

## Hastings School

Ronda de Sobradíel, 31/33, 28043 Madrid  
Calle Lorenzo Solano Tendero, 11, 28043 Madrid  
Calle Manuel Marañón, 8, 28043 Madrid

**School's regional authorisation number:** 28007462

**Date of Inspection:**  
24<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**Inspection Team:**  
Andrew Beavon (Lead Inspector)  
Rachel Rosa (Team Inspector)

**Reason for the Inspection:**  
to consider authorisation for 1200 students from Pre-Nursery to Year 13.

**Overall Recommendation:**  
The school is recommended for authorisation from Pre-Nursery to Year 13 for a period of four years for 1200 students.

The next inspection is due in May 2025.

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## History and Context of the School

Hastings School is a private co-educational school in the centre of Madrid. The school has been in operation since 1971. It was acquired by the Cognita Educational Group in 2010.

The school is based on six sites in the Chamartín and Arturo Soria areas of the city. This inspection covers the three sites around Arturo Soria only as the Chamartín sites were inspected separately in 2018 and authorised until December 2022.

The current roll is 760 students, aged from 3 years to 18 years. The vast majority of students (almost 80%) are Spanish, although many of these students have dual nationality.

The Arturo Soria school sites were inspected in April 2017 and received authorisation for all year groups from Nursery to Year 13. The purpose of this inspection is to consider authorisation from Pre-Nursery to Year 13.

## Accommodation and Resources

The Sobradriel site currently houses Nursery to Year 2 students. A new building will expand this site to accommodate a Pre-Nursery class and Year 3 to Year 6 students from September 2021. Students from Year 3 to Year 9 are currently based at the Lorenzo Solano Tendero (LST) site. The Manuel Marañón (MM8) site provides accommodation for Year 10 to Year 13 students.

The school buildings provide a good standard of accommodation for all students. All classrooms are fit for purpose, suitably furnished and adequately resourced, with interactive boards and/or projectors in every room. These are used effectively to support teaching and learning.

Across the sites, there are specialised rooms for science, art and photography, music and drama all of which are adequately resourced to meet the needs of the curriculum. There are appropriate reading and library facilities for all students. In the MM8 building there is a sixth form common room area with a café and a room for quiet, independent study.

Starting this school year, primary students (from Year 3 upwards) have their own tablet computer, while secondary students are given their own laptop. In all classes, students use them effectively to support and develop learning.

There are playgrounds and sports facilities on the Sobradriel and LST sites. Additional equipment for climbing and physical development in the Early Years Foundation Stage will be installed as part of the building works currently in progress on the Sobradriel site. The MM8 building has an outside seating and relaxation area. Students travel to local sports facilities offsite for physical education classes.

There are dining rooms on all three sites with meals provided by an outside catering service. Students commented that the quality of school meals has improved recently. Following suggestions from the student council, new initiatives such as a vegetarian day have been introduced.

Toilet facilities for staff and students are suitable for a school of this size. Administration and management offices are located across the school sites, as are staff rooms and work areas for teachers.

## **Health, Safety and Welfare**

All three sites are secure and access to each is controlled. The school provides a safe environment for staff and students. Suitable provision has been made to allow for restrictions that have been applied due to COVID.

Appropriate policies cover health and safety, anti-bullying, child protection and safeguarding.

Students comment that the relationships with staff are a strength of the school and that they know who to speak to if they have a concern. Staff are approachable, supportive and deal appropriately with issues raised by students.

Fire and evacuation procedures are displayed around the school and in the classrooms. Evacuation drills take place each term. A school nurse works across the sites, and many staff are also first aid trained. The first aid policy details the procedure for recording accidents or illnesses. There is a learning support team and designated staff take responsibility for the pastoral care of the students.

Appropriate checks are carried out to ensure the safe recruitment of all adults who work in the school.

## **The Curriculum**

The curriculum is broad and balanced and clearly based on the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and the English National Curriculum up to Year 13. There are plans in place to introduce the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme in Years 12 and 13 from 2022. Students will then choose between the A level and IB programmes of study.

Appropriate time is allocated to the teaching of subjects enabling students to learn and make progress. Suitable weight is given to both English subjects and Spanish. The principal language of instruction is English and the school promotes and monitors the use of English in class.

Planning is detailed and consistent across the school. It is supported by clear schemes of work. Differentiated tasks are included in planning, and students were confident in selecting the level of challenge most appropriate for them during lessons.

Students with the additional needs are identified and supported. The learning support department is well-organised and works with teachers to help targeted students inside or outside the classroom. The learning support department also coordinates the roles of external specialist therapists in supporting students in school.

Students are offered an extensive range of option choices at Key Stage 4, in addition to five compulsory GCSE subjects. A good range of subjects is offered in Year 12 and Year 13 and all students study a minimum of three A levels from four blocks of options.

The school offers an extended project qualification for students wishing to develop their research and investigation skills. Students can also take classes for an English proficiency qualification. Additional Spanish subjects are timetabled so students can gain the qualifications they require to access the Spanish university system.

Career and university guidance is comprehensive. Sixth form students are supported in their choices by a dedicated university counsellor. The school participates in an online university fair along with other schools in the same group and has organised an extensive programme of university and careers talks for students and parents. At the end of Year 12, students participate in a three-day university applications course which current Year 13 students commented was well-organised and informative.

Educational visits are organised throughout the year and usually linked to the curriculum. These include a range of subject-specific trips for secondary students, along with an annual ski trip, although many of these activities have been put on hold this year due to COVID.

## Staffing

Staff are suitably qualified and experienced to deliver the EYFS and National Curricula. Teachers are effectively deployed in their areas of specialism.

Staff recruitment and retention are well managed. The majority of staff have worked at the school for several years which has ensured continuity. A number of staff have been at the school for over 20 years.

Staff demonstrate good subject knowledge and up-to-date practice in teaching. This is supported by an extensive programme of in-service training throughout the year delivered by staff and external providers. Recent training has included developing speaking skills in the primary school, the impact of which was evident in the classroom, and preparation for the introduction of the IB programme. The school works closely with others in the same group to keep abreast of current UK practice.

There are good staff-to-student ratios in all classes, with a maximum of 24 students per class, although many classes are smaller. Classes in the EYFS

and Key Stage 1 have both teachers and assistants. Additional support staff work with targeted students in the rest of the school as required.

Staff meetings are held weekly. These provide opportunities for staff to contribute directly to school development and to share their practice, for example, on the efficient management of the introduction of personal tablet computers and laptops for students. Teachers are positive about the school and enthusiastic about their work.

## Teaching and Learning

The standard of teaching ranges from good to outstanding. Overall, it is very good.

In the EYFS, topic-based activities are well-planned and there are good opportunities for productive play and learning both inside and outside the classroom. Lessons are stimulating and engaging, and teachers and assistants work well together. Staff are skilled in identifying and addressing misconceptions, as was clear in a Reception phonics lesson where the teacher patiently modelled the correct pronunciation of a letter sound that one student was struggling with.

Across the school, lessons are well-paced and structured, and have clear learning objectives. Teachers make clear links to previous learning. They vary and change activities to maintain student engagement and encourage participation. For example, in a primary English class, when the teacher realised that some of the students did not fully understand how to structure a persuasive letter, he adapted the lesson to allow further group discussion. This enabled students to have a clearer focus once they started to write their letters.

Students talk fluently about what they are doing and what they are learning, and make good progress. Spoken English is insisted upon and the quality of written English is good. The school has worked with teachers on how to develop students' speaking skills and this was evident in the level of confidence with which students were able to discuss their learning.

The teacher-student relationships are very positive and contribute to a purposeful and inclusive learning environment. Students are focused and attentive. They have enough confidence to suggest a response or answer without the fear of making mistakes. The use of targeted questions by teachers encourages learners to take risks productively. For example, in a secondary geography lesson the teacher skillfully managed a discussion about climate change by asking questions that encouraged students to be more analytical and evaluative, leading to a deeper understanding of the topic.

Across all three sites, there are a number of attractive, stimulating displays celebrating students' work in classrooms and corridors.

## Assessment

The school's systems for assessment are comprehensive. This is a strength of the school. Student progress is tracked and monitored by teachers and the leadership team. They use this data to inform planning and, where required, to determine support and intervention.

In addition to internal assessments, students regularly complete external tests to provide additional data about their ability and potential. These are used to create aspirational targets and to benchmark progress across the school.

Marking, written and verbal feedback are consistent across the school and this successfully drives improvement in attainment. Students are given time in class to respond to feedback and revise their work.

In the EYFS and the primary school, parents receive one report and attend a parents' evening each term. In the secondary school, parents receive four reports and attend two parents' evenings during the year.

The results from external examinations indicate that student achievement is in line with expectations. Levels of attainment have improved since the previous inspection.

## Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is prioritised by the school. A well-planned approach to personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education throughout the school helps students leave well prepared for adult life. This includes a tracking and intervention programme for students' well-being and mental health in the secondary school. School assemblies take place regularly and support the teaching of PSHE, as well as celebrating student achievement.

Students and staff have been involved in a whole school project which has included looking at the attributes of successful learners. The focus on developing good learner habits has had an impact on both the academic success and the personal development of students.

Both inside and outside the classroom, behaviour is very good. Students are well-mannered, positive and motivated. They enjoy coming to school. The members of the student council feel that they are listened to and able to affect change in the school as happened this year with recommendation to introduce 'worry boxes' into secondary classrooms. They commented that although the school has expanded rapidly, it still feels like a family.

## Leadership and Management

Since the previous full inspection, the school's leadership team has undergone a number of changes. The Principal and Head of Secondary have joined the school in the last three years. Despite these changes, the leadership team has

an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and its future direction. The leadership team has been further strengthened over the last 12 months by the appointment of a number of new middle managers. The leadership team has been successful in sharing its vision with the rest of the teaching staff. As a result, staff have supported and championed new initiatives such as the successful learners approach and the introduction of the IB Diploma programme in Years 12 and 13 and helped to embed them across the school.

There are weekly senior leadership meetings to discuss and plan the school's priorities and review progress. School development planning is thorough, and there is an extensive school self-review process to evaluate this.

Performance management systems are rigorous and encourage a professional dialogue between the leadership team and staff. As part of this process, the quality of teaching and learning is monitored frequently and systematically. This includes peer observations as well as observations by members of the leadership team. The performance management process has played an effective part in maintaining the very good standard of teaching since the previous inspection.

### **Response to the previous inspection reports**

The school has successfully addressed the recommendation from the previous inspection report by maintaining and building on the high standards of achievement and quality of teaching.

### **Recommendations**

The school should:

- maintain the very good standards already achieved in teaching, learning and assessment, and in the students' behaviour and attitudes to learning.