

St Andrews School, Samakee

ISQM Accreditation Report

13-15 May 2015

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1. Introduction

1.1 CfBT accreditation

The purpose of accreditation is to bring about school improvement. Although accredited status is often perceived as an end in itself, the process is underpinned by the principle that the school self-evaluation activities in which schools engage, are of equal importance. In this sense, accreditation serves two goals:

- to provide a means by which parents and students are assured that the school has been judged by independent evaluators to meet rigorous quality standards
- to support the school's development through moderation of its own self-evaluation.

The school improvement plan is crucial in ensuring on-going development. The accreditation provides recommendations for the school, which should be incorporated into the school improvement plan.

Principles underpinning the CfBT accreditation model

- Accreditation criteria are rooted in high standards; they relate to international standards and benchmarks, and to other inspection regimes (for example, Ofsted (England) and, in the case of Thailand, ONESQA from the Thai ministry)
- It is a cost effective means of providing quality assurance
- The model is developmental – it is grounded in self-evaluation with the school providing an evaluation of its own performance.

Grades awarded

Judgements are made on a four-point scale as:

Grade 1: Outstanding

Grade 2: Good

Grade 3: Satisfactory

Grade 4: Unsatisfactory

Accreditation status

Gold accredited status is awarded when the school is given Grade 1 meaning **Outstanding judgements in all** of the following sections:

Standards and achievement

Teaching and learning

Leadership and management

Silver accredited status is awarded when the school is given at least Grade 2 or higher meaning **Good judgements or higher in all** of the following sections:

Standards and achievement

Teaching and learning

Leadership and management

Bronze accredited status is awarded when the school is given at least Grade 3 or higher meaning **Satisfactory judgements or higher in all** of the following sections:

Standards and achievement

Teaching and learning

Leadership and management

Introduction

This ISQM verification inspection was carried out by a team of three CfBT Education Trust inspectors. It was a 'light touch' re-accreditation for this school.

CfBT accreditation requirements for 'light touch' inspections are set out below:

'Schools with a Silver or Gold level rating deemed to be good or better, which are not anticipating any change of rating may request a 'light touch' interim accreditation visit after three years. This would involve a smaller team visit and would be followed by a full accreditation visit six years after the original visit. A 'light touch' accreditation visit will be used to verify that standards have been maintained, but it will not support movement to the next level. Where concerns are raised by the 'light touch' interim team that the accreditation level may have fallen, the school will be required to undergo a full accreditation visit within one year. A full visit for all schools would be expected every six years as part of the full accreditation cycle.'

Concurrently, the inspection team inspected the school against the British Schools Overseas (BSO) Inspection Framework. The inspection team used the same evidence base for reaching the judgements to be found in both reports.

Colleague inspectors from Sor Mor Sor will visit the school at a later date and will report separately on the school's provision for Thai language and culture.

Evidence base

In total, inspectors visited 36 lessons. They held 18 meetings including those with the headteacher and other school leaders, staff, parents and carers and talked with representative groups of students. Inspectors also observed the school's work and looked at its self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and students' work. Inspectors examined the results of questionnaire surveys returned by parents and carers and followed up on issues that were raised.

Team Members

Lead Inspector: Mike Hewlett
Team Inspector: Pauline Barker
Team Inspector: Steve Howland

2. School context

St Andrews Samakee International School was opened in January 2000 by the present Head of School and is an independent, privately owned, co-educational school. It is situated approximately 20 kilometres north of the centre of Bangkok and is housed in purpose-built accommodation. This has been imaginatively improved and is currently being extended further. The school is smaller than schools of a similar type. The school caters for students from ages one to 12. There are currently 231 students on roll from 26 different nationalities. There are seven classes for younger students (known as the first school). This includes children in the early years and in Year 1. Students enter the middle school from the age of six where they remain until age 11, before moving onto the newly opened upper school which currently consists of Year 7. The school plans to extend its age range up to Year 9. Students will then transfer to other local international schools.

From ages six to 12, there are six classes. There are slightly smaller student numbers in the classes for older students than for younger ones. Students follow a

curriculum based on the English Early Years Foundation Stage for children up to five years and the English National Curriculum for students from five to 12. These are modified to fit the needs of students in an international school in Thailand. The curriculum includes lessons in the Thai language and culture. The large majority of students speak English as an additional language (around 70%). A smaller proportion, around 19%, is identified as having special educational needs.

The school has a very well established reputation within the local education community and this was recognised by Chulalongkorn University when it invited Samakee to be the first International School to become a centre for its teacher-training programme. The school also hosts many visitors from Thai and International Schools, who come to observe examples of good practice and the innovative features of its teaching approaches.

Report summary

Accreditation status

St Andrews International School, Samakee, is recognised as having met the required standards for accreditation.

The school has been awarded the CfBT Education Trust International School Quality Mark at **Gold level** which reflects the Outstanding judgements described within this report.

This accreditation is valid from May 15 2015 to May 14 2018.

Evaluation

How well has the school addressed the recommendations made by the accreditation team that visited the school previously, in May 2012?

Recommendation 1

- Ensure that the excellent marking of students' work and high quality feedback that is seen in most classes is applied to all.

Marking

- Good progress has been made in addressing this key issue. Marking is much more consistent in different year groups and between classes.
- Marking is regular and, in most cases, students know how well they have done and what they need to improve still further.
- Evidence is found in many books that pupils are given the chance to respond to marking.

- Marking in English is particularly strong.
- Peer and self-assessment are growing features of the school and found in many classes.
- Evaluative comments and feedback given during and after physical education (PE) lessons, celebrate achievement and lead to improved performance.
- There is good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to provide feedback and encouragement to students. This is a very well developed aspect of the school's provision.

Area(s) for further improvement

- There is a need for greater consistency in marking across all subjects and year groups, especially as the school expands.
- School leaders need to check that improvements suggested in the marking are followed up by students.

Recommendation 2

- Improve the leadership and management of the school still further by introducing core subject coordinators who will lead the provision in their areas and support other leaders in monitoring students' work and their progress.

Leadership by core subject coordinators

- Appointments have been made and have been successful in many of the subject areas.
- Appointment of an ICT coordinator and his leading role in developing the subject has had a major impact on the computing curriculum.
- The PE coordinator has made a positive impact on the subject, setting high expectations and aspirations which have contributed to the rate of improvement in this subject.

Area(s) for further improvement

- Leadership is not embedded in all subjects and it is too soon to measure its impact in a minority of areas, including science and mathematics.

Overview of main strengths and areas for development

Report highlights

- St Andrews International School, Samakee, is an outstanding school. It provides an excellent education in an innovative and exciting way.
- Students make outstanding academic progress and their levels of attainment are high.
- Their personal development is strong. Students are well prepared to become independent, lifelong learners.
- Teaching and the quality of students' learning are outstanding. Teachers make excellent use of the rich and varied curriculum to engage students' interests.
- The school's accommodation and resources are of a high standard and very well maintained. Plans for accommodation improvements will enable the school to cater very well for the growing student numbers.
- The school has excellent arrangements to care for, and support, its students who feel that they are safe in school and that they receive good guidance.
- Parents are very positive about the school. They value what the school does for their children and are well informed about their children's learning and school life.
- Excellent leadership from the headteacher, well supported by her leadership team, provides the inspiration for the school's continuing success.

Recommended areas for development

- Increase even further the frequency of outstanding teaching by eliminating the minor inconsistencies found in a few parts of the school.
- Improve the impact and influence of subject leaders to match the very best practice found in the school.

Standard 1: The standards reached by students in their work and the progress they make in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT

Highlights and recommendations

- Children in the early years get off to an excellent start. Almost all arrive at school with few skills in English but make rapid progress in all the areas of learning.
- By the time children leave Reception class, almost all children are working at or are exceeding age-related expectations.
- Similar rates of progress are made in subjects across the school from Year 1 to Year 7.
- Standards in English are mostly well above UK benchmarks and students make outstanding progress.
- Particular strengths lie in the gains students make in their writing and the high quality work they produce.

- Standards in mathematics are outstanding. Students perform at least in line with, and often above, UK national averages.
- There is a rising trend of progress in mathematics. Students are very successful at using and applying their mathematical knowledge in other subjects.
- Students make good progress over time in acquiring scientific knowledge and understanding. They achieve standards that are at least in line with, and often above, those expected for their age.
- Students are especially successful at making observations and linking what they see to what they already know and understand.
- The standards of attainment reached by students in ICT are high in every key stage because they make consistently outstanding progress.
- Students in Years 5, 6 and 7 are studying the new computing curriculum and have already reached the expected levels of attainment for their ages. This is because they are making good, and sometimes outstanding, progress.
- Samakee is a fully inclusive school. Disabled students, those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make excellent progress, often from well below average starting points.

Standard 2: Students' personal development

Highlights and recommendations

- Students' personal development throughout the school is outstanding.
- The school delivers its promise to enable students to become 'confident, independent, lifelong learners'. Consequently, students develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence exceptionally well.
- The school's outstanding ethos, based upon its seven key values, permeates every aspect of school life. This results in students with strong moral codes, a keen sense of right and wrong and a healthy respect for the law. Consequently, their behaviour in lessons and around school is outstanding.
- Students have excellent attitudes towards school and learning, which contribute significantly to their exceptionally good and outstanding academic progress.
- The contribution that students make to the quality of each other's lives is excellent. They enjoy helping people less fortunate than themselves and caring for their environment.
- Students are respectful of each other's different backgrounds and see cultural diversity as a strength.
- The school develops students' knowledge of public institutions and services in Thailand and the UK exceptionally well.
- The attendance of students is high and their punctuality to school and lessons is excellent because they enjoy their lessons and activities so much.

Standard 3: Teaching and learning

Highlights and recommendations

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding overall.
- Relationships are outstanding at all levels and contribute to students' excellent learning.
- Learning assistants and support staff are highly qualified and skilled and contribute significantly to students' learning.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge.
- Resources are used effectively to motivate and engage students and to support teaching and learning.
- When needed, the management of students' behaviour is skilful and employed consistently across the school.
- Teachers use a wide range of carefully selected teaching strategies to develop students' learning skills.
- Outstanding teaching is the norm but not seen everywhere in the school. Minor inconsistencies need to be eliminated.
- In a few instances, teachers do not check to ensure that students act on requests they make through their marking.

Standard 4: The curriculum

Highlights and recommendations

- The school's curriculum is outstanding.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and engaging and provides meaningful experiences that meet the interests, aptitudes and needs of students extremely well. This ensures they all have an equal opportunity to participate and make progress in their learning.
- The school fully satisfies the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum for England. The curriculum is up to date and has been appropriately adapted to take advantage of the school's location in Thailand.
- The curriculum provides exceptionally well for disabled students and those who have special educational needs. Consequently, they make similar rates of progress to all other students.
- The school's provision for personal, social and health education is exemplary and promotes students' outstanding personal development.
- The school guides and prepares students exceptionally well for their next stages of education.

- The extensive range of after-school activities, trips and special events enriches the curriculum considerably and contributes significantly to students' outstanding academic and personal development.

Standard 5: The quality and quantity of the school's accommodation and resources

Highlights and recommendations

- The accommodation is of high quality, is used very well and has improved overtime. Further buildings are opening soon to provide for the growing student numbers.
- The school is staffed outstandingly well by an experienced academic and support staff. Regular staff development keeps them abreast of professional and curriculum developments.
- There are outstanding levels of resourcing from which staff draw to enable students to make outstanding progress.

Standard 6: How well the school cares for and supports its students

Highlights and recommendations

- This is a highly inclusive school with an exceptionally caring and nurturing ethos.
- Students are central to all that the school does; every student is known well, enabling the school to carefully and successfully meet individual needs.
- All aspects of students' welfare, health and safety are key priorities for the school.
- Leaders ensure the induction procedures for students joining the school are excellent, leading to a smooth settling-in period. This establishes a platform for the exceptional care students experience throughout their time at the school.

Standard 7: The school's partnership with parents and the community

Highlights and recommendations

- The vast majority of parents are highly supportive of the school.
- The school's understanding of the vital role that a partnership between home and school, parents and staff has in supporting students' learning.
- Parents receive regular, high quality information about their children's academic and personal progress.
- Regular and effective communication systems keep parents informed and up to date about school matters.
- Parents' views are regularly sought and acted upon.
- Links with external agencies are particularly strong, supporting students with additional needs.

- Student admissions and induction procedures are sensitive, extremely thorough and flexible to meet individual needs.

Standard 8: Leadership and management

Highlights and recommendations

- The exceptional leadership of the headteacher is pivotal to the success of the school. She is well supported by an excellent leadership team. The Board of Governors has a clear, shared vision for the school and provides determined leadership.
- The school's direction is made crystal clear to all staff and self-evaluation is accurate.
- Effective systems ensure that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.
- Performance management systems give the school an accurate picture of teaching quality as well as providing high quality support and professional development for all staff.
- There is a strong commitment to the inclusion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs, coupled with the expectation that all students will achieve as well as they should.
- Assessment and student tracking are much improved, resulting in any potential underachievement being picked up early.
- Many subject leaders are newly appointed so it is too soon to evaluate the impact that they have made.



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