



**COBIS** | Council of British  
International Schools

# Accreditation and Compliance Report



**School:** Wellington College International, Pune

## **Lead Improvement Partner:**

**Clive Agent, Deputy Head: Curriculum,  
Dubai College**

The findings and next steps of this report reflect the work of the Lead Improvement Partner.

The Compliance visit took place between  
2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

This was an on-site visit.

Students on role: 152.

Compliance is valid for 5 years.

The next Compliance check is due in December 2029.

# Contents

## COBIS COMPLIANCE REPORT

1.0 SAFEGUARDING AND SAFER RECRUITMENT	4
2.0 STUDENT WELFARE	8
3.0 FACILITIES	15
4.0 GOVERNANCE	20
5.0 ETHOS AND VALUES	26
OVERALL OBSERVATIONS	30
PRIORITY NEXT STEPS	

# COMPLIANCE REPORT

*Wellington College International, Pune successfully met standards one to five of the COBIS Compliance system.*

## 1.0 SAFEGUARDING AND SAFER RECRUITMENT

**The school places a high priority on the safeguarding of students and staff, including child protection, and the safe recruitment of appropriately qualified and experienced staff.**

### 1A

#### STANDARD

*The school recruitment process is fair, thorough and transparent and applies to all appointments consistently*

#### COMMENTARY

The SCR was found to be in excellent order and very clearly set out with the standard columns. There was a separate tab for teaching staff, non-teaching staff, consultant staff, agency staff, staff employed by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties and Board members. There are currently no volunteers.

Of the 96 staff on the Single Central Register, an investigation of 12 staff files and all Board member files was undertaken to assess whether high standards of safer recruitment and child protection was in place. Files were selected from all of the different tabs found on the SCR. The files were then compared against the records held by the school.

Significant work has been undertaken to get the SCR and staff files to be compliant with COBIS guidelines. There is a summary checklist on the first page in each of the staff files. There is a signature and date in each section of the checklist when completed and these match with the relevant sections of the SCR.

All staff member files showed clear evidence that identity checks had been undertaken. With local hire staff, the majority had a deeper investigation of identity and criminal records using the 'securesearch' service as the robustness

of local police checks are not always timely. It is important to note that local police checks should be conducted every two years. In all cases, both referees had been contacted or reasonable attempts had been made to contact them by telephone, to prove their identity. In all cases, reference checks had a relevant wet signature in the staff file. The reference checking form used by the school is excellent and very clear about what staff need to do.

For staff that have previously worked overseas, appropriate police checks had been gained. For those staff who have previously worked in the UK, all ICPC certificates had been sought and received by the school as of January 2025.

An application form is used to recruit all teaching staff and there is a section on this form which deals with safeguarding. There is also a message regarding safeguarding on the recruitment page on the school's website. There is an Equal Opportunities Policy in place.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- Wherever possible, ensure that an application form is completed for non-academic staff; this will ensure consistency of recruitment and further embed the safeguarding culture within the non-academic staff.
- If a recruitment agency is being used in the future, the school should ensure that the reference checks follow the good practice in place for staff recruited directly by the school.

## **1B**

### **STANDARD**

*All staff within the school including volunteers and supply staff meet high standards of child protection and the safeguarding of students*

### **COMMENTARY**

There is a clear child protection and safeguarding structure within the school. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the Head of the Senior School, and he is supported by two deputies, one of which is trained to Level 3. Whilst it is not ideal to have the Head to have overall oversight for this role, the small number of students on role has meant that staff have had to take on extra responsibilities in the school's early years. The post holder brings a huge amount of experience to the role. All staff understand the key role of child

protection and the safeguarding of students.

All staff at the school, whether teaching or non-teaching, have received Level 1 safeguarding training. Those staff who do not speak English have received internal training through a member of staff who is able to translate English to Marathi, although the school have yet to formally certificate this. There is a central record of safeguarding training for all staff together with the expiry dates of their relevant qualification.

Safeguarding policies are up-to-date and do reference the September 2024 KCSiE documentation from the UK.

Laminated photographs of the safeguarding team were on display in many areas of the school. However, the format of the poster does need to be improved to make the message more explicit. The poster also needs to be placed in more appropriate positions. Among the sample of junior school students who were part of our evidence finding, there was some confusion about who the DSL or Child Protection Officer was and what their role entailed. For many, the first person they would discuss any problem with would be a close friend. This confusion was not apparent amongst the students in the senior school.

Meetings between the Designated Safeguarding Governor (DSG) and the DSL over the first four terms of the school's life were described as 'irregular' by the DSL. However, the DSG did provide advice to the DSL on several occasions when requested by telephone. The DSG provided a termly report to the Board. There does not appear to be any central record kept of checks of the SCR by either the DSG or the DSL.

Clear safeguarding records are kept on *MyConcern* by the pastoral team to show what the concern is, who is involved and what measures are being taken.

Parent information evenings are conducted on specific child protection issues which have included general safeguarding and online safety. Several more are in the planning stage for the rest of this academic year. Additionally, follow up sessions are conducted for non-teaching and support staff, which have included general safeguarding, first aid and fire safety. Certificates of participation will be generated in due course and given to participants.

The school has students up to Year 10 and is aware of the possible anxiety issues among some students as they approach their GCSE examinations. There does

seem to be some pressure on students from their parents and the school will be monitoring this closely.

The school has started to produce a termly safeguarding newsletter to parents highlighting key issues and helping to inform parents about the school's approach to safeguarding. The most recent letter had a focus on online behaviour and possible effects on children's development in their early years.

As the school is relatively new, it has yet to fully compile a list of external agencies that may be able to assist students and parents on a needs-driven basis.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- As the school expands, ensure that any incoming DSL is not the Head of the School.
- In order to fulfil their statutory function, the DSG should undertake at least a termly, minuted meeting with the DSL.
- Ensure that measures are in place for the current Year 10 to monitor and manage any anxiety issues that may arise in the run up to their final GCSE examinations in the next academic year.
- Staff in the junior school need to reinforce the significance of the safeguarding team to bring the knowledge of it into line with that of the senior school.
- The poster showing the faces of the safeguarding leads needs to be improved to achieve its aim; this can be done by having a title such as 'Wellington School Safeguarding Team' and ensuring that the poster is placed at eye level for younger students.
- Ensure that safeguarding and child protection policy always refers to the yearly updated version of the UK KCSiE documentation.
- To ensure a regular termly check is undertaken by the DSL of a sample of staff files in conjunction with the SCR to ensure that all processes are being followed. This check should be signed and dated and kept with HR and form a standing item in meetings between the DSL and DSG.
- In conjunction with other similar schools in the city, compile a list of trusted external agencies.
- Train the member of staff who translates safeguarding training from English to Marathi to a higher level so that he is able to field further questions regarding safeguarding and child protection from those staff who do not speak English.
- Ensure that internal certification is given for those staff who undertake internal safeguarding training in a language other than English.

## 2.0 STUDENT WELFARE

**The school provides a safe and supportive environment for all young people.**

### 2A

#### STANDARD

*The school provides a pastoral structure that meets the needs of all students and promotes their personal development*

#### COMMENTARY

There is a clear pastoral structure in place throughout the school: Heads of Senior School, Junior School and Early Years. Students in the lower years are attached to a class, whilst students in the senior school have a weekly meeting with their tutor who is a member of the teaching staff. The agenda of this meeting is set centrally so that staff have clear guidance about what to discuss with their students.

It was evident that there were regular meetings between the pastoral team and that there were clearly defined processes in place to communicate any pastoral concerns that staff may have. Where problems arise, the school is keen to discuss these issues with parents at the earliest opportunity if they feel that it is necessary. All teaching staff are trained in foundational coaching so that relevant conversations can be had with students. This means that many issues are nipped in the bud at an early stage. The wellbeing of students in the early years tends to be measured using a more qualitative approach of a five-point scale with their classroom teacher; this is tracked over time.

Start of year parent orientation meetings outline school expectations regarding student welfare. These are backed up by clear and very informative parent handbooks. Parental concerns may be raised formally and informally to the school. The Master welcomes all students to the school each morning and therefore makes himself available for informal discussions with parents. Parents note that any concerns are invariably dealt with promptly and efficiently.

Attendance is closely monitored and will be made available to parents on upcoming reports. However, it had yet to be decided by the pastoral team what figure is deemed to be an acceptable floor percentage for attendance.

There is a thorough and effective procedure in place as students make the transition from the junior to the senior school. The school is currently formulating plans so that students are able to make a smooth transition from the senior school to the new sixth form which will exist from August 2025.

The PSHE curriculum is clearly mapped across all year groups and is already well-embedded in the school. Students report that they enjoyed the content. The PSHE curriculum is made available to parents in a transparent way as some topic areas may be controversial given the range of religions and nationalities across the student and parent body. To date, parents have been very supportive and, following discussions with them, they note how progressive the PSHE curriculum is. Regular assemblies take place for different year groups and often have student input. Given that the school has only been operational for four terms, there has not yet been a full evaluation of the PSHE curriculum; this is something that should be undertaken at least every two years to ensure that material is still fit for purpose.

Students throughout the school are very aware of the potential dangers of social media and the overuse of screens. To this end, mobile phones have to be turned off in school and this is vigorously enforced. However, laptop computers are allowed at break times.

Each student is assigned to one of four houses when they enter the school, and students take a great deal of pride in representing the house. Each competition does have a winner, but these are not aggregated at the end of each year to decide who is the overall winner of the house competition. This would be a worthwhile development. Even though all students are members of a house, there has not been any information given to students about where their house name comes from.

Given that students are from a variety of backgrounds, there is clearly a need for extra support for some students. Students in Year 2 and above take the CAT4 assessment on entry and, where appropriate, they take an English language assessment. Additionally, all students are closely tracked when in school. Where EAL issues are identified, booster support is given where students are taken out of English lessons and given one-to-one support by appropriately qualified staff. Where necessary, in-class support is also given so that students are able to access the curriculum at an appropriate level. In early years, students are observed in the classroom setting and appropriate support is given where necessary. In all cases, parents are extremely supportive of this and appreciate the school's intervention. However, links to external third-party

specialists are currently weak and the school is therefore not always in a position to assist students with specific needs.

It is clear that students are extremely happy and thriving with the pastoral structure that is in place. Students and parents were unanimous in saying that staff were open and caring to all students and that they felt safe and secure in the school.

In addition to student welfare, staff wellbeing is also closely monitored by the senior leadership team. Whilst the school is based in a large city, culturally it is very different from many places in India. Staff sickness was noted as having been a problem. The DSL stated that the expatriate staff are a tight community and do look out for each other.

## **COMMENDATION**

The school should be commended for its excellent pastoral structure and its up-to-date and engaging PSHE programme. Both students and parents appreciate the caring nature of the school and its proactiveness in addressing any arising problems.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- Given that mobile phones are not allowed, the school needs to evaluate its policy regarding the use of laptop computers in breaktime. There needs to be a more robust monitoring of students' use of the internet in school and the school's firewall should be improved.
- Ensure that the school and parents are able to develop links with appropriate support for students on an ad-hoc basis outside of school by building relationships with third party providers. The school, if possible, should consider partnering with other similar schools and sharing information about third party providers.
- Ensure that a decision is made by the pastoral team regarding what the minimum acceptable attendance is before interventions are automatically triggered.
- The school's PSHE curriculum mapping should be evaluated at least every two years to ensure that coverage is maintained and that any arising school specific issues can be addressed.
- Formalise the house competition so that there is an overall house competition winner each year.
- Provide information to students about the origins of their house name.
- As the school role expands over the coming years, there will inevitably be

an increase in the number of expatriate staff in the school. The school needs to give close thought to how best to further recruit and retain quality teaching staff and ensure that they are happy in their time in Pune.

## 2B

### STANDARD

*The school has provision for the physical and mental health, and safe supervision, of all students to allow them to flourish in the school environment*

### COMMENTARY

All local government regulations regarding health and safety and fire are followed to the letter. There is a clearly understood system within the school's staff regarding the reporting of health and safety issues. These are promptly dealt with by the in-house maintenance team. As the school expands, it will be introducing an electronic system of reporting and recording of health and safety issues so that these can be more easily tracked in a timely manner.

The eating area of the canteen was kept spotless by the housekeeping staff and students were appropriately supervised throughout. There was a clear and well-followed system for what to do with plates and crockery when the students had finished eating.

All teaching staff have first aid qualifications and there is a rolling monthly training programme led by the school doctor. However, there is no obvious record keeping of the date of completion of the first aid training.

The school has a team of two nurses and a doctor with medical rooms fully equipped for first responses. Whilst this is not mandated by the local authorities, it is certainly a positive move by the school. All accidents and students' visits to the nurse are recorded and it is policy that a message is sent home. Records of each interaction of the medical team with students are kept on the school's MIS. The doctor also writes a manual record of the interaction and, if she feels it to be appropriate, sends a message to the relevant Head of School so that they can triangulate any pastoral concerns. This does however seem administratively excessive. Medical provision extends to co-curricular

activities. In the event of any accident the nurse is called and examines the student and advises on next steps.

The level of supervision before, during and after school cannot be faulted. On school drop off in the morning, the Master and security staff monitor traffic closely; on pick up, there are also clear systems in place which all students and parents understand. Supervision throughout the school day is close, but not intrusive. Security cameras are situated throughout the whole school.

## **COMMENDATION**

The school provides an excellent environment for students at all times with close, but unobtrusive, supervision at key times. Medical facilities are superb with excellent and caring staff.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- Ensure that records are kept of first aid training showing which staff undertook training and when. This will help the medical team keep track of when training should be renewed.
- Set up the MIS so that an automatic message of a medical interaction is sent to the relevant Head of School and parents; this will reduce paperwork and ensure that nothing is missed.
- Ensure that the practice of informing parents with each visit to the medical facilities reflects policy.

**2C****STANDARD**

*The school ensures that through positive behaviour management students are supported in their learning and safety*

**COMMENTARY**

Heads of School and the students themselves report that behaviour by students is, in almost all cases, excellent. This was triangulated by our observations during the visit. Students are well-mannered, polite and showed respect for both peers and staff. To date, there have been no major suspensions or exclusions at the school. Attendance is monitored centrally by the school heads, and this will be reported on to parents in the future.

There was much discussion during the visit about intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of students. The current system in place awards college recognitions and college concerns. However, as in many institutions, students reported that these were inconsistently applied. Where college concerns were reported, use of the language of the school values that had been broken was sometimes used.

Students and parents clearly understand the systems that are in place and students report that rewards and sanctions are referred to in assemblies.

**NEXT STEPS**

- If possible, put systems in place so that college recognition and concerns are more systematically applied by all staff. In addition, where concerns are issued, a more consistent use of the language of the school values would be a very useful addition.
- Consider referring to college recognitions and concerns in the parental handbooks.

## 2D

### STANDARD

*The school ensures that off-site activities are appropriate and safe*

### COMMENTARY

Students that were interviewed were unanimously clear in wanting further field trips. Whilst the focus at present is on developing sporting trips and other trips to support the newly introduced IAYP Programme, there is a clear commitment to develop trips in the senior school; these include plans for the MUN club and a possible UK trip via the Wellington Schools network. On a local level, there have been trips supporting curriculum subjects such as art and biology. There was less evidence of anything planned for younger students.

The Head of the Senior School oversees trips and works with staff on trip planning. He ultimately signs off on risk assessments. Two risk assessments for trips were seen. There is a clear template which is followed, but it would be advisable to write into the template a place for reflection and evaluation, especially as residential trips are now being planned.

The administrative team has a clear role in planning trips and supporting the teaching staff in ensuring logistics are arranged. There is a clear procedure for ensuring parents are informed. The process would be improved by having a planning checklist with an annexed risk assessment.

The PE teacher has undertaken a risk assessment for all the outside areas and activities. He has identified risks and put in mitigation measures and responses.

### NEXT STEPS

- There is a clear desire in the community for more field trips in all parts of the school and is something that the school should encourage as it expands.
- Further develop the guidance for trips to ensure that there is one-page sequential checklist of things to do. This should certainly include an evaluation of the trip when it returns so that any lessons can be learned for future trips.

## 3.0 FACILITIES

**The school provides all students with access to an environment conducive to learning and that keeps them safe.**

### 3A

#### STANDARD

*Accommodation supports the learning needs of all students*

#### COMMENTARY

All local building regulations are followed and complied with; this should mean that the current building works are of top standard when they are completed. The school has fully functioning and efficient air conditioning throughout the whole site to enable students to work in a conducive environment. However, power cuts do happen from time to time in Pune and the school does have a backup diesel generator to keep the school functioning when needed.

As in much of India, air pollution is a significant issue in Pune. During the visit, the AQI exceeded 150 on some days, although this did vary across the day. The school takes a strong line about students playing outdoors at break times as well as participating in co-curricular activities when the air quality is poor; this view was supported by the sample of parents that were interviewed. The school does monitor air quality within the school buildings to ensure that there is no adverse effect on students when they are inside classrooms. During our visit, there was compliance with the school's view on preventing students being outside during break and lunchtimes.

Overall, the site has superb facilities throughout, and this is set to improve further when the rest of the buildings are completed later this academic year. Classrooms are big, very well-decorated and maintained to a high standard. Each classroom has appropriate resources for the age groups that use it. Throughout the site, clean toilet facilities were age appropriate and domestic staff undertake regular checks of them.

There is currently a small, but well-stocked, library, a 25m swimming pool and a full-size all weather multipurpose astroturf pitch.

## COMMENDATION

The school is to be commended on providing first-class facilities to its students and ensuring that they are kept in excellent condition. This is only set to improve further with the imminent opening of the new blocks later this academic year.

## NEXT STEPS

None noted.

## 3B

### STANDARD

*The site provides a secure environment for students, staff and visitors*

### COMMENTARY

The school is in its second year of operation on a brand-new site. Two of the four blocks are currently open and operational and the remaining two blocks are under construction. The construction site is boarded off and, despite attempts by the COBIS team to enter the site, remained secure.

The overall site is protected behind high walls and the security staff on the points of access carry out their duties with professionalism. On a tour of the school site, it was clear that some doors that should have been locked were unlocked: these included rooms used to house cleaning materials for toilets, and stationery cupboards. In addition, some movable insect repellent machines were located on the floor with a trailing wire; this may be a hazard.

Fire safety equipment is in evidence throughout the school and fire extinguishers are checked regularly and have inspection dates clearly marked on them.

On-site security is excellent throughout the school. No visitor is allowed to access the site without signing in and obtaining a pass. Certain parts of the school can only be accessed by having a higher access teacher pass. The areas of the school which are under construction are appropriately fenced off and secure. However, the inspection team was able to access the corridors leading to the closed swimming pool area which means that it was clearly accessible to students.

All students know what to do when it comes to an emergency evacuation. There was an emergency evacuation on the first day of the visit. On inspection of the file, the report had yet to be added by the last day of the visit. There needs to be a text area of evaluation of the evacuation report showing what could be improved on. At the time of the visit, a lockdown practice had yet to be undertaken.

### **NEXT STEPS**

- Ensure that, at all times, rooms which have a lock are locked when not in use and that areas that are out of action are kept that way.
- Ensure that all stand-alone insect repellent machines and any other similar items are fixed to the wall and are not at floor level.
- Timely written evaluation of evacuations would support future practice.
- Ensure that a lockdown practice is undertaken in the first term of each academic year.

## **3C**

### **STANDARD**

*The fabric of the school provides an effective and safe working environment*

### **COMMENTARY**

The new buildings provide students with a wonderful and modern facility. Decoration throughout the school is excellent with photographs on walls of students in many areas. The two open blocks are clearly modern, spacious and make excellent use of natural light. Circulation of students around the site does not cause any bottlenecks. Wall displays are in place throughout both in the classroom and in communal areas.

Currently the small senior section of the school is using the junior school facilities whilst construction of the senior blocks is completed. This is currently not an issue as the overall number of students on role is sufficiently small. There are specialist rooms in the existing junior school building and the school has sufficient slack in its current timetable to allow for these specialist rooms to be used by all students. These include an IT room and appropriate spaces for music and art. There is also a specialist room for science where chemicals are kept in a locked room. This room has a working fume cupboard.

Furniture throughout all classrooms is appropriate.

There is a swimming pool with appropriate changing facilities. Whilst closed on the visit for maintenance, relevant lifesaving equipment was in place. It was understood that a lifeguard would be in place when students are using the pool.

There is also a full-size all-weather pitch on site. However, there were no changing facilities or toilets adjacent to the pitch. A closer inspection showed that the pitch's footprint was too small given the markings of the football and hockey pitches. The markings, in their current state means that pitch furniture encroached onto the playing area; in a match-situation, this could cause serious injury.

Students understand that building work is going on around the school site and they are very compliant in knowing which areas of the school are out of bounds.

There is some shading in the outside areas, but students commented that this was insufficient for the warmer months of the year. An inspection of the site confirmed that shading was indeed insufficient in some areas.

The kitchen facilities were in excellent order; levels of hygiene were high with all staff wearing appropriate clothing and headwear. Food storage was excellent. At the end of each day all areas of the kitchen and canteen area are thoroughly cleaned.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- As it is clearly not feasible to increase the size of the all-weather pitch, the markings need to be redrawn to reduce the size of the playing area so that pitch furniture do not encroach beyond any touchlines.
- Give serious consideration to the construction of changing facilities, toilets and medical equipment storage adjacent to the all-weather pitch.
- Discuss with the student council and staff as to the most appropriate areas to improve outdoor shading areas

### 3D

#### STANDARD

*Overall facilities meet the needs of all students, including those with additional educational needs and/or a physical disability*

#### COMMENTARY

There are many toilet facilities around the school which are clearly designated for staff, students, visitors and the disabled. Toilets are clean and tidy and are monitored on a regular basis by ancillary staff. Lifts are in all buildings which allow access to all floors of the currently open building.

Wheelchair access into the school through gate 7 does not exist; whilst a ramp exists, it ends on an area of grass which cannot be navigated by a wheelchair. Further there is a significant lip to cross on the entrance to the actual school which cannot be navigated.

#### NEXT STEPS

- Ensure that a path is built across the grassy area so that wheelchairs can access A block. In addition, a portable ramp needs to be available so that wheelchair users can actually get into A block.

## 4.0 GOVERNANCE

**The school's governors work to support students and to provide strategic direction for the school.**

### 4A

#### STANDARD

*All governors / proprietors meet all the requirements for adults with access to young people reinforcing the importance of safeguarding within the school*

#### COMMENTARY

As of January 2025, all Board members have successfully completed basic safeguarding training and the newly appointed DSG has been trained to Level 3 and therefore the school meets the standards for COBIS compliance.

A couple of weeks prior to the visit, the DSG suddenly resigned from his post. The school has since managed to appoint a new DSG and, whilst the transition between the incoming and outgoing DSG has not been as smooth as the school would have liked, mitigating measures were put into place. The Chair of the Board assured the inspection team that there were no outstanding serious live safeguarding cases. The Chair also assured the team that there would be a seamless transition to the new DSG using the DSL in due course and several meetings have since taken place to bring the new DSG up to speed. The outgoing DSG member did not have an overview of the accuracy of the SCR by taking a termly sample of files.

All Board members have fulfilled the standard identity and local police checks and these are clearly documented in the SCR and in the Board member files.

At the time of the visit, the Chair of the Board and fellow Board members had yet to undertake safer recruitment training; this is essential for any upcoming senior appointments.

#### NEXT STEPS

- The incoming DSG should ensure that a record is kept of the termly sampling of the SCR by the DSL.
- The Chair must ensure that there is a seamless transition between the outgoing and incoming DSGs over the coming term.

- Any members of the Board who may be involved in the recruitment of senior staff in the future must undergo safer recruitment training.

## 4B

### STANDARD

*Measures are in place for governors to register interests and to manage any conflicts of interest*

### COMMENTARY

Personal Disclosure Forms and Conflict of Interest documentation is available in the appendices of the Governor Handbook. This has been seen by the inspection team and everything is in order in the Governor files which are kept by the HR department.

The Chair of the Board explained what would happen if a conflict of interest did arise in the decision making of the Board. As of January 2025, the Governor Handbook has been significantly revised to make it clear what procedures need to be followed if this event should ever occur.

To date, there have not been any conflicts of interest that have needed to be managed at Board level.

### NEXT STEPS

- To ensure that Board members' interests are updated yearly and, of course, when the Advisory Board take on any new members.

## 4C

### STANDARD

*There are written procedures / protocols for the remit of the work of the governing body*

### COMMENTARY

The Chair of the Board is very clear about his objectives in helping deliver high

quality education to the city and to the parents of the school. He was pleased about how the Board had helped him to achieve this to date.

Following the meeting with the Board and reviewing the minutes of recent Board meetings, there are indications that the Board does not always solely keep to its strategic overview of the school. It is standard practice to leave operational matters to the Master and the school's SLT, leaving the Board to concentrate on strategic matters and ensuring that the Master is accountable to them. The strategic overview of specific educational matters should be delegated to the Education sub-committee. This means that there needs to be an evaluation of the remit of all the committees of the Board.

There are written procedures in place in the form of a Governor Handbook. The handbook covers the following areas: governance structure, processes, roles, conduct, intervention, delegation, voting and sub-committee make up. Prior to the visit, it was clear that the guidance given in the governor handbook did not always reflect reality.

However, since the visit, the governor handbook has been revised so there are clear guidelines about what actually happens when there is a possible conflict of interest in a meeting and regarding the onboarding of new governors. The revised handbook has explicit job descriptions for the DSG and for the governor with oversight for Health and Safety. The document is comprehensive and will make it much easier for any new governor to understand how the Board works in reality.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- The handbook needs to be evaluated at the end of each year to ensure that it is still fit for purpose.
- To ensure that there are clear lines drawn between the Board and the Master and his SLT regarding the strategic and the operational oversight of the school. This will need a rethinking of the agenda items of the full Board. As part of this rethink, a more strategic use of the Education sub-committee needs to be undertaken.

**4D****STANDARD**

*There is appropriate support for new governors*

**COMMENTARY**

At the time of the visit, training for new governors had yet to be formally codified and the induction process clearly differed for the members of the Board that were interviewed. However, subsequent meetings with the Master and an examination of the revised Governor Handbook shows that there is now an explicit process in place for new governors.

There is now a formal recording of Board member induction in their files that are kept by HR. This involves a checklist of the key points in the process. As and when they are completed, they are signed off and dated.

**NEXT STEPS**

- To evaluate the onboarding process in conjunction with any new governor three months after they have been appointed. Any further relevant suggestions should be incorporated into the induction process.

**4E****STANDARD**

*Governors have a commitment to their own training and development*

**COMMENTARY**

Informal discussions took place between individual Board members and the Chair at the end of the last academic year about possible areas of improvement and development in the functioning of the Board. However, this process of self-evaluation has not been formalised in the Board handbook.

As a result of these informal discussions, an external provider will be coming into the school for a Board training day in term 2.

As and when any further training beyond basic safeguarding training takes

place for the whole Board or for individual members, this should be recorded in files by the HR department.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- To formalise the self-evaluation process with a series of written questions prior to the final Board meeting of the year. These questions should include each member's contribution to the Board and a review of the Board's work as a whole from the perspective of that member. Members should be asked whether tasks and deadlines have been hit in the given time frame. Members should also be asked for whether the sub-committees are functioning as outlined in the handbook. Members should consider whether they need any training specific to them and their role within the Board structure. Additionally, they should give overall feedback for any other areas for improvement in the Board's functioning.
- To record all internal and external training that each Board member has completed on their files. At the very minimum, this should involve a yearly safeguarding training course so that members are up to date with the latest safeguarding developments.

**4F****STANDARD**

*The governors provide records of meetings and decisions which show evidence of active and committed governance*

*The profiles and contact details for the governors are available to parents along with key policies*

**COMMENTARY**

Record keeping of full Board and sub-committee meetings are excellent. Agendas are produced, minutes taken and circulated in good time. Action points are given and a member of staff is accountable for this together with a date for completion. A schedule of future meetings has been seen. An overview of the termly sub-committee agenda is in place in the governor handbook.

Members of the Board do make themselves available to the school for various events throughout the year; however, this is not formally recorded anywhere in the Board member files.

Names and biographies have been made available to the school community on the school website.

**NEXT STEPS**

- To ensure that all members of the Board attend at least one school event each year.
- To ensure that any events that the Board attend are recorded to provide evidence of an active and committed governance.

## 5.0 ETHOS AND VALUES

**The school has an evident British educational ethos, is outward-looking and promotes international mindedness.**

### 5A

#### STANDARD

*British educational ethos and values are at the heart of a holistic approach to learning and to the development of learner qualities*

#### COMMENTARY

This is a currently a small school and staff know their students extremely well; this fact was made clear in interviews with students and their parents. There is a strong pastoral system supported by counsellors to help students who need extra support. Each student in the senior school has a personal tutor who has both an academic and pastoral overview of the child. The Head of the Senior School shares guidance with pastoral tutors on a regular basis to identify issues to be addressed in these meetings. Teaching staff have received training on coaching to improve the effectiveness of the conversations had in these meetings and thus the support given to students. In the Junior School the class teacher has the pastoral overview of each student.

The school engages the services of a counsellor and there is a comprehensive support for students whose language is not English to increase their language skills so that they are able to access the curriculum.

The school maintains an emphasis on the holistic development of the child. This is evidenced through a high-quality academic education with strong support for developing pedagogy, the provision of additional support, especially for children with EAL, a rich programme of sports and creative arts co-curricular activities. The aim of this programme is to enrich and develop students.

The co-curricular programme is seen as a strength of the school by parents and is much valued by students of all ages. A Year 2 student referenced her fondness for origami - even though her mother would have preferred her to be doing sport on that day. There have already been several performances showcasing students' theatrical and musical talents, and the school band was rehearsing during the visit. Ten students have signed up for the IAYP programme - the vast majority of those eligible. The further development of

the co-curricular programme is evidently a priority of the school leadership, especially with the growth of the school.

There are structured opportunities for students to understand and value transferable skills through interdisciplinary projects; these take place regularly and the results are celebrated through the school. These are often whole school projects and allow students, through the school values, to develop their soft skills which, in the words of the Master, will make them 'thought leaders of the future'. Great examples include March's Music Art and Dance (MAD) Festival, April's Literary Festival and May's Science Week. In November, all KS3 pupils created projects on particular themes demonstrating cross curricular involvement. Examples included students developing a computer programme to work out the size and shape of any mathematical object; other students used IT to look at the design and the possible creation of a new house shirt.

Students from both juniors and seniors know, and can articulate, the school values. Senior school students understand how these are reinforced through the rewards and sanctions schemes and through student led assemblies such as a recent one on 'Courage'. Junior school students are typically and understandably less clear about the school's values, but the Head of Junior School was able to point to strong examples of how their understanding is developed.

## **COMMENDATION**

There is a clear desire to develop the whole student. Values are lived daily by staff and students and, in its short life to date, there are clearly structures and processes in place to develop both student's hard and soft skills by the school.

## **NEXT STEPS**

None noted.

**5B****STANDARD**

*The school has an outward-looking perspective promoting its values via a wide curriculum and through opportunities to develop awareness of other cultures and global issues as far as this is permissible within the host country*

**COMMENTARY**

The wide variety of students at the school with different backgrounds and religions is a cause for celebration. However, all students are able to come together and refer to the school's overarching values and its learning attributes. It is important to stress that the school is committed to valuing Maharashtrian language and culture. Non-native students from early years could share phrases they knew in Marathi. Internationalism starts in international schools with a strong connection with the host culture and the students were aware of, and enjoyed, important festivals such as Diwali, Holi, Navratri and Ganpati.

The school leadership articulated a strong commitment to valuing and celebrating the host culture and emphasised its potential value to drive recruitment of expatriate staff. Through Marathi lessons, students are introduced to local culture such as dance. However, it was felt that staff, both expatriate and Indian, should have a crash course in Maharashtrian history to support students' learning in this area. This will also serve to help staff integrate themselves into the culture of Pune.

The school has a clear intention to engage with local NGOs to support student learning, but must make better use of its local staff and other resources to help make this a reality. The school leadership is commendably risk averse, but Pune and much of India has the infrastructure and capacity to facilitate engagement with Indian culture and wildlife, and these should be enjoyed and understood by all students.

Students in the Senior school with experience in other international schools within India and abroad noted the lack of celebration of the multicultural student body. Many COBIS schools celebrate 'international days' and the school leadership did show interest in exploring this matter further and considering how this might be developed. Advice from COBIS is that these are often wonderful opportunities for meaningful sharing of aspects of the myriad of cultures at the school, but that they need to be carefully planned to avoid it being simply 'flags and food'.

There is a fully functioning Student Council who meet on a regular basis. They have a vocal input into key decisions made by the school.

### **NEXT STEPS**

- Ensure that the school assists new staff in helping them understand Maharashtrian history; this will not only support students' learning in this area but will assist staff in their induction into Pune.
- To further understand the history of the Maratha empire and Shiva Ji, the school should facilitate student visits to the Peshawar's Palace.

## **5C**

### **STANDARD**

*The school teaches the majority of subjects through the medium of English*

### **COMMENTARY**

All subjects, apart from languages, are taught through the medium of English.

### **NEXT STEPS**

None noted.

## OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

Wellington College International, Pune is certainly a school with ambition. In only its fourth term of having students on site, the school has already cemented an excellent reputation in the community. Students and parents are hugely satisfied with what the school has to offer. The Master's commitment to the successful development of the school and his huge work ethic has really driven the success to date and he should be commended on his efforts.

Clearly the school is undergoing a period of transition with the building of the new blocks and the expansion of the school from its opening in September 2023 into the Sixth Form. One of the keys to the medium-term success of the school is the timely opening of the new blocks; if this happens to plan, effective marketing of the school can take place whilst the student recruitment window is open in term 2. The Head of Marketing and her team are highly skilled at their jobs; they are thoroughly professional in their work, but they do need something to work with to assist with driving the school forwards.

The school is also managing the end of contracts for key senior staff, so there is an additional pressure on replacing them with suitably qualified practitioners to ensure that the school's already excellent reputation can continue.

The Chair of the Board is prepared to resource the project and, refreshingly, takes a long-term view. The school certainly has the potential to be an excellent model for future Wellington projects and is certainly a great asset for the city in attracting global talent to come and work in Pune.

Students are friendly, mature, inquisitive and the school's academic and pastoral offering are excellent. The school's facilities are superb. Wellington's values are not just words: they are lived daily by students and staff.

### PRIORITY NEXT STEPS

- Ensure that the minor tweaks outlined in the next steps in standard 1 are put into place so that the standards of safer recruitment are as high as they can be.
- To ensure that there are clear lines drawn between the Board and the Master and the school's SLT regarding strategic and operational oversight of the school.
- To ensure that the governance of the school is always fit for purpose. A yearly evaluation of its work and an assessment of any skill gaps is

essential for the successful future of the school.

**Recommendation to COBIS Director of Accreditation:**

That following a short period subsequent to the visit where minor 'tweaks' were made in one or two areas, the school has now met all COBIS Compliance Standards and should be awarded COBIS Member school (Compliance) status.

