With the opening of the secondary school on another site and, as numbers rise in primary, manage the growth of the school to not just maintain but strengthen the integrity and strength of the school's educational values and ethos. Use the principles and the polices to craft cohesion and a robust spirit of one-schoolness.
- In addition to the new TA, recruit specialists in EAL and AEN to support learning and learners and arrange training in those areas for teaching staff and teaching assistants.
- Further exploit the considerable potential to seize exciting learning opportunities through the wider curriculum – like service learning, sustainability projects, house events and activities and charitable partnerships - to promote student leadership and to nurture and develop learner attributes and human qualities.

Recommendation to COBIS Director of Accreditation:

The British School of Monaco has met all the COBIS Compliance standards and is therefore recommended to receive COBIS Member (Compliance) school status.

