

# **Report of the Inspection of NLCS Jeju**

**May 2019**

## Summary of key findings

### The overall quality of at NLCS Jeju is: Good

- The principal and his senior team clearly articulate the educational values of a North London Collegiate school.
- Leaders are ensuring that structures are increasingly in place to implement these values as the school goes through a time of transition. However, work remains to be done to ensure that the school's high ambitions for staff and students are met. For example, leaders should consider how best to meet the English language needs of students to ensure all pupils fully access the challenging academic curriculum.
- The quality of teaching is good. Many teachers teach lessons to a high standard, focusing on academic knowledge and building strong relationships with students. However, in some lessons teachers do not plan and sequence students' learning effectively enough. As a result, students in these lessons do not learn as much as they could. This is more pronounced in boys' lessons.
- The quality of students' learning is good. When teaching is at its best, students demonstrate enthusiasm and curiosity, and ask probing questions. They grasp factual information quickly and explore ideas. However, students report that in some lessons they do not learn as well as they could because the lessons are not as well planned.
- The quality of pastoral care for individual students is good. Staff are caring and support students well. Students appreciate this and feel they can turn to adults if necessary. Pastoral staff communicate well to meet students' needs.
- A new pastoral structure is planned to meet the needs of students as the school grows and changes. The assistant heads are working with energy and focus to address questions from staff about the operation of the new system, and have been proactive in developing effective processes in consultation with key staff. In order to fully embed the desired changes and to forge strong links between house staff and heads of year, it is important that there is clearer direct leadership of this change by the vice-principal (pastoral).
- Arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of students are also changing. Priority must be given to ensure that new systems are clear to all staff, and that those with responsibility for safeguarding are able to take appropriate independent action if needed.
- The spiritual, moral and social development of students is very good. The personal development curriculum addresses a broad range of relevant topics and increasingly links to the tutor programme. This helps students to develop an awareness of, and respect for, others. Students' involvement in community projects is strong.
- The quality of educational provision in the junior school is outstanding. As a result of outstanding leadership and teaching in the junior school, the quality of pupils' learning is also outstanding.
- Junior school leaders and staff work very effectively as a team to provide an aspirational and challenging curriculum. Leaders and teachers ensure academic rigour in the junior school through the subject-focused curriculum and extensive choice of extra-curricular activities.

## Key recommendations for leaders

- Senior leaders should ensure that new strategies are clearly articulated and implemented, taking into account the impact of planned actions on middle leaders and staff.
- Senior leaders should ensure that all teaching meets the high expectations of a North London Collegiate School and that all teachers routinely plan academically challenging and stimulating lessons so that pupils make exceptional progress.
- The senior leadership team should ensure that the planned changes to pastoral structures are implemented as successfully as possible next term, and that the system is effective in enhancing the pastoral care of every student. In particular, the vice-principal (pastoral) will need to provide a clear strategic direction to all staff, and to ensure that there are strong links and effective systems of communication between parents, tutors, house staff and heads of year.
- Similarly, leaders must ensure that safeguarding systems and processes are clear to all staff. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding must have autonomy to act in the best interests of students and to hold all staff to account if necessary.
- Leaders should continue to ensure that the quality of education in the junior school remains outstanding.
- Senior leaders should ensure that all recommendations contained in this report are addressed in an effective and timely way.

## **I. INTRODUCTION: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1. NLCS Jeju is an independent day and boarding school for girls and boys aged between 3 and 18. The school is situated in South Korea in Daejeong-eup on Jeju Island. It was the first school to have been established as part of the Jeju Global Education City: a project initiated and funded by an agency of the South Korean government - the Jeju Free International City Development Centre (JDC). The school's establishment relies on an agreement between JDC and North London Collegiate School (NLCS (UK)), founded in 1850 and located in Edgware, Middlesex, United Kingdom.
- 1.2. The school is overseen by a board of governors, and accepts students of all faiths and of no faith. The senior team oversee the overarching strategic leadership of the whole school, comprising the principal, five vice-principals (one of whom is the head of the junior school) and the bursar; educational and operational leadership in the senior school and the junior school respectively are overseen by a senior school leadership team and a junior school leadership team, each of which includes a number of assistant heads.
- 1.3. At present, the school has 1,318 students on roll, organised into a junior school (incorporating nursery to year 6) and a senior school (year 7 to year 13). Throughout the school, pastoral identity is defined by the house system; a vice-principal and two assistant heads form the team with pastoral oversight for years 7 to 11, and an assistant head has oversight of the sixth form (years 12 and 13). Students are mostly of Korean descent and their parents and guardians come mainly from professional and business backgrounds.
- 1.4. To secure an exceptional educational experience, the school gives high priority to providing an ambitious education that enables each student to make the most of his or her own gifts. It aims to do this through the professionalism of its teachers, their drive and enthusiasm, and their detailed knowledge and love of their subject. It aims for academic excellence, the growth of the whole personality, good relationships, and teaching students to go beyond the demands of examinations. It seeks to provide an opportunity for the students to develop their own interests as well as to take risks, and to maintain an internationally minded, outward-looking community that is tolerant and teaches service to others.
- 1.5. Entry to the school is selective. Admission is through group and individual assessment into nursery, reception and years 1 to 3; the school sets entrance tests in mathematics and English for applicants to years 4 upwards as well as making use of the CAT test. All students are interviewed before a final decision is made on their entry to the school.
- 1.6. With the exception of lessons in Korean history, Korean language and literature and Korean social studies (and Mandarin, for students who have Mandarin as their mother tongue), the language of academic instruction is English. For the vast majority of students, English is not their first language and hence significant provision is made for teaching students for whom English is a second language.

## 2. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 2.1. Key findings

2.1.1. The leadership of the school clearly articulates the values of academic excellence, extra-curricular participation and pastoral support which are fundamental to a North London Collegiate School education. Structures and processes in the school are increasingly being reviewed and aligned to ensure these values are implemented as the school leadership goes through a time of transition.

2.1.2. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers understand the high expectations of the school and many teach lessons of a high standard. Where teaching is strongest, teachers have good academic subject knowledge and build effective relationships. Teachers model their own academic thinking which encourages students to do the same. However, in some lessons teaching is not as secure, and this is more pronounced in boys' lessons than in girls' lessons. In these lessons, teachers do not plan and sequence activities to ensure sufficient progression in learning.

2.1.3. The quality of students' learning is good. As a result of the good teaching they receive in many lessons, the majority of students demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and make clear progress. Students demonstrate enthusiasm and curiosity, while asking probing questions. Their grasp of factual information is secure and they challenge themselves to a high level. They debate and explore ideas, and are open to forming new opinions and listening to the views of others. However, students report that in some lessons, teachers' planning and delivery lack both content and challenge.

2.1.4. The quality of pastoral care for individual students is good. Staff at all levels care deeply about the welfare and well-being of students and work hard to ensure that they are well supported. Students value the support they receive and readily identify a range of adults to whom they can turn. There is regular dialogue between the assistant heads, house staff and tutors, and coordination with the counselling and medical departments of the school, to ensure that the needs of individuals are fully met.

There is a recognition that the needs of the students are changing as the balance between boarding and non-boarding students shifts, and this has led to plans for a new pastoral structure for next year, with heads of year holding oversight of students' academic and pastoral matters. In order to fully embed the planned changes and to forge strong links between house staff and heads of year, it is important that there is clear direct leadership of this change by the vice-principal (pastoral).

Arrangements to safeguard the welfare of students are also changing in the coming year. The school needs to ensure that the systems in place are clear to all staff. Those with responsibility for safeguarding need to have the authority and autonomy to act in the best interests of the individual students and to hold staff to account.

2.1.5. The spiritual, moral and social development of students is very good. There is a well-planned curriculum for PSD that addresses a broad range of topics and links increasingly to the tutor programme. Subjects such as Korean cultural days, black history month and LGBTQ month are celebrated and help students develop an awareness of, and respect for, others. Students are involved in a range of community projects within and outside of the school, and they show an awareness of key global issues such as food waste and the over-use of plastics. They are articulate, polite and develop increasing confidence as they progress through the school.

2.1.6. The quality of education in the junior school is outstanding. The quality of teaching in the junior school is outstanding, and the quality of the pupils' learning in the junior school is outstanding.

The junior school leaders work very effectively as a team to ensure that the school is providing an aspirational and challenging education. This subject-focused curriculum provides a rich educational experience that is underpinned by academic rigour and an extensive choice of extra-curricular opportunities. The NLCS ethos is articulated clearly by the junior school leadership team, through

the development plan, policy and planning documents, as well as the staff handbook, professional development programme and the feedback from a thorough monitoring programme.

## **2.2. Key recommendations**

- 2.2.1. Senior leaders should ensure that strategies are clearly articulated and implemented, taking into account the impact of new initiatives on middle leaders and other staff. Senior leaders should ensure that staff are consulted and motivated to contribute to school improvement at all levels.
- 2.2.2. Senior leaders should ensure that teaching in all subjects, and particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, consistently meets the high expectations of the school so that teachers routinely plan academically challenging and stimulating lessons, and teach them with expertise; and that as a result, all students are engaged and motivated in their learning, and therefore make exceptional progress, in every lesson.
- 2.2.3. The senior leadership team should ensure that the planned changes to pastoral structures are implemented as successfully as possible next term, and that the system is effective in enhancing the pastoral care of every student. In particular, the vice-principal (pastoral) will need to provide a clear strategic direction to all staff, and to ensure that there are strong links and effective systems of communication between parents, tutors, house staff and heads of year.
- 2.2.4. The school needs to ensure that the systems to safeguard students are clear to all staff. Those with responsibility with safeguarding need to have the seniority and autonomy to act in the best interests of the individual students and to hold all staff to account without further discussion if necessary.
- 2.2.5. Senior leaders should continue to work with energy and focus in order to ensure that the educational experience in the junior school continues to be of a high standard (and, in connection with this, should pay particular regard to the recommendations contained in section 25 of this report).
- 2.2.6. The school should take effective and timely action to address all of the recommendations contained in the following sections of this report.

### **3. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

#### **3.1. Findings**

##### *3.1.1. Implementation of strategy and overall quality of provision*

The leadership of the school clearly articulates the values of academic excellence, extra-curricular participation and pastoral support that are fundamental to a North London Collegiate School education.

Structures and processes in the school are increasingly being reviewed and aligned to ensure these values are implemented as the school leadership goes through a time of transition; as this unfolds, it is important to ensure that lines of accountability are clear. It is also important that over-complication of systems or duplication of effort are avoided - both to ensure that implementation is smooth and effective, and also in the light of concerns raised by some staff about workloads.

A number of new initiatives have been introduced with the aim of improving academic provision and outcomes. These include a new academic monitoring framework, an academic focus on greater engagement with scholarship, the new “divisions” structure for subject departments, and a series of improvements to the support given with applications to higher education.

Induction for new staff ensures that all members of the school community fully understand the ethos of the school and its emphasis on academic excellence. However, induction and training should take greater account of the specific development needs of staff. Greater emphasis should be given within staff training to the role and expectations of the tutor and meeting the pastoral needs of the students. Training should be also provided to all teachers on strategies to meet the differing learning needs of boys and girls in lessons, so that the quality of teaching in all lessons meets the needs of all students.

##### *3.1.2. Provision for English as an additional language (EAL)*

A number of strategies have been implemented to improve students’ proficiency in the use of academic English. The results of these have not yet been formally assessed by the school but there appears, from inspectors’ experience of lessons, to have been some progress in this area.

The school’s new language policy, to encourage the use of English, has been effective in lessons but clearly less effective in corridors and social spaces. Students respond well to the positive encouragement and praise they receive in this regard, but they feel that speaking their mother tongue is not something for which they should be punished.

The new “pathways” strategy, regarding the teaching of EAL across year groups, provides targeted support for students less proficient in English. The course, rooted as it is in the teaching of English through the study of literature, has been well conceived and is well taught; however, the relatively large class sizes in some year groups makes the provision of individual support within those classes more challenging. The demands of creating the new EAL course have meant that EAL teachers have not felt able to offer further support, either in class or via withdrawal, to students; EAL teachers are also not providing adequate professional development or support to other members of staff to improve their practice.

##### *3.1.3. Marking and feedback*

There are some examples of outstanding marking that provides clear formative guidance. Students particularly value the timely feedback they receive, but they report that this is not provided consistently across subject areas.

At its very best, a dialogue-based approach was observed, where the teacher followed their feedback with further questions to engage and challenge students. However, the overall approach taken to marking is inconsistent between subjects, and also within departments; in many instances, marking is infrequent and superficial. Urgent action is needed to ensure that students receive regular and detailed formative feedback that ensures further improvement.

#### 3.1.4. *Co-curricular provision and enrichment*

There is a rich programme of co-curricular activities that both support the boarding life of the school and provide an important counterbalance to students' busy academic life. These activities encourage aspiration and promote personal development; in many cases, older students are involved in running activities for younger students, developing leadership skills. The programme provides important opportunities for integration between girls and boys within the "diamond" structure in years 7 to 11, as well as allowing students to find their niche, and therefore grow in confidence.

The school offers many opportunities for students to enter both regional and national competitions in a variety of academic subjects and activities. Successes in competitions such as the Robotics Society gold medal award in the national First Lego League, are highly valued by the entire community and students are looking forward to the forthcoming Jeju Youth Scientist Competition.

The Saturday morning Bryant programme is an important part of the NLCS ethos of enriching students beyond the classroom. It is well supported by an extensive range of trips and educational visits within South Korea and internationally.

The academic societies provide valuable opportunities for enrichment to foster subject passion and confidence. For example, the Life Science and Biotech Society has visited a local university to carry out a series of experiments; there are active model United Nations and debating societies, as well as a wide range of society meetings and events to promote the academic perspectives of the various subject departments.

Alongside this, some specific enrichment opportunities have been introduced to help support aspirational university applications. For example, the economics department is running a series of "stretch lessons" on Fridays after school that enable prospective applicants in this subject to explore themes and concepts that go beyond the IB diploma syllabus. The school is recommended to build on these initiatives further, so that sixth form students in all subjects have the opportunity to deepen their subject passion and academic confidence; as part of this, the school should consider whether time can be made available within the sixth form timetable that can be used to provide a structured programme of teacher-led subject enrichment in each discipline.

#### 3.1.5. *The library*

The library is placed centrally at the heart of the school. It is used predominantly as a study space and for reading lessons. Links at department level are underdeveloped, and this means that the library's contribution to the provision of an authentically NLCS education is limited.

Consideration is being given to reviewing the allocation of space within the library to better meet the changing format of research resources in a digital age, while maintaining the central function of the library as a space for research, enrichment and independent learning.

#### 3.1.6. *Support and guidance for admission to higher education*

The school has made well-judged adjustments to the processes for university guidance and support. To improve the quality of applications to colleges in the USA, a new SAT preparation course has been introduced; the new system of guidance that provides each student with their own guidance counsellor from year 10 upwards is a valuable development, and supporting documentation relating to US applications is of a high standard. It is pleasing that this year the school has the largest number of offers from Ivy League colleges in its history. In some cases, students are applying to far too many US colleges; the school should continue to seek to educate students and their parents to guard against this.

There has also been a focus on improving support with applications to universities in the UK, with subject departments now becoming increasingly involved in preparing students in their academic areas. The quality of UCAS references and students' personal statements is now improved, and tutors are becoming more actively involved with these key documents and in providing broader support to their tutees with applications. More work needs to be done to support students with Oxbridge interviews and, as part of this, the school plans to



develop a strategy next year that has a specific focus on promoting academic flexibility and encouraging students to think on their feet.

### 3.1.7. *Links with parents and the community*

Parents feel that their concerns are heard by the school and they are aware of the challenges the school faces. Whilst instances of teacher absence can be a challenge in the context of the school, prompt communication can help to alleviate parental concerns.

There is a close and mutually supportive relationship between the school and parent groups, and the school makes efforts to hear and respond to the views of parents through parent representative groups. The school has made efforts to connect with the wider community on Jeju through community service projects.

## 3.2. **Recommendations**

- 3.2.1. Senior leaders should ensure that strategies are clearly articulated and implemented, taking into account the impact of new initiatives on middle leaders and other staff. Senior leaders should ensure that staff at all levels are consulted and motivated to contribute to school improvement.
- 3.2.2. The school should continue to embed the new approach to teaching EAL. Alongside their English teaching responsibilities, opportunities should be identified, within EAL teachers' timetables, for them to work with individual students and with small groups (whether in classes or through withdrawal from classes), as well as to observe and support other teachers in the development of strategies for EAL learners within their lessons.
- 3.2.3. The school should continue to review its implementation of the new language policy and consider how best to positively encourage the speaking of English in lessons and throughout the school day.
- 3.2.4. Leaders should ensure effective and close working links between departments and the library so that the benefits of the library are fully integrated into each subject's curriculum.
- 3.2.5. Leaders should ensure the physical environment and resources of the library meet the requirements of a fully functioning library and that the library area is better used by staff and students to meet these requirements.
- 3.2.6. Induction and wider professional development should take greater account of the specific development needs of staff. Leaders should ensure that greater emphasis is given within staff training to the role and expectations of the tutor and meeting the pastoral needs of the students. Training should be also provided to all teachers on strategies to meet the differing learning needs of boys and girls in lessons, so that the quality of teaching in all lessons meets the needs of all students.
- 3.2.7. The school should continue to develop new initiatives to provide subject-focused enrichment which enables sixth form students in all disciplines to have the opportunity to deepen their subject passion and academic confidence; as part of this, the school should consider whether time can be made available within the sixth form timetable which can be used to provide a structured programme of teacher-led subject enrichment in each discipline.
- 3.2.8. The school should develop a strategy to raise awareness amongst parents and students about the expertise and strength of its US programme, so that students make relevant and appropriate choices when applying to American universities and so that parents understand the benefits of students being more selective in the choices that they make. As part of this, the school should ensure that the achievements of its students in securing offers from leading US colleges are appropriately celebrated.

3.2.9. Urgent action is needed to improve the consistency, quality and frequency of marking so that every student receives regular and detailed formative feedback that supports further improvement.

## 4. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

### 4.1. Findings

**The quality of teaching is good.** Teachers understand the high expectations of the school and many teach lessons of a high standard. Where teaching is strongest, teachers have good academic subject knowledge, and know how to impart this to their students through building effective relationships. In these lessons, teachers' own knowledge in their subject ensures that lessons are both challenging and motivational. Teachers prioritise using academic language, creating opportunities to model this, which enables students to express their ideas increasingly fluently.

In the best lessons, teachers plan sequences of activities that build on students' prior knowledge, adapting their teaching responsively to the strengths and needs of students. Teachers model their own academic thinking, which encourages students to do the same, encouraging them to participate in engaging activities. In these lessons, teachers blend their instruction with opportunities for students to apply and consolidate their skills, while ensuring lessons maintain pace and sustain students' interest. As a result, an atmosphere of mutual endeavour and shared learning prevails, to which most students respond with respect and engagement. Teachers introduce students to important concepts and complex ideas in a clear and accessible manner, continually developing students' understanding and skills. Teachers' use of praise, reinforcement and an encouraging tone draw students into discussion effectively. As a result, students readily volunteer answers and develop their conceptual understanding.

However, in some lessons, and particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the quality of teaching is variable, and this is more pronounced in boys' lessons than in girls' lessons. In these lessons, teachers do not plan and sequence activities to ensure sufficient progression in learning. In some lessons, teachers do not respond sufficiently quickly to the learning needs of students or effectively manage the behaviour of students who are not focused on their learning.

**The quality of students' learning is good.** As a result of the good teaching they receive in many lessons, the majority of students demonstrate constructive attitudes to learning and make clear progress. Students demonstrate enthusiasm and curiosity, while asking probing questions. Their grasp of factual information is secure and they challenge themselves to a high level. They debate and explore ideas, and are open to forming new opinions and listening to the views of others. Students report that in some lessons, teachers do not plan or deliver sufficiently challenging lessons; observation of lessons during the inspection bears out the fact that there is scope for teachers to engage and stretch students more consistently.

### 4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1. Senior leaders should ensure that teaching in all subjects, and particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, consistently meets the high expectations of the school so that teachers routinely plan academically challenging and stimulating lessons, and teach them with expertise; and that as a result, all students are engaged and motivated in their learning, and therefore make exceptional progress, in every lesson.

## 5. SOCIAL, MORAL SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

### 5.1. Findings

**The provision for the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of students is very good.**

The personal and social development (PSD) department has a well-planned curriculum for years 7 to 11 that builds year-on-year as students mature. It is taught by a team of specialists who tackle sensitive issues with a high degree of tact and gentle humour. They aim to create a safe space for discussion and actively encourage contributions from the whole class. The curriculum is responsive to the needs of students and the timing and content of topics have been amended to support their emotional development. Sessions on relationships are run at the end of year 11 as part of the preparation for IB diploma programme. This year, small group PSD sessions with the counselling team have been provided for year 12 girls, and staff hope to broaden this provision in the future.

There is a culture within the department of seeking to review and revise provision to adapt to the changing needs of students. One particular drive is the education of students about the importance of sleep in supporting their academic achievement. Another future aim is to enhance the well-being programme more widely within the school so that a culture where this is actively promoted becomes more embedded and less reactive.

Links between the work of the tutors and the work of the PSD department are established but it is recognised that tutor provision can vary. The assistant heads are aware of this and are monitoring the work of tutors with a view to increasing consistency and embedding links with PSD more fully. They feel that the training of tutors in skills such as conflict resolution or specialist aspects of sixth form work is important. They would value more dedicated time in which to achieve this.

**Global awareness amongst students is very good.** There are a range of student-led societies and activities such as Tower Aid, Global Awareness Society and Gender Studies Society. The school also celebrates a wide range of culturally significant days, including Korean Remembrance Day, Diwali and Holocaust Memorial Day. Students on a recent exchange visit with NLCS (UK) were able to reflect positively on the cultural differences they experienced during their stay.

**House spirit is particularly strong within the school.** Students speak passionately about their links to houses and the sense of community it engenders. They clearly enjoy the spirit of competition between houses the school fosters. In the sixth form, students move to the Halla houses, which frees them from compulsory participation in house events, but they continue to attend house activities for younger students and to support them in these events. House staff are keen to foster even stronger affiliation to Halla houses by encouraging a range of inter-house competitions. Although this initiative is still in its early stages, there is a clear desire to develop it further.

**Opportunities for student voice are good.** There is an active food committee which has listened to the concerns of students and they recognise the changes brought in as a result of this dialogue. The student council is also active and has representatives from all year groups. Here, students again feel that they are listened to, but they would welcome more feedback on their suggestions, including why some of their requests may not be achievable.

### 5.2. Recommendations

5.2.1. The consistency of student experience of the tutor programme and its links with the PSD programme should be further developed.

5.2.2. Consideration should be given to the allocation of protected time for PSD for students in the sixth form.

## 6. PASTORAL CARE AND BOARDING

### 6.1. Findings

**The quality of pastoral care for individual students is good.** Staff at all levels care deeply about the welfare and well-being of students and work hard to ensure that they are well supported.

House staff currently act as the first point of contact for all students and they work closely with the tutor team to ensure that students are known as individuals. The counselling team provide support for individuals who may self-refer or be referred by a staff member. There is a wider support network of peer counsellors who undergo a training programme during CCA time in their first term in post.

Students value the support they receive from staff and readily identify a range of adults to whom they can turn, including tutors, house staff, the counselling team and individual teachers. Their interactions with staff in school and in the boarding houses are warm and have a good deal of humour. Students know that they can talk to staff if they experience bullying and that the school will take steps to deal with their concerns.

The house staff work hard to provide a welcoming and homely experience in the boarding houses and achieve this within their budgetary constraints. They would welcome investment in the maintenance and refurbishment of house facilities. They communicate regularly in both formal and informal meetings. This ensures that they are all aware of emerging situations across the houses and also allows them to achieve a high degree of consistency in processes and the implementation of policy. There is an active and varied weekend programme for boarders which is communicated to parents weekly and in which boarders are actively encouraged to participate. Boarders speak of their enjoyment of these activities and how it helps them to achieve a good balance between study and essential rest. They also speak warmly of the house staff and of the friendships they have forged within the boarding houses.

There is regular dialogue between the assistant heads, house staff and the medical centre and other support staff such as the counselling team. The matrons in-house provide another level of support and take a high degree of pride in their work and in their role as a link between the students and house staff. However, the frequent changes to the line management of matrons means that there can be some confusion about whom to turn to, and they would welcome stability. The medical centre provides individual care for students as required but also wider advice for houses on managing seasonal health issues.

Food in the evenings and at breakfast is varied and is consistent in quality with that provided at lunchtimes. The students report that the food committee is active and provides a forum for them to feedback on provision. They can see the changes made as a result. Regular special menus are provided for boarders at the weekends, something they appreciate, and they also spoke about their enjoyment of Sunday brunches. The houses are well provided with facilities to make drinks and snacks and these are readily available outside of school times.

There is a recognition that the needs of the students are changing as the balance between boarding and non-boarding students shifts, and this has led to the development of plans for a new pastoral structure for next year. Internally appointed heads of year will have oversight of academic and pastoral matters for all students. All staff involved in pastoral care appreciate how this will further enhance the care the school shows for its students, though some questions have understandably been raised by staff about specific aspects of the operation of the new system such as lines of communication. The assistant heads are working with energy and focus to address these questions, and have been proactive in developing effective processes in consultation with key staff. In order to fully embed the desired changes and to forge strong links between house staff and heads of year, it is important that there is clearer direct leadership of this change by the vice-principal (pastoral); he is ultimately responsible for the success of this important initiative and for providing the strategic direction required when such a significant change is implemented.

Arrangements to safeguard the welfare of students are also changing in the coming year with changes in both personnel and structures. The school needs to ensure that the systems in place are clear to all staff. Those with responsibility for taking action on safeguarding matters need to have the seniority and autonomy to act immediately in the best interests of the individual students and to hold staff to account.

## **6.2. Recommendations**

- 6.2.1. The senior leadership team should ensure that the planned changes to pastoral structures are implemented as successfully as possible next term, and that the system is effective in enhancing the pastoral care of every student. In particular, the vice-principal (pastoral) will need to provide a clear strategic direction to all staff, and to ensure that there are strong links and effective systems of communication between parents, tutors, house staff and heads of year.
  
- 6.2.2. The school needs to ensure that the systems to safeguard students are clear to all staff. Those with responsibility with safeguarding need to have the seniority and autonomy to act in the best interests of the individual students and to hold all staff to account without further discussion if necessary.

## 7. ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

### 7.1. Findings

**The work of the English department is good.** The newly appointed head of department has quickly identified the strengths and needs of the department and is taking increasingly effective action to ensure that curriculum planning will meet high academic expectations. Leadership of the department is increasingly strategic and focused on ensuring that students make strong progress in both English language and literature, and that their additional English language needs are met through a structured “pathway” approach to examination entry.

The head of department is establishing improved systems to track the progress of students in English. The success criteria against which students’ achievements are mapped are under review, with the intention that they more closely match the expectations of the IGCSE and IB diploma specifications. Students’ achievements in recent external examinations show that, while the number of students achieving the highest grades have increased, the number of students receiving the lower grades has also increased. The department is taking effective steps to remedy this in the new “pathway” routes through the curriculum which select some students to take a reduced examination offer. Care must be taken to ensure that the teaching time freed up by this strategy is used effectively so that these students’ proficiency in English is secure.

Teachers plan and deliver lessons that include a range of challenging texts. For example, Shakespeare plays are taught to all year groups in the original text. Students respond enthusiastically when they are given well-planned opportunities to discuss texts and ideas. In the best lessons, teachers focus closely on providing students with a literary framework for their thinking, which enables academic discussion. Schemes of work are under review, which should ensure that the current gaps in department planning are filled and that teaching across the department is consistently well planned and executed.

**The quality of teaching in the English department is good** overall. In the best lessons, teachers demonstrate their secure subject knowledge and form close learning relationships with students. In these lessons, teachers guide students expertly, giving them a framework for their interpretation of texts. However, in some lessons this quality of planning and delivery is not in evidence.

**The quality of students’ learning in the English department is good.** Students are generally motivated to learn and make progress, demonstrating a good understanding of the subject. They engage well with activities in lessons and ask pertinent questions. During lessons students become increasingly independent in their learning. However, in some lessons, where students are insufficiently challenged by the teaching, they lose interest, and some become disruptive.

While there are some good examples of marking and feedback to students, both in books and in lessons, this practice is not consistent across the department. In the best examples, teachers give focused and motivational feedback, with clear expectations for improvement. As a result, students take the advice offered and improve. However, in some books feedback is sparse.

Co-curricular provision in English is improving. The English Society has been reinvigorated and new societies for poetry and creative writing have been introduced. As a result, students’ participation in extra-curricular activities has improved.

### 7.2. Recommendations

7.2.1. Ensure that the teaching time made available by the recently introduced curriculum “pathways” is used to ensure that the English skills of students on language only pathways are developed so that they can make strong progress.

7.2.2. Ensure that curriculum planning is securely in place, is aspirational and that all teachers deliver lessons of consistently high quality, so that all students, including boys, are motivated to learn and make strong progress.

- 7.2.3. Ensure the quality of marking and feedback to students is focused and timely, giving specific, motivational guidance so that students respond and make sustained improvement to their work.
- 7.2.4. Ensure that quality assurance processes within the department closely monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, so that teachers consistently teach lessons and provide feedback that meet the standards expected of an NLCS education.



## 8. MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT

### 8.1. Findings

#### **The work of the mathematics department is good.**

Students enjoy their mathematics lessons, and teachers have the academic freedom to design lessons which, at best, are engaging and enthuse students. Students appreciate the availability of their teachers for additional support at lunchtimes and breaks. They find their teachers approachable and helpful.

Departmental planning is sound, and the schemes of work are being improved to promote greater commonality of coverage across the sets. The schemes of work are available on an online platform facilitating the sharing of appropriate resources, and they include a section on the use of academic English.

The head of department is aware of the strengths and weaknesses within the department, and is working on issues surrounding assessment data, feedback to students and setting. However, planning to deal with these issues is not sufficiently clear at this time. The members of the department would appreciate further development and support, with access to opportunities for subject enrichment.

**The quality of teaching in mathematics is good.** The teachers are clearly passionate about the subject, and the very best lessons are creative and designed to have maximum impact – for example, in a lesson that was observed where students competed to build a cone and derive a formula to describe an equation of the surface area. Use of ICT supports the students in graphical techniques and GDC skills are taught. However, some lessons lack pace and suffer low-level disruption, and lessons were observed where inappropriate use of language was not reprimanded.

**The quality of students' learning in mathematics is very good.** In lessons where teaching is less focused, students work independently to ensure that they make sufficient progress; equally, in lessons where teaching is of the highest quality, this has a direct impact on students' engagement with the subject.

Marking across the department is inconsistent, and ongoing discussions within the department about the best processes for feeding back to students need to be brought to a decisive conclusion. Students make use of the end-of-topic tests and annual tests to assess and benchmark their own progress, and are largely very positive about this process; year 12 students appreciate the time they are given in lessons to review and reflect on these assessments, and find the four marks available for this process motivational. However, the marking of classwork and homework requires urgent improvement, as there is little evidence of formative comments to guide further improvement, or of students responding to the feedback.

Students relish the challenge of entering competitions run by UKMT and eagerly await their results. They also enjoy being set extending questions from Olympiads in class.

Teachers support students alongside the university guidance department, and at the request of the individual students. The department provides practice interview opportunities in conjunction with the university guidance department.

The mathematics department is working to improve the use of academic English in lessons. It is pleasing to see the schemes of work refer to the explicit teaching of vocabulary, and time in lessons is being dedicated to ensuring students are familiar with the technical language required for mathematics. Specific mathematical vocabulary is being highlighted in classroom discussions and the students are encouraged to always use the correct terms.

## **8.2. Recommendations**

- 8.2.1. Marking should be made more consistent throughout the department, and teachers should aim to develop an ongoing dialogue with students in the marking of tasks, as well as tests, so that students are able to track their individual progress and make improvements.
- 8.2.2. Planning within the department should continue to be developed to ensure there is consistency in the students' experience between sets.
- 8.2.3. The head of department should make certain that provision is made to ensure that all members of the department are developed as teachers and as subject experts.

## 9. SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

### 9.1. Findings

In the absence of the science co-ordinator, **provision in the years 7 to 8 science programme is good overall.**

The years 7 to 8 science teachers should be commended on managing the unexpected absence of the science co-ordinator and ensuring the classes are still taught, and schemes of work developed and reviewed. They have rallied round to fill the gap, but the understaffing has led to a delay in many of the planned updates to the curriculum. Moreover, the quality of lessons, use of resources and marking of students' work are variable.

The years 7 to 8 science teachers have struggled to find regular time to meet to discuss and plan the teaching of the content, which would be beneficial given the broad nature of the course. The schemes of work have interesting content, and incorporate a range of practical work; however, there appears to be some repetition between years 7 and 8, and the science schemes of work should be further developed to maximise students' challenge and engagement. Links with the junior school are encouraged, with the department running inspiration sessions to help with the transition between the junior and senior schools.

**The quality of teaching in years 7 to 8 science is good overall, and the quality of students' learning is satisfactory with some good elements.** The very best lessons are outstanding, using creative tasks to promote independence and collaboration, whilst exploring unfamiliar areas of science. However, some lessons lack pace and ambition; this in turn impacts on students' learning, and a lack of appropriate vocabulary also holds back students' progress and understanding.

Teachers seek to promote accurate use of scientific language through questioning in science lessons, and they use discussion to seek to deepen the students' understanding of the terms used. In some lessons, students are challenged to define scientific terms themselves.

There are some examples of excellent marking. At its very best, feedback encourages the students to consolidate and further their understanding of the topics through formative marking and dialogue. However, marking is inconsistent between classes.

Many co-curricular activities in the field of science, including the impressive student-led magazine *Lucidity*, help to bring about effective collaboration between various societies to support students in developing their abilities to communicate scientific concepts.

### 9.2. Recommendations

9.2.1. Regular meeting times should be ring-fenced for the teachers of the year 7 to 8 science course to meet to share resources and discuss the teaching of the course, ensuring it is taught consistently and to a high level by all teachers.

9.2.2. Marking should be standardised and brought in line with the best in the department so that students can assess their own progress in the subject.

## 10. BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT

### 10.1. Findings

**The work of the biology department is good.** There is a clear vision for the development and the head of department has, in her first year, begun to address some of the departmental issues related to the direction of the whole school development plan.

The head of department is clear in her analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the department and is working with her staff to tackle these. Progress has been hampered by the continued absence of a member of staff, which has required all members of the department to increase their teaching loads. The head of department uses online surveys to ensure that the views of all members of the department are sought when they are unable to meet together to discuss issues due to other commitments.

Detailed schemes of work are available for staff within the departmental handbook and are an area of ongoing review. The coordination of assessment is developing within the department, as is the development of a shared resource bank for all staff. As a result, the department are able to track the progress of students accurately and co-ordinate teaching where groups are shared between staff members. Internal moderation of IB diploma assessments is in place.

**The overall quality of teaching in the department is good, and the overall quality of students' learning is also good.** Lessons are well planned and staff work to ensure that all students remain engaged throughout. In the best lessons, students are encouraged to think independently, apply their knowledge to novel situations and to express their opinions on a range of areas. They are actively encouraged to read research papers and other sources relevant to the topic being taught. Teachers and students demonstrate in lessons a clear enthusiasm for the subject and the head of department is particularly pleased that the uptake of biology in the sixth form next year has increased.

Marking in the department is variable. Some books show evidence of formative assessment and the department utilises the "DIRT" (dedicated improvement and reflection time) process to enable students to understand their own performance in tests. In interviews, students speak highly of this process in helping them to understand how they can improve upon their test performance. The head of department is trialling a whole-class feedback system that allows teachers and students to correct common misconceptions in an efficient manner. However, not all marking is regular, and feedback and the non-completion of assessment sheets are not always followed up on.

The department has an active co-curricular programme. The head of department is pleased that the recent Medex conference was successful and aims to develop this further in the coming year. The biology department has also taken over the running of the Medical Society and there is an active Life Science and Biotech Society which is student-led and has arranged for students to visit local universities to observe the work done there.

The head of department feels that biology staff and the university guidance counsellors work well together and this year they are supporting a number of potential medics and dentists to make successful university applications. Once the university guidance counsellors have identified students intending to study biology, the department works with them to ensure that they are well prepared for their applications.

In lessons there is a clear focus on the correct use of academic English and a drive to ensure that terminology is understood. The creation and use of glossaries are encouraged up to and including the sixth form, and students are challenged to expand upon their answers and explain the biological meaning of words. The department has this year focused on the use of accurate written English in lab reports and the head of department intends to extend this work in the future.

**10.2. Recommendations**

- 10.2.1. The department should continue to develop common resources and assessment schemes to ensure cross-year group consistency of experience in these areas
- 10.2.2. The head of department should work to ensure consistency in marking and feedback to students across the department.

## 11. CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT

### 11.1. Findings

#### **The work of the chemistry department is good.**

The department should be commended for covering an unplanned shortage of staff, and for maintaining lessons of a good standard despite this.

The department is well led. Weekly meetings and a shared office allow the sharing of best practice and collaboration. The current (outgoing) head of department is in contact with the incoming head of department to aid a smooth transition.

Schemes of work are appropriately detailed and under constant review. The schemes of work allow for the students to make good progress through the course, and develop their holistic understanding of the subject.

**The quality of teaching in chemistry is good overall.** Teachers nurture a constructive learning environment, and the best lessons are planned to incorporate effective practical tasks, the opportunity for collaborative working, and opportunities to challenge students through carefully designed questions and activities. Teachers include interesting and enriching information in the course of their lessons to keep students engaged.

**The quality of students' learning in chemistry is good.** Students speak highly of their chemistry teachers, and they enjoy their chemistry lessons. They demonstrate good classroom routines and behaviour, particularly when collecting experimental data and conducting observations during practical work. Students respond well, and make good progress, as a result of the best teaching.

Planning is currently underway to improve year-wide assessments and ensure that accurate data is kept on students' progress, which will in turn allow more effective deployment of support strategies. Year 12 students understand that their year-wide assessments will be of a synoptic nature, to help them develop their chemistry more broadly. Students receive written feedback once a fortnight, and they particularly appreciate having areas for improvement highlighted.

The Chemistry Society has been an enjoyable outlet for students who are keen to explore the subject, and the students appreciate the opportunity to participate in competitions outside of school such as the Jeju Youth Scientist competition. Earlier in the academic year the department hosted Dr Bob Shroeder from UCL who delivered enriching and extending workshops for year 12 students to explore the chemistry of organic conducting materials.

Students feel supported by the university guidance team, and receive subject-specific support towards the end of year 12. The department holds mock interviews for students to help them prepare for chemistry and scientific interviews. They recommend reading and podcasts to promote subject enrichment. The head of department has identified a need to be involved in the university guidance sooner than in the current process, to aid students in making ambitious but realistic choices.

Students are generally encouraged to use the correct academic language in lessons, but this could be developed further.

### 11.2. Recommendations

11.2.1. The school should ensure a smooth transition between outgoing and incoming staff so that new and existing staff are developed in their subject expertise and in the teaching of key practical skills.

11.2.2. The marking should be improved in regularity and aim to consistently highlight areas to support the students' progress in the subject.

## 12. PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

### 12.1. Findings

**The work of the physics department is very good.** This is particularly evident in the quality of lessons, as well as in the dedicated support teachers provide for students outside of lessons. Individual teachers are keen to collaborate and share best practice, though there is scope for this to be co-ordinated in a more strategic way across the department as a whole to enable all teachers to develop their practice consistently.

Schemes of work are available, but need to be fine-tuned to make them more useful for staff and to allow a consistent teaching of topics across the year groups. All teachers should be involved in this development, to draw on the various strengths of the department's teachers.

The head of department has identified key issues and strategies necessary to improve performance in IB diploma examinations - for example, the department has identified a need to enthuse girls, and to inspire them to enjoy the subject more. This now needs to be followed up with more specific initiatives and the identification of clear, measurable targets; this will ensure that specific strategies are purposeful and have impact, should be followed up on, and in places adjusted to ensure they have an impact, and that a clear and united vision across the department is developed.

**The quality of teaching in physics is very good.** Teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They design tasks that encourage students to develop a firm grasp and keen critical analysis of key concepts; they build appropriate opportunities for practical work into lessons to deepen students' understanding, and they encourage students to make links between topics.

As a result of the strong teaching they receive, **the quality of student's learning in physics is also very good.** They are enthusiastic about their physics lessons, they have good classroom routines, and they make clear progress. Practical work is carried out with enthusiasm and attention to detail, and students report that this is a useful way of consolidating their understanding of the theory they have learnt.

The tracking of students' progress has improved; students in need of support are being identified effectively, and attendance at additional support sessions has improved. The impact of these support sessions should be measured and recorded.

Assessment should be made with increased frequency, and more detailed and focused feedback should be given to students to allow them to have an accurate picture of their individual progress and what they need to do to improve further.

Engineering, cosmos and physics societies are all active, and the department is working hard to increase the uptake of the activities amongst younger students. Older students have the opportunity to plan and teach sessions to younger students.

Students feel well supported by the university guidance department, who work with the physics teachers to provide mock interviews for students applying to subjects such as natural sciences and engineering.

### 12.2. Recommendations

12.2.1. Meetings and departmental documentation should be improved to facilitate the sharing of best practice to ensure that all lessons delivered are engaging and have impact.

12.2.2. Specific strategies should be introduced to support the use of academic language in the subject for students of all ages.

- 12.2.3. Schemes of work should be improved to ensure they are useful and used by all members of the department, to ensure consistency of outstanding lessons and a consistent student experience.



### 13. KOREAN DEPARTMENT

#### 13.1. Findings

**The work of the Korean department is outstanding.** The head of Korean is new in post (September 2018) and has inherited a thriving department. She has been sensitive to the pre-existing dynamic and strong sense of collaboration among her colleagues.

The curriculum is broad and offers extensive opportunities to engage with Korean language and culture. In years 7 to 9 there is an emphasis on laying the structural foundations and developing the necessary techniques for effective written and oral communication; as they move up the school, students relish the opportunities to research, discuss and debate literature and learn about Korean politics and history.

**Teaching in the Korean department is outstanding.** A particular strength is the quality of relationships between students and their teachers; there is a genuine warmth and even affection palpable in lessons. Teachers' evident enthusiasm for their subject and frequently creative approach to lesson planning ensures a high level of engagement and motivation on behalf of the students: as a result, **students' learning is also outstanding.** They work well collaboratively, or as individuals, demonstrating considerable commitment and enjoyment of their studies. They present their knowledge and understanding with confidence and can think on their feet, responding thoughtfully, and with careful consideration, to deeper questioning and suggestions.

Marking and assessment in the department are good, with detailed records kept regarding student assessment tasks. In the best cases, students' work books show evidence of structured, formative feedback given regularly. However, the regularity of marking and use of these structures was not consistent across the department.

The department offers a good number of co-curricular activities to allow for the further development of knowledge and enjoyment of both literature and language, and by both native and non-native speakers of Korean, and these are well attended.

#### 13.2. Recommendations

13.2.1. The department should continue to review the quality and frequency of marking and feedback to students, and work with teachers to ensure greater consistency in this area.

## 14. MANDARIN DEPARTMENT

### 14.1. Findings

**The work of the Mandarin department is very good.**

The head of department demonstrates a commitment to providing a truly broad and extended education and has good ideas about how to strengthen Mandarin further as an important subject in the school. There is a strong collaborative team of teachers who are open to sharing best practice and learning from one another.

The curriculum is well planned and ambitious, catering for the needs of both first language and non-native speakers, including provision at a wide range of levels across the school. The teaching focuses effectively on building both fluency and accuracy in the students and there is evidence of regular and robust curriculum review and planning by the department.

**The quality of teaching in the department is very good, and the quality of students' learning is also very good.** Teachers use the target language consistently and the strongest lessons observed were pacy, well-pitched and involved a variety of learning activities and high levels of enthusiastic student participation. Students enjoy lessons and appreciate the willingness of teachers to provide additional assistance either in class or in the subject clinics offered for those taking Mandarin IGCSE or IB. Students also have easy access to authentic material in the language and have weekly reading assignments to make sure they make use of such resources.

Marking is clear, regular and mostly consistent across the department. Students find the review materials and summary feedback provided using google classrooms particularly helpful.

There are some opportunities for further engagement with the subject beyond lessons such as the calligraphy and Chinese paper-cutting clubs. There is, however, scope to reinvigorate other activities like the Mandarin Society and trips to China as this would help to raise the profile of the subject and offer students a chance to deepen their understanding of the culture.

A small number of students have applied to study Chinese or Asian studies at university and the department was able to offer mock interviews and other limited support; this could be extended to include more substantial guidance for future applicants.

### 14.2. Recommendations

- 14.2.1. The department should look for opportunities to work more closely with the junior school Mandarin teachers to help ensure a smooth transition to the senior school and to help encourage students to continue with the language at a higher level.
- 14.2.2. The quality of displays and opportunities to share student work in Mandarin classrooms are inconsistent and the department should focus over the coming year on creating more vibrant learning environments to inspire and enthuse students.
- 14.2.3. The number and range of enrichment and extension activities in the subject should be considered as these can help to raise the profile of Mandarin across the school and enable students to engage with the language and culture more deeply.

## 15. EUROPEAN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT

### 15.1. Findings

**The provision in the European languages department is very good.** The head of department has a clear vision for the ongoing development of European languages within the school. The switch to having Latin as a separate department has been well received as it recognises the strength of the provision and better reflects the distinct nature and opportunities for learning within that subject. There will still be many ways to collaborate and work together across the three languages taught within the department, in addition to joint projects and interdisciplinary work with English and other departments.

The head of department provides clear and effective support to the team and communication within the department is strong and this contributes to a consistency of high expectations for students and an effective approach to planning that embeds the acquisition of sound grammatical understanding alongside increasing fluency and confidence of communication in the language.

**The quality of teaching in the department is very good, and the quality of students' learning is also very good.** The target language is used consistently in lessons and the quality of teaching observed was often outstanding and never less than good. Students at all levels make good progress and it was impressive to see some accurate and well-crafted written work, produced at a level significantly in advance of normal year level expectations. Students spoke highly of the warmth of relations with their teachers and value the time, care and support they receive from them. Teachers in the department also took opportunities to make links between the culture and traditions of the countries being studied with equivalent traditions in Korea and this not only offered the chance for excellent speaking practice, but also conveyed a sincere and interest in Korean culture which students clearly appreciated and found motivating.

Teachers provide regular feedback to students on their work and manage to strike an effective balance between rigour and an insistence on accuracy with encouragement and praise, particularly in oral feedback.

There are a number of activities beyond the classroom including an annual *soirée française* and several Greek and classics clubs. The department has also offered international trips to promote further the study of languages. Teachers seek to incorporate the use of authentic materials into learning and have subscriptions to a number of journals and magazines for student use. The head of department has also been collecting a small library of books in the classroom for older students.

The department has the capacity and flexibility to adjust provision for students with differing prior levels of learning in the subject or more substantial English language needs and this effectively tailored support gives individuals an opportunity to have a valuable first experience of the languages. Skilled teaching enables students to make impressive progress and sometimes discover a new passion for one of these languages.

### 15.2. Recommendations

- 15.2.1. The department should continue to develop opportunities for the students to engage with the subject beyond the classroom to enable them to develop a deeper understanding of the culture and literature of the countries and regions studied. It is particularly important to ensure that students are exposed to French and Spanish as world languages as this will help them to appreciate them in a much broader context.
- 15.2.2. The quality of displays and opportunities to share student work in language classrooms are inconsistent and the department should focus over the coming year on creating more vibrant learning environments to help inspire and enthuse students.
- 15.2.3. The school should improve the provision of books and resources for European languages in the library so that students have access to a wider range of materials and to encourage reading for all levels in the target languages.

## 16. HISTORY AND POLITICS DEPARTMENT

### 16.1. Findings

#### **The provision in the history and politics department is outstanding.**

The head of department has a clear and crisp vision for the department and leads a strong team who all share a sincere and infectious enthusiasm for the subject. It was clear in many of the lessons and in the student interviews that this enthusiasm is reciprocated by many students and this is helping to produce exciting rates of progress and levels of achievement across the school. The department has closely analysed recent examination performances and implemented sensible changes and introduced additional support to secure stronger outcomes for students.

The curriculum across the school is well designed and maintains a sharp focus on instilling an understanding of key historical concepts while equipping students with the skills and language to succeed in the subject, as well as the confidence to apply them to tackle demanding topics and material. The clarity of planning to ensure a logical and progressively more demanding approach to analysis and argument is excellent and will undoubtedly enable students to become increasingly proficient and capable historians as they move through the school.

**The quality of teaching in the department is outstanding, and the quality of students' learning is also outstanding.** Much of the teaching observed was outstanding and students demonstrated consistently excellent attitudes to learning and high levels of engagement. The quality of debate and discussion in sixth form lessons was inspiring, and teachers used probing questions and a wide range of engaging activities to deepen learning and sharpen the students' analytical skills. In the younger years, students were eager to answer difficult questions and were using a range of ambitious resources to complete research for their coursework assignment.

Work is regularly marked and the department is increasingly making use of well-designed rubrics to ensure a consistency of assessment. Students are particularly appreciative of the frequent and precise feedback they receive to help improve their written work.

There are many opportunities to engage with the subject beyond lessons, such as academic societies, visiting speakers, external competitions and school-wide exhibitions commemorating specific events or anniversaries. Students' participation and leadership are particularly strong in activities relating to politics and taking action.

The department provides additional guidance and wider reading lists, as well as practice interviews and individual support, for students applying to university for related fields of study.

Teachers in the department are mindful of the particular challenges for students with English as additional language and are systematic and thorough in providing support, for example through glossaries and by the regular and conscious use of key historical terminology to help students access the subject.

### 16.2. Recommendations

16.2.1. The department should continue to offer a range of intellectual and enrichment activities to enable students to pursue their passion for the subject beyond lessons, and it would be beneficial to ensure that these also link closely to strengthening and supporting students' university aspirations.

16.2.2. The focus on equipping students with the understanding and analytical skills to thrive in the subject is commendable and is clearly having a positive impact. It is recommended that the department review the overall balance of topics, periods and regions studied in to ensure that the department is also providing students with a suitably broad and varied exposure to history.

## 17. GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

### 17.1. Findings

**The work of the geography department is good with some outstanding features.** The leadership of the department, coupled with the collegiate nature of the teachers, has supported sustainable growth aligned to the whole-school development plan. The department has benefitted from the establishment of divisional meetings within the school, to aid strategic thinking and to share good practice between departments.

The number of students electing to study the IB diploma within the subject has continued to grow, which has presented an increasing challenge to the department in ensuring that all students (the overwhelming majority of whom have English as a second language) are consistently and effectively supported through the challenges of course reliant on complex terminology. The subject's recent decline in IB diploma results is being addressed through departmental strategies and a revised approach to the teaching of the course.

The planned curriculum for geography is excellent, with well-developed schemes of work that nurture understanding of the subject whilst developing ambition and wider interest in global issues. These programmes of study are supported by a stimulating series of fieldwork trips, which have been developed over the last two years. The department is continuing to develop the year 7 to 9 curriculum through the integration of innovative approaches to teaching that stretch all students, such as the "Big Think" strategies observed within lessons.

**The quality of teaching in geography is good overall, with some elements of outstanding practice** being observed; likewise, **the quality of students' learning is good, with some elements of outstanding practice.** All lessons are taught by passionate, enthusiastic, highly knowledgeable practitioners. The use of higher-order questions, student-centred activities and a faster pace of learning, were characteristics of the lessons in which the most progress was observed; there is scope for this to be made consistent across all lessons in the subject.

Marking, assessment and formative feedback to students within the geography department are generally good, although there is a significant degree of inconsistency between teachers regarding the use of formative feedback. Limited evidence of a student-teacher dialogue was observed within students' work. The use of higher-order questions within set work provides the students with opportunities for greater challenge and subsequently more detailed, formative feedback. The systems within the department are appropriate and support dialogic marking, including a simple departmental sticker system, although currently most teachers are not employing them consistently.

The geography department's co-curricular programme is very good. The department offers many co-curricular opportunities that both enrich and extend the students' subject knowledge and understanding. The provision of fieldwork for most year groups has been welcomed by the students, who value the experiences that these provide. The fieldwork trips challenge the students by asking them to apply their knowledge to unfamiliar and often complex situations. The department has an ethos to develop knowledge of Jeju wherever possible through lessons and fieldwork opportunities. The active student-led Conservation Society seeks to further enrich the students' knowledge through teacher and student lectures, which have been well received.

University guidance begins in year 12 for students who have indicated an interest to study the subject with the school's university guidance counsellors. The department provides support for students applying to a related subject through reading lists, essays and mock interviews.

The department's support for students with English as an additional language is excellent. All teachers are aware of their students' abilities and needs, and this informs the planning of lessons. Within lessons teachers were observed to support the development of academic English using challenging student presentations and the development of key terminology.

The department is keen to further develop all students' reading for pleasure and has engaged fully with the school's accelerated reader programme and development of breadth of reading through set texts and reading lists.

**17.2. Recommendation**

- 17.2.1. It is recommended that the department prioritise the development of assessment, marking and feedback practices so that student-teacher dialogue is consistently established with all teachers to ensure rapid student progress.

## 18. ECONOMICS AND PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

### 18.1. Findings

**The work of the economics and philosophy department is good with some outstanding features.**

Curriculum planning is appropriate in delivering the requirements of the IB diploma syllabuses for the respective subjects, covering key aspects of microeconomics and macroeconomics for economics students, and the philosophy of religion and moral philosophy (along with a study of Plato's *The Republic*) in philosophy.

The head of department has a clear vision of what he is aiming to achieve. He aspires to promote opportunities for research, a spirit of student engagement and forging of links between topics, provision of challenge in lessons, and a focus on precise use of technical terminology to support students for whom English is not their first language. In philosophy, there is a clear desire to promote students' ability to "do philosophy", rather than allowing them to conceive of the subject purely as a body of knowledge to be acquired.

This is manifestly an ambitious set of aspirations, all of which closely align to the principles of a North London Collegiate School education. There is evidence of some progress towards this vision, though it is not yet consistently embedded in the practice of the department.

The philosophy lesson observed was of a very high standard. It focused on Socratic method as part of the exploration of Plato's *The Republic*. The teacher's exposition was clear and engaging and there was a warmth of rapport in the classroom which encouraged students to work collaboratively and with determination to deepen their understanding of the Socratic technique. They used technical language with confidence, and they made perceptive connections between different elements of the IB diploma course – for example, linking the linguistic framework of Socratic dialogue to concepts of univocality, equivocality and analogy that they had encountered in their study of religious language. The particular success of the lesson arose from the teacher's ability to motivate students to engage actively and enthusiastically with the subject matter, allowing them to raise interesting questions and enabling them to approach the course with a spirit of inquiry, enjoyment and philosophical curiosity. This active engagement is a key characteristic of the very best lessons in the economics and philosophy department, but (especially in the teaching of economics) is not consistent practice.

**The quality of teaching in economics and philosophy is good with some outstanding features.**

Teaching is underpinned by solid subject expertise; this is largely conveyed to students effectively (and, in some lessons, with passion). In the very best lessons, the teacher plans a range of engaging activities to stretch and inspire students; these lessons are delivered with pace and energy, providing challenge and reflecting a clear academic ambition. However (especially in the teaching of some economics lessons), there is scope for some teachers to adopt a more dynamic and ambitious approach so that students in turn are seen to be tangibly excited by the material they are being taught about.

**The quality of students' learning in economics and philosophy is good with some outstanding features**, in response to the quality of the teaching that they receive. Students are studious and hard-working and, in the very best lessons, they engage with real focus and energy and there is a clear sense of the academic progress that they are able to make in a relatively short space of time. In some lessons, however, the activities set can slow down the pace of progress (as seen in one lesson, which the teacher used to set an extended research task without any clear opportunities to assess progress or measure the development of students' understanding), and in some cases students do not respond with significant enthusiasm or academic excitement to the material that they are engaging with.

In the best practice, teachers provide clear formative feedback to students and make helpful annotations to students' work. This is not entirely consistent, however; in some cases, marking lacks sufficient depth to enable students to have a clear picture of their progress and the specific aspects they need to work on to improve further.

The use of high-quality reading materials has been identified as a priority for the department this academic year, as a way of deepening students' exposure to, and engagement with, scholarship. This has been managed by giving

students copies of articles and similar academic resources which they keep in their files; whilst this approach is effective in itself, opportunities to make specific use of the library as part of the teaching of the economics and philosophy curriculum are underdeveloped.

The focus on reading materials is part of a wider strategy to develop students' academic vocabulary. In one lesson, students who have particular EAL needs were given a series of questions to help scaffold their understanding and draw out key points when engaging with a reading task, and teachers routinely highlight key terminology and challenge students to correct or refine their technical expression in the course of lessons.

Active economics and philosophy societies hold weekly discussions. Opportunities for students to contribute to *Equilibrium* magazine (which is now a broader humanities publication) and *The Islander* provide an engine for research and sharing of scholarly perspectives, and students are also encouraged to involve themselves in competitions such as the inflation competition; one student was highly commended in the John Locke Institute essay competition last year.

The department is closely involved in supporting prospective university applicants for economics, philosophy and related fields. In particular, the department is running a series of "stretch lessons" on Fridays after school to enable prospective applicants for economics to explore themes and concepts that go beyond the IB diploma economics syllabus; this is a commendable initiative, and one which could potentially serve as a model for other subjects.

## **18.2. Recommendations**

- 18.2.1. The head of department should review marking in the department to ensure that every teacher is consistently and regularly providing every student with detailed, formative feedback that gives them a clear sense of the progress that they are making and the specific steps they need to take in to improve.
- 18.2.2. The head of department should ensure that all members of the department are consistently teaching lessons of the highest standard, which actively engage and enthuse students; as part of this, he should forge links between economics and other subjects to learn about pedagogical approaches and techniques in other disciplines and consider how this can help to further enhance the teaching in the department.



## **19. ART DEPARTMENT**

### **19.1. Findings**

#### **The provision in the art department is outstanding.**

The head of department has a clear vision for the subject and brings tremendous drive to art in the school, leading an impressive team of passionate and skilled teachers and assistants.

Planning in the subject is thorough and is actively reviewed to maintain a broad and inspiring experience of art for students. Promoting scholarship and exposing students to different artists, artistic movements and techniques underpin the work of the department. There has been a particular focus in years 7 to 9 over the past year on incorporating new projects to ensure that fun remains a key element of learning in these years. This is actually a feature of lessons across the department and it was great to observe consistently high levels of enthusiasm and frequent laughter, as students were able to engage playfully with the subject while working on sophisticated and ambitious pieces.

**The quality of teaching in art is outstanding, and the quality of students' learning is also outstanding.** The ability of teachers in the department to nurture genuine confidence and encourage creative endeavour in the students as artists is striking and contributes to high levels of achievement and the growing popularity of art as an option in the upper years. The focus and engagement of students in lessons is particularly striking and it is clear that teachers have nurtured very strong study and work skills which help to drive the remarkable levels of achievement across the school in art.

Members of the department clearly recognise the value of providing regular and precise feedback to students and there is no doubt that the quality of the ongoing dialogue between teachers and students plays a crucial role in the students' love of the subject and their success in examinations.

The department provides a wide variety of activities and opportunities for students to pursue their interests in art outside lessons and teachers continue to develop links with the wider artistic community in Jeju and beyond to extend further such provision. The range of opportunities and contributions to the visual arts at the school are also apparent from the diversity, vibrancy and calibre of students' work displayed around the school.

The department provides exceptional support and guidance for students applying to art school or university, tailoring this to the particular passions and strengths of each individual and helping the students to secure offers from many of the most prestigious institutions in the world.

### **19.2. Recommendations**

19.2.1. The department should strive to maintain the outstanding level of provision and continue to develop the range of exhibitions and opportunities to display and celebrate student work across the school, particularly for younger students.

## 20. DRAMA DEPARTMENT

### 20.1. Findings

**The work of the drama department is outstanding.** The head of drama is new in post (September 2018) and has spent considerable time this year in refining curriculum progression and, on schemes of work, creating resources to support those schemes. He has a clear vision for the department and is well aware of strengths and areas for development,

The department's curriculum planning and schemes of work demonstrate an academically ambitious approach to the teaching of drama, which reflects well the values and ethos of a North London Collegiate School. The programme of work is challenging, well thought through and now mapped clearly from year to year.

**The quality of teaching in the drama department is outstanding.** Teachers have an excellent rapport with their students and create a safe and supportive environment in lessons, which promotes creativity and the taking of creative risks. Expectations are high and classroom management of both boys' and girls' classes is excellent. **The quality of students' learning is consequently outstanding.** Students work together collaboratively to produce practical work of a high standard, which is rooted in an understanding of technique and skill. They clearly enjoy their lessons and make excellent progress.

During the inspection, some detail was evident in departmental records of assessment; however, records of actual performances were not evident to cross-reference. There was no evidence of methodologies to capture oral feedback for the future reference of students and teachers.

There is a good programme of both large-scale and smaller studio performance opportunities available to students as part of the school's co-curricular offering, led by both teachers and students.

### 20.2. Recommendations

20.2.1. The department should continue to review the quality and frequency of marking and feedback to students, and work with teachers to ensure greater consistency in this area.

## 21. MUSIC DEPARTMENT

### 21.1. Findings

**The work of the music department is outstanding.** It is a busy and vibrant department with a clear strategic vision that strives to develop the enjoyment of music within all students. The department has an ambition to deliver a music curriculum that nurtures all students, irrespective of their backgrounds in music.

The head of department is a passionate subject specialist who leads her collegiate team of teachers with enthusiasm. The department regularly evaluates all aspects of its curricular and co-curricular provision, leading to continuous refinement and enhancement in all aspects. There is a striking difference in ethos between the music departments of the junior school and the senior schools; securing greater alignment should be a priority for both departments so that there is a coherent philosophy across the school for the benefit of the students.

The planning of the music curriculum is very good. The ambitious programmes of study develop students' knowledge and practical skills through a series of well-connected themes. The department has identified the characteristics required for success at the end of year 11 and has planned schemes of work that develop these over the course of years 7 to 11.

**The quality of teaching in music is very good, and the quality of students' learning within the department is also very good.** Lessons have a clear focus on developing students' musicianship as well as their ability to work collaboratively and individually. Lessons consistently develop a variety of skills through challenging activities. Students state that they enjoy the subject and have developed their confidence and knowledge within their lessons.

Marking within the department is good. The department regularly sets work, which is consistently marked; however, the marking tends to be summative in nature and there was little evidence of student-teacher dialogue observed within students' work.

The co-curricular activities led by the music department are outstanding. A large range of performance-based groups allow all students to participate whilst providing opportunities for highly talented musicians. The concert level of performance within the senior school has continued to improve, and the observation of the symphony orchestra was a particular highlight of the inspection visit.

### 21.2. Recommendations

21.2.1. It is recommended that the school aligns the principles and values for music across the entire school so that there is a consistency of ethos for music within the junior and senior schools.

21.2.2. It is recommended that the head of department prioritises the development of assessment and feedback practices within the department so that students make progress through the recording of verbal feedback and responding to written feedback given.

## 22. DANCE DEPARTMENT

### 22.1. Findings

#### **The work of the dance department is outstanding.**

The department has a clear and ambitious vision underpinned by a profound commitment to the development of both expressive sophistication and scholarly depth in the way that students approach the subject.

The dance curriculum is carefully planned, engaging and innovative, from year 7 up to IB diploma level. Provision is well documented through clear schemes of work (though at IB diploma level planning documentation could be more specific to flesh out the content of the IB diploma course guide in more detail).

Lessons are purposeful and reflect the teachers' clear ambition for their students; teachers challenge students in an atmosphere of trust and respect, and their own love for the subject is in turn reflected in the enthusiasm and determination with which students engage in their dance lessons.

**The quality of teaching in the dance department is outstanding.** Lessons show a clear sense of the teachers' expertise and passion; the success of teaching is underpinned by a warmth of relations between staff and students, and between students themselves, that all teachers skilfully engender. Lessons are highly interactive in nature, and teachers provide clear instructions and use questioning skilfully to support students and guide further improvement.

As a result of the excellent teaching that they receive, **the quality of students' learning in dance is outstanding.** Students approach the subjects with a spirit of commitment, energy and enthusiasm; they are determined to give their very best, and they make excellent progress. They show application, perseverance, co-operation and initiative. Their conceptual understanding and their artistic performance are both strong, and students achieve at a high level with impressive use of physical, technical and expressive skills.

Lessons are marked by a palpable spirit of inclusivism, and in this context students are encouraged to assess their own and each other's performance and understanding in a candid and constructive way. They give feedback and advice in a respectful and supportive manner; this creates a framework within which students are able to make meaningful and tangible progress, both individually and collaboratively.

To complement the natural focus on the development of technical and expressive performance skills, students also complete workbooks for each unit of work. These workbooks have been carefully designed by teachers to deepen students' academic engagement with dance and to offer opportunities for self-evaluation and reflective writing.

The department offers an impressive variety of co-curricular activities, covering all age groups and including opportunities for students to engage with a wide range of dance styles such as jazz, ballet and contemporary dance. Within this programme, the department has also developed a spirit of student leadership - for example, through sixth form students leading a project for year 7 and 8 students as part of the preparation for the forthcoming Arts Festival.

### 22.2. Recommendations

22.2.1. The head of department should develop the IB diploma scheme of work in more detail.

22.2.2. In the coming academic year, members of the PE department will contribute to the teaching of dance in years 7 to 9; the induction and training of these new members of the team should be considered carefully, so that they are supported in a way that ensures that the current high standards of provision are consistently maintained.

## 23. COMPUTER SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

### 23.1. Findings

**The work of the computer science department is good with some outstanding features.** The head of department has a clear vision for the subject and has implemented numerous strategic developments, including the implementation of a project-based learning approach to the year 7 to 9 curriculum, whilst maintaining the broad range of co-curricular options offered to students. The gender imbalance in the department's IB diploma classes has been eroded significantly, partly due to the success of the co-curricular activities and revitalised year 10 and 11 curriculum. The department has benefitted from collaboration with the mathematics department within the newly introduced divisional meetings, which have aided strategic vision.

The computer science department's IGCSE results have continued to improve, though the IB diploma results are lower than desired. The department is seeking to deal with this through the implementation of additional preparatory projects in year 12, whilst also changing teaching to employ the Frayer model of learning to support the retention of subject knowledge, utilising material learnt within the IGCSE course. Significant efforts have been made to improve the consistency of teaching within the department and regular progress assessments have been introduced across years 10 to 13.

Curriculum planning for years 7 to 9 within computer science is very good, with a logical progression of subject-specific skills and knowledge developed through the schemes of work. The constant review of the curriculum leads to the subject evolving based on best practice and the development of new topics. The department has worked to align the approach to computer science within the junior school with that in years 7 to 9 in the senior school. However, the IGCSE schemes of work for years 10 and 11 do not currently contain the same level of detail as those of years 7 to 9 and should be improved urgently.

**The quality of teaching in computer science is good.** In the very best lessons observed, input from the teacher focused on the clear development of knowledge and understanding, whilst students actively took notes from whole-class discussion and the online materials they were using. More broadly, though, there is scope to create a more consistent balance between students working independently, input from teachers, and the utilisation of online resources; in some cases, too much reliance on self-tuition was evident, and this did not utilise the skills and expertise of the teachers to maximal effect.

**The quality of students' learning in the subject is good, with some outstanding features.** In particular, the coding written by students within lessons is of a high standard, and the projects completed are impressive. The newly developed project-based learning in years 7 to 9 is excellent, and this has enabled the students to develop a high level of technical knowledge and skills; as a result, students at this level are keen to keep studying the subject for IGCSE. Learning at IGCSE level and in the IB diploma course are not as secure, and the department's plans to introduce greater consolidation of knowledge through the use of the Frayer model of teaching and the use of more projects, should help improve learning across years 10 to 13.

The quality of marking and assessment of students' work is good. The marking of year 12 work is regular and consistent between teachers, although it is mostly summative in nature. The department has sought to address this by developing a system of formative feedback and student-teacher dialogue using Google Classroom. All teachers have trialled the use of an electronic feedback system, which is regularly monitored by the head of department. This trial has initially proved successful and the department intends to implement it across all year groups next year. This new system will be important to ensure consistency of assessment as the department develops more project-based learning.

Co-curricular enrichment within the department is outstanding. The department runs co-curricular activities including robotics and hardware technology groups every week. The students develop considerably within these activities and have performed well in national and international competitions. The introduction of a dedicated Hardware Logic Lab within the school has further supported these developments. The department has introduced several international trips including to Japan and to Silicon Valley in the USA. In addition to these enriching experiences, the department has developed a series of competitions and collaborative events such as

the relationship with Jeju university and the hosting of the FOBISIA Creative Coding Challenge for over 18 schools.

The computer science department nurtures a strong uptake of the subject for IB diploma students. A large proportion of the year 13 students intend to study computer science at university and the department works closely with the school's guidance counsellors to support applications in the best way possible. The introduction of additional projects in year 10 and year 12 has encouraged more students to select computer science as the subject of their IB diploma extended essay.

## **23.2. Recommendations**

- 23.2.1. It is recommended that the department design detailed schemes of work for the IGCSE course that reflect best practice so that there is a consistent approach to teaching across the department.
- 23.2.3. It is recommended that the department continues to develop its systems to record and monitor formative feedback and student-teacher dialogue. It will be important for the head of department to be able to monitor the consistency of the feedback quality given to the students through the project-based learning curriculum.

## 24. PHYSICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

### 24.1. Findings

**The work of the physical education (PE) department is outstanding** in all respects. The department is collegiate, hardworking and ambitious for the development of each individual student. The first teaching of the IB diploma cohort is a significant development for the department and the teachers are reflective upon their practice to improve the students' learning. The head of department regularly completes formal and informal observations and there is a strong sense of self-reflection from all teachers. The monthly professional development sessions held instead of a departmental meeting are highly valued by teachers and are key to the continued improvement of teaching within the department.

The leadership of the department is strong, and there are excellent relationships between all members of staff. The department has a shared ambition to develop sport for all and fitness for life, whilst also maintaining a programme of sports that supports the development of elite participation. This is achieved through an ethos of inclusivity within lessons, whilst maintaining an impressive range of sports that are accessible for all students and which develop the most talented individuals.

The programmes of study have been well planned and support the development of all students both physically and personally through the exposure to new experiences and sports. The collegiate nature of the teaching staff means that there is regular communication about the content of lessons and the aims of the curriculum. The schemes of work for PE in years 7 to 11 are thorough and detailed. These have been written in a way that is also accessible to all students. However, the schemes of work for the IB diploma are currently lacking in detail and could present challenges for new members of staff joining the team or for staff teaching new units. The department will need to review and develop these schemes of work in line with other academic departments.

**The quality of teaching in PE is outstanding, and the quality of students' learning within the department is also outstanding.** The behaviour management strategies exhibited in all observed lessons were very impressive. Their use ensured that all students were kept busy, challenged and fully engaged; they remained entirely on-task, and as a result of this approach they often made outstanding progress. An observed lesson on throwing the javelin, as part of the athletics rotation, established effective peer-peer coaching where students were tasked with observing and improving the technique of their classmates. This collaboration between students developed knowledge, understanding and speaking skills.

Assessment within PE is mostly through verbal feedback to students within lessons. The department also effectively utilises peer- and self-assessment to ensure that within every lesson all students make rapid progress. The department provides students with regular grades regarding their achievements within the subject. The head of department moderates the grades awarded by the department to ensure that there is consistency between teachers.

The co-curricular provision offered by the department is outstanding. The range of sports and activities offered to students is impressive. The balance between "experimental" and "developmental" provision allows all students to access sport and develop the core principles of fitness and a love of sport.

### 24.2. Recommendations

24.2.1. It is recommended that the department continues to design detailed schemes of work for the IB diploma course so that there is a clear and consistent approach to teaching and the development of scholarship.

24.2.2. It is recommended that the department continues to develop the professional development opportunities and provision within the department, utilising the expertise of teachers so that all teachers continue to develop their practice.

## 25. THE JUNIOR SCHOOL

### 25.1. Findings

25.1.1. *Implementation of strategy and overall quality of provision in the junior school*

#### 25.1.2. Findings

#### **The quality of education in the junior school is outstanding.**

The junior school leadership team work very effectively together to ensure that the ethos of an NLCS education is at the heart of the junior school. They work in collaboration with their counterparts in the senior school to ensure that an academic, aspirational and subject-rich education is the foundation for every lesson.

Leaders in the junior school have robust evaluation and strategic plans that ensure that pupils receive exceptional teaching because lessons challenge and inspire pupils. This academic focus is supported by outstanding pastoral care that provides support for individual pupils while encouraging them to take risks, be resilient and develop their leadership and confidence.

The junior school is very well managed. Leaders ensure that a robust and effective system of monitoring, appraisal and continued professional development is in place. The assistant heads, (pastoral, and teaching and learning) meet regularly with the heads of department and the phase leaders, and whole-school issues are discussed at staff meetings. As a result, communication between leaders and all staff is clear.

Leaders have planned effectively to ensure the continuity and consistency of the educational experience of all the pupils during the imminent move to a new building and the growth in the number of pupils. For example, from the start of next academic year the reception classes will be included within key stage one of the junior school to ensure that the NLCS style education is provided for the very youngest pupils from the start of their education.

### 25.2 Recommendations

25.2.1 Ensure that key stage one pupils, including reception, experience a rich and broad education aligned to the ethos of a North London Collegiate School; and that this is underpinned with essential EYFS experiences in reception.

25. *The junior school curriculum*

#### 25.1.2.1. Findings

The curriculum is based on that followed at NLCS (UK) while taking into account the culture and geographical focus of NLCS Jeju. The curriculum includes history, geography, science, mathematics and PE. It offers an exceptional and ambitious education. The assistant head (teaching and learning) and heads of department ensure that the curriculum for each subject is aspirational and knowledge-rich. All staff share the ethos of the importance of subject passion, specialism and high academic challenge to bring about academic excellence.

The curriculum is wide ranging and offers pupils the opportunity to try new subjects and develop new interests and skills through the co-curricular programme. Leaders ensure that the development plan, staff meetings, policy documents, appraisals and monitoring meetings, and the continued professional development programme, consistently promote curriculum aims. Subject specialism has been introduced very effectively in years 5 and 6. Leaders monitor the quality of the curriculum closely, including reviewing, planning and undertaking lesson observations. Currently there is no formalised process for reviewing the subject areas on a rolling programme. Art has been reviewed recently as the new head of department introduced new units of study. Leaders should consider introducing a more formalised system of review.



Leaders ensure that visits and residential trips for pupils in every year enhance the educational experience on offer to the pupils. For example, pupils have visited the lava caves in connection with a unit of study on volcanoes, and pupils in year 1 have visited a market as part of work on healthy lifestyle and money. A residential experience has been introduced for every year group in the lower school: year 3 spend a night in school, and year 4 have a night on Jeju. Year 5 spend two nights away, either on the mainland or the island, and year 6 visit London. On previous trips to London, year 6 have visited NLCS (UK); the current policy stating that optional trips cannot take time off during the school term precludes visiting NLCS (UK), and this should be reviewed.

A wide range of co-curricular clubs is on offer as part of the rich and broad curriculum in the junior school. A designated member of staff co-ordinates this programme and meets with the junior school staff when planning the programme to include clubs to promote subjects. This wider programme is very effective at developing confidence in the pupils, and enables them to broaden their experiences. As a result, a greater number of clubs that offer an academic content have been introduced this year, including the Jeju players, a drama and script writing club run by the head of English and the professional tutor. A creative writing club for key stage two now includes able writers in key stage one.

A new initiative of a series of academic lectures was introduced this year as part of the enrichment programme, and this is popular with pupils. This introduces pupils to subjects outside the curriculum and extends their knowledge. In the autumn term a visiting speaker spoke to the pupils on polymer plastics. In the spring term there were talks on Korean history.

In the run up to the end of the first term, members of the junior school staff filmed and uploaded on to a digital platform a story read in English for parents to enjoy with their child at home. This gives pupils the opportunity to listen to and develop vocabulary at home, and encourages them to make further use of the junior school library.

Leaders should consider extending links with other NLCS schools through the community of practice forums developed at the start of last year. This would enable staff from all three NLCS schools to share ideas on curriculum developments and resources.

Leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the junior school effectively and in a number of ways. A formalised programme of lesson observation includes learning walks and peer observations, which begin at the start of the academic year. By half term all staff have been observed by a member of the leadership team.

Leaders clearly articulate the expectations of an NLCS lesson, and lessons are graded on these criteria. Heads of department have greater involvement in monitoring so are more informed about what is going on in the classroom and are able to react quickly if any teacher needs guidance or support. Leaders also scrutinise pupils' books regularly. The process has been used for professional development when the whole staff consider the content and the presentation and the pupils' learning. Expectations for pupils' books are shared with staff.

Leaders ensure that the features of exemplary lessons are explicit, and expectations of an NLCS lesson are circulated for staff as a helpful reminder. There is a more rigorous programme to support teachers who do not meet these expectations: staff are given targets and opportunities to plan with others and take part in targeted lesson observations with leaders. More focused feedback is given from observations on specific subjects such as the level of challenge in lessons. The monitoring process also looks at documentation, including curriculum documents, ensuring that planning for challenge is prioritised.

#### 25.1.2.2. Recommendations

25.1.2.2.1. Introduce a rolling programme of subject reviews.

25.1.2.2.2. Review the residential trips policy, to explore whether there may be a way for the year 6 trip to London to visit NLCS (UK).

25.1.2.2.3. Extend the junior school's links with other NLCS schools through participation in communities of practice.

### 25.1.3. *The quality of teaching in the junior school*

#### 25.1.3.1. Findings

#### **The quality of teaching in the junior school is outstanding.**

The very best lessons in the junior school are well structured, ambitious and well-paced, offering pupils stretch and challenge. Staff have good subject knowledge, passion and enthusiasm. They provide resources which support the pupils' learning and extend pupils' subject specific vocabulary. Leaders share expectations of what makes an exemplary lesson at NLCS. The system of monitoring teaching and scrutinising pupils' books is rigorous. This process includes the heads of departments - the specialist teachers. Learning assistants support pupils effectively. Teachers set homework tasks appropriately to the age of the pupil, although some of the parents expressed the view that project-based homework tasks involve a considerable amount of parental input. Teachers make good use of the assessment data to inform planning.

For example, a year 5 English lesson involved work on mystery and suspense. The pupils had studied *Macbeth* in the previous unit, and moved onto work on *Skulduggery Pleasant* by Derek Landy. Pupils analysed characters and provided example, evidence, and explanation. The language used was ambitious and challenging.

In a year 6 art lesson the teacher showed the pupils new techniques to use oil pastels to create texture and shading for work on self- portraits, using subject specific vocabulary. In year 4 the pupils worked on creating a piece of description based on *Gulliver's Travels* after developing an example from *Beowulf*. The pupils were very well supported with specific vocabulary sheets in both English and Korean. Pupils in year 5 began a mathematics lesson with a ten-minute exercise using square roots and numbers to the power of zero and other high-level mathematical processes to reach a specified number. Pupils met this challenge head on because they were fully engaged and well-motivated and the teacher encouraged them with plenty of discussion.

#### 25.1.3.2. Recommendations

25.1.3.2.1. Leaders should continue to ensure that all pupils are stretched and challenged.

25.1.3.2.2. Leaders should introduce a more formalised system of curriculum review as the school expands.

25.1.3.2.3. As the school expands, the role of assistant head should have a greater academic role as well as the pastoral role.

### 25.1.4. *The quality of pupils' learning in the junior school*

#### 25.1.4.1. Findings

#### **The quality of the pupils' learning in the junior school is outstanding**

Pupils' learning is outstanding. They are engaged and eager to learn. They are keen to answer questions and contribute readily. They demonstrate curiosity and confidence to rise to the challenges their teachers set them.

For example, in a science lesson when the pupils were making their own model of the heart, pupils worked collaboratively, using the technical scientific language such as "ventricle" and "muscular".

The timetabling of both mathematics and English across the year group in upper key stage two enables teachers to target support more effectively in these subjects. The use of English writing walls in the classrooms provides reinforcement of more complex structures to help the pupils as a reference tool. In two lessons observed, teachers questioned boys more than girls.

Pupils follow the school's policy on presentation, writing the date out in full and underlining the title. Teachers' marking, on the whole, provides pupils with a target for further improvement and many teachers provide a further question or line of enquiry for the for the pupil; however this is not followed up in all exercise books.

The school has fully embraced the focus of the whole school on the policy of total English language immersion, with insistence on the use of English inside and outside the classroom. As a result, there is noticeably more use of English around the school than observed in the previous inspection. Targeted EAL intervention is provided for pupils who need additional support.

The additional educational needs (AEN) provision within the school is very well organised. The current post holder has additional SENCO qualifications. The record keeping is thorough, recording the level of support for pupils, and whether the support is one-to-one or within the classroom. There are resources available for teachers to use, which provide information on characteristics of dyslexia, dyspraxia and ADHD enabling staff to make informed judgments. The AEN and EAL coordinator meets regularly with teachers and learning assistants (LA) to plan work for the pupils on the register. Parents are kept informed of the additional help and the strategies employed with their children.

#### 25.1.4.2. Recommendations

25.1.4.2.1. Teachers should develop strategies to encourage girls to contribute and answer questions in class in a confident manner.

#### 25.1.5. *Junior school subjects*

##### 25.1.5.1. Findings

The junior school has appointed heads of department to develop subjects as part of the focus on subject specialism, which is characteristic of an NLCS education. Many of the curriculum plans have a recommended reading list or extension lists, which is a useful addition for developing teachers' subject knowledge.

##### 25.1.5.1.1. Mathematics

The provision for mathematics is strong throughout the junior school. The head of department provides support for staff both inside and outside the classroom. The Inspire mathematics scheme has been successfully embedded and is now in its second year in the school. It includes extension questions for years 5 and 6 which provide further stretch and challenge. Teachers use more practical resources to ensure that pupils have additional resources to support their learning.

##### 25.1.5.1.2. English

The head of department has introduced a new assessment enabling pupils' written work to be assessed alongside examples from over 20,000 children in the UK. The results have helped inform further development in the subject, including the need to focus on story openers and the use of tenses and irregular tense.

The head of department is introducing more classical text work and topic-based vocabulary worksheets help pupils when working on extended writing. A new programme for the teaching of spelling has also been introduced and pupils have spelling and vocabulary books in lessons, which are taught by specialists. Pupils' writing is impressive. The shared goal to improve standards in written language and to have a more focused policy of the use of spoken English in the school environment is achieving excellent results.

#### 25.1.5.1.3. Art

In art, the head of department has rewritten the curriculum planning documents, creating a subject-rich curriculum which introduces a greater range of specific skills. There is a focus on developing pupils' experience of using a range of materials. The new curriculum covers a wide range of areas including printmaking, sculpture, 3D construction and fibre. At its heart is the desire to develop the pupils as scholars of the visual arts, an appropriate NLCS ambition.

#### 25.1.5.1.4. ICT

In ICT, the head of department is focusing on integrating technology into the classroom. Gaps in staff competence and confidence are being closed. The head of department has run a circus of technological ideas for use in the classroom including Air Play (an alternative to apple TV) and Go Noddle - a brain gym challenge. E-Safety has been a focus this academic year, with blogs provided for parents to help them in this area at home. Pupil surveys shows that pupils feel safer on line.

#### 25.1.5.1.5. Science

The head of department is an enthusiastic advocate of his subject and the pupils clearly enjoy the lessons. The science facilities (two laboratories and a prep room) are excellent and enable specialist teaching of science to junior school pupils. This is a real achievement, which would be further enhanced by staffing support for the provision of practical lessons. The head of department is keen to introduce a system to provide the pupils with a Dropbox record of science topics covered in addition to the learning in evidence in their exercise books. This work will be differentiated to make it accessible to every pupil. Clearer and more challenging objectives are planned for the units of study to ensure consistency between teachers.

The inter-house science week helps to promote the subject. This project was designed to promote creativity, collaboration and cooperation and further understanding of physics, and achieved its aims magnificently. This year the pupils were thoroughly engaged in the activity of building a machine designed to carry out a very simple task using a complex mix of pulleys, levers and ramps.

#### 25.1.5.1.6. History and geography

The new head of department has revamped the curriculum to include units of study more focused on local geography and the history of the local area. For example, in year 2 the case study has changed from being a Scottish island to focusing on Jeju. In year 1, instead of studying castles, the pupils are investigating buildings built for defence, including Jeju fire stacks built in 1909. In history, a new unit has been introduced to look at the changes in the decades from 1960s to present day. The projects year 6 have produced in response to this showed how engaged the pupils were in this task.

#### 25.1.5.1.7. Physical Education

The head of department has a clear vision to increase the number of sporting opportunities and to make the subject more accessible to all. Foot-golf, ultimate frisbee, water polo and Tchouk-ball have been introduced. These new sports have been very successful. They offer new, less familiar sports to pupils, and the department has found it has achieved the aim of being more accessible to a greater range of pupils. Competitive swimming awards have been reviewed, as the head of department felt the system was causing pupils too much anxiety. There is now less emphasis on achieving level grades. There has been a big increase in the number of matches and competitions that all pupils have enjoyed, and greater numbers have been involved.

The building of the Astroturf and the athletic pitch has enabled NLCS junior school to invite other schools to take part in matches including a school from Seoul. The junior school has taken U10 and U11 teams to Seoul in March, and two girls' teams went to Seoul in November for football matches. During the inspection week, ten girls are going to China for a netball competition. This year the school has had tremendous success in the Federation of British schools in Asia (FOBSIA) games, winning the tournament with five gold, one silver and three bronze medals. This achievement of all 40 pupils who took part was celebrated in an assembly during the inspection week.

#### 25.1.5.1.8. Personal, social and health education (PSHE)

The PSHE programme is well planned and well resourced. Pupils in key stage one and lower key stage two have a lesson a week. In years 5 and 6 pupils have a PSHE half day once a half term. Boys and girls in years 5 and 6 are taught sex and relationships education separately, in line with the Korean guidelines.

#### 25.1.5.1.9. Music

The head of department has two orchestras and an ensemble group in the junior school. Most of the pupils who learn music have lessons outside school. Those who have music in school miss lessons on a rolling programme. The pupils perform in the harvest concert, nativity concert and spring and summer concerts. However there is opportunity to further develop choirs across the key phases, in addition to the chamber choir that is auditioned. This would allow more pupils to participate and experience the joy of belonging to a large choir; to have the opportunity to enter inter-school competitions; and to develop confidence in performing in front of an audience. This would also be an opportunity to promote music more widely around the junior school.

#### 25.1.5.2. Recommendations

25.1.5.2.1. Consider enhancing staffing support for science practical lessons, for example through the provision of a science technician.

25.1.5.2.2. The school should identify more opportunities for establishing choirs across the lower school to raise the profile of music in the junior school.

#### 25.1.6. *The junior school environment*

##### 25.1.6.1. Findings

As part of the drive for a challenging and ambitious education, with excellent facilities, the lower school (years 3 to 6) is moving into a new building in August. Pupils in key stage one (reception to year 2) will remain in the existing building, which would benefit from some updating and refurbishment to match the facilities of the new building. Leaders should consider providing more bicycle and scooter racks in the new building, as the number of scooters and bikes has grown and could cause an obstruction.

##### 25.1.6.2. Recommendations

25.1.6.2.1. Review the existing facilities that will be retained for key stage one so that they are in line with the quality of the environment for key stage two pupils.

25.1.6.2.2. Carefully monitor the impact of bicycle and scooter use and whether additional racks are needed when the new building opens.

#### 25.1.7. *The junior school library*

##### 25.1.7.1. Findings

A new librarian was appointed in February. The library is now open during lunchtime and the pupils are all timetabled to have a lesson a week in the library with the librarian and their form teacher. The librarian has made the library more welcoming for pupils to enjoy selecting books. The year 6 pupils are selected as library ambassadors. There is scope for this role to be expanded. The pupils could be given a short training course to develop their skills and formalise the role as a leadership opportunity. In addition, a programme of library and research skills could be introduced to help develop the independent research skills of the pupils. The librarian

could establish closer links with the junior school librarians at the other NLCS schools, for example as part of the community of practice framework.

#### 25.1.7.2. Recommendations

25.1.7.2.1. Establish links with junior school librarians at the other NLCS schools.

#### 25.1.8. *Assessment and reporting in the junior school*

##### 25.1.8.1. Findings

Leaders are working to ensure that all assessments, both summative and formative, are thorough and rigorous and have a strong impact on the pupils' achievements. To this end the school has recently introduced InCas assessments, which will provide the staff with assessment data as well as data about pupils' attitudes to school. Leaders and heads of department ensure that this data is analysed, a report is compiled by the head of department noting any trend with suggestions of strategies to adopt for further consolidation work with those in need and extension work for those who need a challenge. This information is directly used to inform planning so that the educational experience of the pupil is improved.

Parents are happy with the reporting system, and receive two formal reports a year. Teachers give grades for both attainment and effort. Parents can also meet the teacher at a curriculum evening in September and at a three-way reporting conference in the spring, which includes their child. Parents feel their child's teacher knows the child well.

In many cases teachers, when marking the pupils' books, provide guidance on the next step and pose a question requiring a response from the pupil. However, these questions are not always answered. Leaders should investigate how to introduce a more consistent response to this issue.

##### 25.1.8.2. Recommendations

25.1.8.2.1. Ensure pupils respond to guidance from teachers on how to improve their work.

#### 25.1.9. *Induction and professional development in the junior school*

##### 25.1.9.1. Findings

The staff handbook makes clear the high expectations of the school and refers to the "busy" culture that is at the foundation of all an NLCS school provides. Inspirational teaching remains at the core of this approach. This aim is articulated very effectively by the leaders. This culture provides the opportunity for pupils to be challenged, to be exposed to a wide diversity of experiences, and is underpinned by a caring and supportive pastoral system.

Staff professional development underpins this statement and the appointment of the new professional tutor and the introduction of the Seesaw platform have enabled the sharing of articles related to teaching and subject development. There is a new area in the staff room to facilitate professional discussion and encourage wider professional reading, which has given staff further opportunity to read widely about educational matters. Articles of interest are actively and frequently shared on a "pop-up" continual professional development section of the digital platform Seesaw for use by staff.

### 25.1.9.2. Recommendations

25.1.9.2.1 (There are no recommendations concerning induction and professional development in the junior school.)

### 25.1.10. *Pastoral care in the junior school*

#### 25.1.10.1. Findings

The pastoral care in the junior school is outstanding. The staff know their pupils very well and the pupils know who to go to if they have a problem. There is a robust system of record keeping, a new behaviour policy and a new system for rewards and sanctions for the year 6 pupils. These have helped ensure that the oldest pupils remain well behaved and conform to junior school expectations. The creation of phase leaders at key stage one, lower key stage two and upper key stage two has ensured further pastoral support for the pupils. As the school expands and the phase leaders' role becomes that of an assistant head, this role could include a more academic role as well as providing for pastoral leadership.

This year the school has developed its approach to managing poor behaviour with more of a focus on restorative justice, rather than sanctions such as withdrawal from the class. Any bullying is dealt with quickly and effectively.

One of the key changes this year is the focus on the use of English in school and the language letter that goes home to parents asking for a meeting if the pupil has not followed this approach. At this meeting strategies will be discussed to help the child improve their language development.

The opportunities for pupil leadership have increased. Year 2 pupils now have representatives on the school council meeting. The role of pupil ambassadors has been created to promote the pupil's interests, such as the eco-ambassadors.

The house system goes from strength to strength as part of the continuing drive to promote the sense of community. Competitions this year have enabled pupils of all ages to mix and develop a real sense of collaborative community. These events include a house tug of war and poetry competitions. Pupils are rewarded for individual achievement and these individual plus points (the rewards system) can lead to the reward of a house ball, motivating the community most effectively and on display very prominently in the entrance to the upper key stage two entrance.

The new year 5 and 6 tutor system has been very popular with both parents and pupils, as both groups feel the smaller tutor numbers mean their tutor knows them well. Tutor briefings take place every Friday with tutors and all subject specialists.

Class notes on the shared teacher drive provide easily accessible information on pupils to ensure all staff are up to date with any concerns. Behaviour packs which record each class's behaviour, and which move with the class, has improved year 6 behaviour in lessons. There has been a successful drive to include work celebrating diversity and promote inclusivity this year. For example, in March the school celebrated the Korean independence movement with the Korean-speaking staff leading the house assembly. An event based on the lunar new year created an opportunity to experience traditional activities and games led by the Mandarin and Korean departments.

Leaders have developed a very effective system to ensure the smooth transitions between year 4 to year 5 and year 6 to year 7 with the introduction of tutors and subject specialists. Year 6 pupils go to the senior school to enjoy lessons run by a member of staff who will be teaching the year 7 pupils in the next academic year. Subject specialists are timetabled to teach year 4 pupils during the summer term so that the transition to more specialist teaching will be a familiar concept for pupils.

Leaders ensure that a counselling service is available to pupils. Leaders should consider how to develop this service to best meet the needs of junior school pupils.

#### 25.1.10.2. Recommendations

25.1.10.2.1. Ensure that the counselling service is available to all pupils in the junior school.

#### 25.1.11. *Links with parents and the community in the junior school*

##### 25.1.11.1. Findings

Much has been done to develop links with the junior school parents. A new digital platform called Seesaw has been introduced this year. Staff are able to take a photograph of a pupil performing in an assembly or during a presentation of a cup or award and send it directly to the particular parent's phone. The parents are delighted with this initiative. Leaders are more visible, all attending the "coffee and chat" meetings and the team is outside every morning to meet and greet the pupils. Parents' views are sought regularly and there has been very constructive work with the parent representative group (PRG) this year.

Leaders involve parents in important aspects of the curriculum as appropriate. For example, there has been a talk on sex and relationships with the year 6 parents this year, ahead of the work on this area with the pupils. 80% of the year 6 group parents attended. The programme of "Mamma and Papa" talks, on issues about raising children, which was offered in previous years, has not been operating this year. This was a very successful initiative last year and the school should consider whether it can be run again next academic year.

The junior school has well established links with the local community. They run a stall at a local village festival and raise money for charity. A food collection was organised at the start of the year as part of the harvest festival. This involved one of the year 6 pupils making phone contact, under the supervision of a member of staff, to facilitate the collection of the food, so this link also provided an excellent opportunity for leadership training.

##### 25.1.11.2. Recommendations

25.1.11.2.1. Consider reintroducing "Mamma and Papa" talks.

#### 25.1.12. *Quality of provision in the early years*

##### 25.1.12.1. Findings

Early years provision is well planned, with clear stages of expected progress for children in key areas of learning. Adults know the children very well and prioritise children's physical and emotional development and reading skills. Leaders track children's progress closely and have carefully designed programmes to promote phonics and early reading. However, the use of the outside learning space is not sufficiently developed to enable children to continue their learning in the outdoor environment.

##### 25.1.12.2. Recommendations

25.1.12.2.1. Develop the outside learning area so that children have the opportunity to play and learn while out of doors.

## 25.2. Summary of recommendations

The following recommendations have been made in the body of section 25.1 of this report:

25.2.1. Ensure that key stage one pupils, including reception, experience a rich and broad education aligned to the ethos of a North London Collegiate School; and that this is underpinned with essential EYFS experiences in reception.



- 25.2.2. Introduce a rolling programme of subject reviews.
- 25.2.3. Review the residential trips policy, to explore whether there may be a way for the year 6 trip to London to visit NLCS (UK).
- 25.2.4. Extend the junior school's links with other NLCS schools through participation in communities of practice.
- 25.2.5. Leaders should continue to ensure that all pupils are stretched and challenged.
- 25.2.6. Leaders should introduce a more formalised system of curriculum review as the school expands.
- 25.2.7. As the school expands, the role of assistant head should have a greater academic role as well as the pastoral role.
- 25.2.8. Teachers should develop strategies to encourage girls to contribute and answer questions in class in a confident manner.
- 25.2.9. Consider enhancing staffing support for science practical lessons, for example through the provision of a science technician.
- 25.2.10. The school should identify more opportunities for establishing choirs across the lower school to raise the profile of music in the junior school.
- 25.2.11. Review the existing facilities that will be retained for key stage one so that they are in line with the quality of the environment for key stage two pupils.
- 25.2.12. Carefully monitor the impact of bicycle and scooter use and whether additional racks are needed when the new building opens.
- 25.2.13. Establish links with junior school librarians at the other NLCS schools.
- 25.2.14. Ensure pupils respond to guidance from teachers on how to improve their work.
- 25.2.15. Ensure that the counselling service is available to all pupils in the junior school.
- 25.2.16. Consider reintroducing "Mamma and Papa" talks.
- 25.2.17. Develop the outside learning area so that children have the opportunity to play and learn while out of doors.