

English International College

Urbanización Ricmar, Autovía del Mediterráneo A7 km 1035,5
(Ctra Cadiz-Malaga Km 189.5), 29604, Marbella, Málaga

School's regional authorisation number: 29602554

Date of Inspection:

6th February 2025

Inspection Team:

Richard Cook	(Lead Inspector)
Danielle Best	(Team Inspector)

Reason for the Inspection:

to evaluate the provision from Nursery to Year 13 for reauthorisation as British

Overall Recommendation:

The school is recommended for authorisation from Nursery (3 years) to Year 13 (18 years) for a period of **4 years** for **750 pupils**.

The next inspection is due in February 2029.

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

Schools should not refer to themselves as being authorised by the British Council, NABSS nor any other inspection service. Schools must not use the logos of any of these organisations in their publicity. NABSS member schools may use the NABSS logo.

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:

The English International College was founded in 1982 and became an educational charitable trust in 1997, overseen by a board that includes legal and financial trustees and the senior leaders of the school. It is situated close to Marbella on the southern coast of Spain. There are currently 440 pupils on roll, around half of whom are British or Spanish, with the rest made up of a range of nationalities, including a significant number of Chinese and Russian students.

The school was last inspected in 2021 and was granted authorisation to teach pupils from nursery age to year 13. The purpose of this inspection is to consider the reauthorisation of the educational provision for those year groups as British.

Accommodation and Resources:

The school provides accommodation and resources suitable for the delivery of the British curriculum.

The school is set across a number of buildings, interconnected by a variety of attractive outdoor and playground areas. The close proximity of the buildings means that it is easy and convenient to move between them. The early years foundation stage (EYFS) and key stage one (KS1) classrooms are on the ground floor of one building and have direct access to the outdoor areas. Classrooms in which support can be offered to small groups of pupils can be found on an upper floor. Key stage two classrooms are located in an adjacent three storey building. The secondary classes are situated in three buildings. Whilst there is some variation in the size of classrooms, the vast majority are suitable for holding at least 20 pupils, which is the maximum that the school has in a class. Classrooms are well-lit and suitably furnished. The school environment is very welcoming and excellent use is made of display, particularly in the primary department, to support pupils' learning and to celebrate their achievements.

The school has a wide range of specialist facilities. These include four well-equipped science laboratories, as well as a preparation room fitted with all of the required safety equipment. A large art studio contains many examples of students' work. Specialist rooms are also provided for music and drama and the school's auditorium has recently been refurnished. The excellently-stocked and well-presented library is a focal point of the school and a great deal of use is made of it by the students. The library also provides means for independent study. In addition, the key stage five (KS5) students have access to their own study room.

Sport is a prominent feature of the school and the facilities available include changing rooms, a large all weather pitch, two separate hard floored courts, and two outdoor swimming pools.

In addition to two computer suites, pupils from year 5 upwards have their own tablet computers, through which teachers are able to share resources digitally with them. The majority of assignments, however, are appropriately completed on paper, and pupils are issued with exercise books for most subjects. Each classroom has a large

interactive screen that teachers use frequently and effectively to support teaching and learning.

Since the last inspection, the school has redesigned the outdoor areas used by its youngest pupils and added to the equipment available to them. Planning has been adapted to enable a greater amount of productive learning to take place outdoors, although this is something that the school wishes to improve further still. EYFS classrooms are well resourced with practical resources to allow for hands on learning. Further up the school, however, outside of specialist lessons, few practical resources are available, leading to a heavy reliance on printed materials.

Toilet facilities are sufficient in quantity and size, and are situated in appropriate positions around the school.

Meals are cooked on site and are served in the dining room.

Facilities for teaching and administrative staff are good, including offices and rooms for preparation, meetings and relaxation.

Health, Safety and Welfare:

The school provides a safe environment for pupils and staff. Its policies in relation to health and safety are sound and adhered to well.

Access to the premises is secure and is carefully controlled and monitored.

Fire exits are clearly marked and evacuation procedures are displayed throughout the school. Fire drills are held regularly.

First aid is administered by the school nurse. Several other members of staff have been first-aid trained, including, some, in the use of the defibrillator.

The school follows its safeguarding and child protection policy effectively and pupils are aware of who they could go to, if required. Background checks have been carried out for all members of staff working in the school and a single central record of these has been established.

There is an excellent adult-to-pupil ratio and students are well supervised. Their behaviour is exemplary and this contributes to the safe atmosphere in the school.

The Curriculum:

The curriculum is firmly based on the EYFS curriculum and the national curriculum. In KS4 students study for IGCSE qualifications and in KS5, A-levels. In these phases the curriculum is appropriately based on syllabi established by the examination boards.

The curriculum across the whole school is broad and balanced. The school's dedication to sport means that more time is devoted to physical education in several year groups than may be typically seen in a British school. This reduces the time

available for some core subjects. However, assessment information and external examination results indicate that this is not having an adverse effect on pupil achievement.

Planning for all subjects is age-appropriate, with clear progression in the activities planned for different year groups and teachers, right from the earliest stages, providing many opportunities for pupils to be challenged in their learning. Planning also takes account of those pupils who may require additional support and a great deal of targeted intervention is provided for them.

The school places much emphasis on personal, social and emotional education and the resulting community ethos is reflected throughout the curriculum.

Appropriate careers guidance is provided and pupils are given a great deal of support with the university application process.

The curriculum is enriched by a varied range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, technology, arts and drama. The school provides pupils with many opportunities to take part in local sports competitions, debate tournaments, or to gain officially recognised awards and qualifications. A variety of excursions take place each year, some of which include overnight stays.

Staffing:

The teaching staff is appropriately qualified and teachers are effectively deployed in their areas of specialism.

Staff retention is a notable success of the school. Three-quarters have taught at the school for five years or more and, on average, teachers have been there for twelve years. Staff speak highly of the school and feel respected and trusted to make sound educational judgements about their classes. They appreciate the familial atmosphere in the school and the personalised approach they are able to take in their provision for the pupils.

A supportive staff appraisal system is in place and a range of opportunities for continued professional development are provided.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment:

The quality of teaching is consistently good and, in a number of cases, is outstanding.

These high standards reflect the positive relationships between the teachers and children. Pupils are motivated and enjoy being challenged. Teachers ensure that students are engaged and that every one of them participates fully throughout each lesson. What pupils are to learn is made clear to them, as are the steps that will enable them to carry out tasks successfully. Lessons are well-paced. Pupils are able to work productively and independently, or, when required, collaboratively. They present their work carefully and are proud of their achievements. Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and many use questioning skillfully to elicit information.

English is very clearly the principal language of instruction and the level of spoken English in the school is high. Teachers are skilled at helping pupils to acquire new vocabulary and to become fluent users of the language.

Marking, especially in the primary department, provides useful advice that makes it clear to pupils what the next steps in their learning are. Pupils are also becoming adept at judging for themselves how well they have met expectations.

Assessment and tracking procedures have been revised since the last inspection. Whilst a range of teacher assessment and standardised testing scores continue to be collected, the systems have been streamlined and greater emphasis is now placed on the analysis and use of data, rather than simply collecting it. The school is currently evaluating the effectiveness of these new systems and considering how to ensure greater consistency in the accuracy of teacher assessment between departments.

Results from standardised testing in key stages one to three, alongside teacher assessment, demonstrate that the majority of students achieve at or above the expected standards in all of the core areas.

Results at IGCSE and A-level, which have always been notable, remain outstandingly high. Last year 99% of grades awarded at IGCSE were 4 – 9 and 85% of grades at A-level were A* - C. Pupils achieve above international averages in almost all subjects.

There is very good communication between home and school, and parents receive detailed written reports about their child's progress.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent throughout the school. Its ethos and values are well-promoted and clearly evident in all aspects of school life.

The school has a positive atmosphere and pupils speak highly of it, with many of them citing the relationships that they have with their friends and with their teachers as being its best feature. Students behave very well and are supportive of each other.

Pupils feel that they have a voice and role to play in the life of the school. In addition to the student council and the house system, the school has developed its own award that motivates and challenges students to complete projects beyond the curriculum.

Leadership and Management:

The school is very well led and managed.

The head teacher joined the school three years ago and is dedicated to maintaining the high standards for which the school is known. He is ably supported by the head of primary and the academic head. Between them, the school leaders have a shared vision for the future success of the school and are committed to its continued development and improvement. They have worked hard to ensure that there is more

consistency in provision and continuity between departments than in the past, whilst at the same time allowing teachers a greater amount of autonomy than is typically seen. Whilst the head teacher takes a keen interest and is influential in all aspects of school life, he has a strong belief in teamwork and in professional development and so is supported by a large number of teachers in other positions of responsibility, including key stage leaders and heads of department.

The school's development plan is firmly focused on continually improving the provision for students and accurately identifies the current priorities for developing the school.

Response to the previous inspection report:

- *Develop the EYFS and KS1 outdoor area to make it more conducive to learning.*

In addition to the creation of a new outdoor area, containing climbing equipment and a stage for performances, the areas directly leading from classrooms have been redesigned to allow more learning to take place outdoors. This is, however, still something that the school would like to improve further. Here, continued development of specific skills is still something that the school would like to improve further in pursuit of the early learning goals for the youngest children.

- *Continue to maintain the outstanding learning environment that has been created and the good levels of academic achievement.*

Excellent levels of academic achievement have been maintained.

Conclusion:

The English International College is an identifiably British school, which employs dedicated and suitably experienced staff to deliver the English national curriculum to a high standard. Pupils make excellent progress during their time at the school and achieve outstanding examination results. They are provided with many opportunities to achieve outside of the curriculum and are well-prepared for adult life. Leaders are dedicated to the school's continued improvement.

Recommendations:

There are no major recommendations and so the school is advised to continue to work towards the targets that it has set itself for development, including:

- continuing to develop the use of the outdoor areas by EYFS and KS1 pupils to allow for even more purposeful learning to take place outdoors;
- continuing to review and monitor the effectiveness of its new assessment and tracking systems; and
- providing further opportunities for integration between the primary and secondary departments, to allow for even greater continuity and consistency across the school.