



part of Independent Schools Inspectorate

British Schools Overseas

Inspection Report

Haileybury Almaty School

March 2024

Contents

Contents	2
School's Details	3
1. Background Information	4
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
2. Inspection of Standards for British Schools Overseas	5
Preface	5
Key findings	6
Part 1 – Quality of education provided	6
Part 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	7
Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	7
Part 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	8
Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	9
Part 6 – Provision of information	9
Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	9
Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	9
3. Inspection Evidence	11

School's Details

School	Haileybury Almaty			
Address	112 Al-Farabi Avenue Almaty Kazakhstan			
Telephone number	+7 727 355 0100			
Email address	reception@haileyburyalmaty.kz			
Headmaster	Mr Simon Mills			
Chair of Governors	Mr Ian Hunt			
Proprietor	Haileybury Almaty JSC			
Age range	4 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	787			
	Reception	52	Juniors	373
	Seniors	256	Sixth Form	106
Inspection dates	4 to 5 March 2024			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Haileybury Almaty was opened in 2008 as the first British international school in Kazakhstan. The school's academic standards and teaching methods are based on a British education model. All pupils are taught in English and have regular lessons in Kazakh and other modern languages. Haileybury Almaty is a not-for-profit school, created with the help of charitable contributions from the founders. The school is overseen by a board of governors, which includes both employees of Haileybury College (UK) and the shareholders in Kazakhstan. An executive chair of governors, who is based in the UK, makes monthly visits to the school.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to develop pupils who are resilient, resourceful, organised, courageous, inquisitive and reflective in all that they do; to encourage these learning traits through a curriculum which covers a broad and balanced range of subjects, extra-curricular activities, visits and special events and is regularly evaluated and updated. It seeks to encourage pupils to demonstrate ethical behaviour, and to develop a keen understanding of their rights and responsibilities, the need for both teamwork and leadership, and the importance of contributing fully to society. Pupils should reflect in their ethos and activity the traditions, values, heritage and cultural diversity of the Republic of Kazakhstan and of Haileybury schools.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils are from Almaty and the surrounding area or from expatriate backgrounds. A significant number of pupils receive fee assistance in line with the school's founding mission to assist young people in Almaty.
- 1.4 The majority of pupils have an ability on entry above the average for pupils of the same age in the UK. About 60 pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and many of these are supported outside timetabled lessons. Almost all pupils speak several languages and speak English as an additional language (EAL), and they receive support according to their needs and age.

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 was previously inspected against the British Standards Overseas in 2014.

Key findings

2.1 The school meets all the Standards for British Schools Overseas and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

Part 1 – Quality of education provided

2.2 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

2.3 The school's curriculum policy, plans and schemes of work meet the needs of the ages and aptitudes of all pupils from the early years to the sixth form. The curriculum provides pupils with experience in a suitably wide range of skills and develops a good understanding of English. On entry, pupils are assessed for their level of English and given additional support if necessary. Lessons in English proficiency receive more time than any other subject, reducing from about seven and a half hours each week in the junior school to about four hours each week in Years 9 to 11.

2.4 The youngest children in the early years follow the key areas of learning designed to develop their curiosity, enthusiasm and capacity for learning, and their ability to form relationships. The children use a good range of resources and have opportunities to make choices about what to do, and whom to work with.

2.5 The junior school curriculum is adapted from the UK national curriculum, and includes an appropriate proportion of English, mathematics, science, and thematic work. Specialists teach art, physical education (PE), music, and Kazakh. A notable feature at this age, which continues into the senior school, is pupils' experience of robotics, through computing. Pupils reach high levels of proficiency and understanding, reflected in the regularity of their success in national and international competitions.

2.6 Senior school pupils follow a curriculum that promotes a breadth of learning and allows specialism. Kazakh pupils, by law, study their native language. There is a compulsory core of English language, English literature, mathematics and two separate sciences, but beyond that pupils choose from a variety of the humanities, creative subjects, sciences and modern foreign languages. In the sixth form, pupils follow three or four subjects to A level.

2.7 In response to the questionnaire, almost all parents expressed the view that the curriculum is appropriate for their children. Across the ages, the acquisition of speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills is given strong emphasis. The school organises over 150 different co-curricular activities each week.

2.8 Throughout the school, pupils follow a personal development course that is designed for their different ages and maturity. In the senior school, this includes mandatory sex education. The content meets all the requirements of the standards, including health, social and economic education. The approach is sensitive to the prevailing culture in the country where required. Staff appreciate the training they receive in dealing with difficult questions that might arise in these lessons. In response to the questionnaire, almost all parents said that the school's relationships and sex education programme prepares their children effectively for life in modern society. Although sometimes critical that issues have already been discussed in previous years and at the same level, in general pupils are equally positive about the courses.

2.9 Pupils receive up-to-date careers guidance from the start of the senior school. They develop employment skills, research careers online, and benefit from the considerable support of former pupils who provide guidance, advice and experience of work.

2.10 The quality of advice given to pupils about choice of university and courses is reflected in the range of degrees and the destinations at which recent pupils study. These are pictured along corridors and on the school's media, to cement the aspirations of current pupils. In discussion, pupils refer to former

pupils studying abroad. A high proportion of pupils leave the school to follow degrees at universities with demanding entrance requirements worldwide.

- 2.11 The needs of pupils who have been identified as having SEND are met through support in lessons and one-to-one sessions outside class. In response to the questionnaire and in discussions, teaching staff speak positively about the training they have been given and the guidance received. Most parents say that their children's particular individual educational needs are met effectively.
- 2.12 School leaders regard the provision of high-quality teaching as one of their top priorities. They have initiated five professional learning communities (PLCs) which include amongst others a focus on monitoring and tracking. Further, they have invested in a commercial scheme to sustain high levels of learning and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the classroom, teaching and learning and assessment. In their responses to the questionnaire, pupils acknowledge that teachers have good subject knowledge and know how to help them learn, and that feedback and marking help them to improve.
- 2.13 Teaching is characterised by well-planned lessons and suitable teaching methods. Teachers demonstrate a good understanding of the pupils and their needs, good subject knowledge and understanding, and effective use of resources. They enable pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress, and they foster self-motivation and application. Also, for the most part, they are able to retain pupils' interest.
- 2.14 Teaching is well resourced, and information and communication technology (ICT) is widely used in both teaching and learning. Teaching does not undermine British values. Teaching does not discriminate against pupils because of their protected characteristics and skillfully draws on the cultural diversity of the community. Strategies to manage behaviour are, for the most part, effective. However, leaders and other staff acknowledge that approaches to pupils' inattention or disengagement are inconsistent.

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

2.15 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.

- 2.16 The school actively promotes the British values of democracy, rule of law, liberty, respect and tolerance and furthers the pupils' personal development. It promotes principles which enable pupils to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and confidence; distinguish right from wrong; accept responsibility for their behaviour; and contribute to the lives of others. It enables pupils to gain knowledge of and respect for public institutions in England and for the responsibilities of citizenship in Kazakhstan and neighbouring countries.
- 2.17 Through effective promotion of its values, the school encourages tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions; respect for other people; respect for democracy and the democratic process; and balanced presentation of political issues and preclusion of partisan political views.
- 2.18 This includes respect for the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. In response to the questionnaire, a very large majority of parents agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The school is non-religious and apolitical and, as such, does not teach religious education as a separate entity. World religions and matters of faith are acknowledged, but not discussed. In discussion and in questionnaire responses, pupils reported that incidents in which disrespect was shown are extremely rare, and quickly addressed.

Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

2.19 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16] are met.

- 2.20 Suitable arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school. Such arrangements are in line with Kazakh law and have regard to the latest statutory and non-statutory guidance in the UK. The school routinely uses professional expertise from the UK to ensure that the effectiveness of its safeguarding arrangements are kept under review. The particular vulnerability of those with SEND or who are new to the school is recognised. Staff are aware of the code of conduct and whistleblowing policies and say they would be confident to use them. The leadership of safeguarding is strong, and records show that action is timely and appropriate, with each new concern assessed for risk. The wishes and the needs of pupils are prioritised. The effectiveness of any intervention is regularly monitored. Documentation is well ordered with clear chronologies and is in line with UK statutory guidance.
- 2.21 The school has no access to the government safeguarding partners in Almaty available to a UK school. However, the internal structures ensure that pupils are listened to and provided with early help. The school employs a counselling team with a variety of skills, and they support other staff. In response to the questionnaire, a few pupils said that they could not talk to anybody at school about any concerns. In discussion, pupils knew that adults are available, but explained they would almost certainly speak to their families instead. Staff training is thorough, and records allow accurate monitoring. The vast majority of pupils say they feel safe at school and online. In their response to the questionnaire, staff were almost unanimous in their support of the safeguarding arrangements, the guidance given, and stated that they are alert to signs of, for example, sexual harassment.
- 2.22 Almost all staff responding to the questionnaire said that good behaviour is promoted. Excellent behaviour was observed by inspectors during their visit. The overwhelming majority of pupils replying to the questionnaire said that the school expects them to behave well. However, a minority thought that the school occasionally treats them unfairly. In discussions, this was traced to inconsistent and, at times, over-zealous use of the 'red ticket' system. Leaders, and many staff spoken to, believe that the system has been effective in setting expectations, but now needs revision.
- 2.23 In response to the questionnaire, most parents agreed that the school does all that it reasonably can to prevent bullying from happening, and most pupils state that the school takes it seriously. Strategies to counter any bullying are discussed in personal development sessions, and senior pupils lead workshops. On the rare occasions that bullying does occur, the school deals with it effectively and supports both victim and perpetrator.
- 2.24 The school meets Kazakh health and safety laws and fire safety standards. National authorities undertake a detailed check of compliance in this area as a condition of accreditation. Documentation is exhaustive, detailed and comprehensive, reflecting a proactive and well-planned approach. Arrangements to ensure pupils on-site are secure are appropriate, and pupils say that the school provides a safe environment in which to learn. Procedures to mitigate risk to pupils during an earthquake are effective and seen to work in practice during the inspection. Security protocols are robust. Pupils are properly supervised, and attendance and admissions procedures ensure that the school can find the whereabouts of a pupil. There is no requirement to report to an external agency that a pupil has left the school. The risks to pupils involved in all activities, are appropriately assessed and recorded. First aid is administered in a timely manner.

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

- 2.25 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**
- 2.26 The suitability of persons appointed as members of staff is checked in line with national requirements and as far as reasonably possible in line with guidance issued to schools in the UK. Appropriate checks are made on those working as contractors and on volunteers. All adults working or volunteering at the school must have suitable documents issued by the Kazakh authorities. Before appointment, the school makes appropriate checks of identity, right to work, receives police checks from overseas and,

where relevant, makes checks against the list of those prohibited from teaching and managing schools in the UK. The school makes other checks as it thinks necessary, for example for any inappropriate online behaviour, and seeks references from the most recent employers. Those in governance roles are checked to an appropriate level. A comprehensive and accurate register is maintained of the recruitment checks undertaken on all those listed above.

Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

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

- 2.28 The school occupies purpose-built accommodation in the centre of Almaty. It includes outdoor learning facilities for the youngest pupils, and extensive recreational space for pupils in the senior and junior schools. All are of a standard that fully meets the educational needs of pupils.
- 2.29 Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided, including for disabled pupils. The medical room provides accommodation which caters for the medical and therapy needs of all pupils. Premises and accommodation are maintained to a standard so that the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured. In particular, the buildings are protected as far as possible from the effects of earthquakes, which are an identified risk. Corridors and staircases are spacious and enable safe transit between activities. Classrooms and shared spaces are ventilated appropriately to cater for the wide range of external temperature in the region. The acoustic conditions and lighting are suitable. External lighting ensures that pupils can safely enter and leave the school premises. The provision of water for drinking and washing is suitable.

Part 6 – Provision of information

2.30 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

- 2.31 All necessary information is provided: contact details for the school, the headmaster and the chair of governors and a statement of the school's ethos. The school makes available policies and particulars of arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions; provision for SEND and EAL; and the school's academic performance. It makes available its complaints procedure; curriculum policy; arrangements for promoting good behaviour and preventing bullying; and its health and safety and first aid arrangements. In addition, the safeguarding policy is published on the website. An annual written report of each pupil's progress and attainment is provided for parents or carers.

Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.32 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

- 2.33 The school's complaints procedure is made available to the parents of current and registered pupils. It enables initial consideration of any complaint on an informal basis; establishes a formal procedure for a complaint to be made in writing to either the principal or heads of school; and provides for a third stage, a hearing before a panel which includes an independent member at which a parent may be accompanied. It provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and for a confidential record to be kept of findings. Communication with parents is frequent and clear, and school leaders explain reasons for any decisions taken. As a result, it is rare for the school to receive complaints beyond the informal stage. In response to the questionnaire, a very large majority of parents agreed that they receive timely and helpful responses to their questions, concerns or complaints.

Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- 2.35 The leadership and management of the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfilment of responsibilities so that the BSO Standards are met consistently, and actively promote the wellbeing of pupils. Governors have an accurate and informed oversight of the decisions made by school leaders, and regularly formally review the implementation of school policies. In response to the questionnaire, the very large majority of parents said the school is governed, led and managed well.

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The reporting inspector held two online discussions with school leaders before the inspection. The inspectors then observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. 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 Cole

Reporting inspector

Mr Andrew Ryan

Team inspector (Head, IAPS school, UAE)