

## Programme Evaluation Report

**Head of School:** Michael Shaw

**School Name:** Buckswood School

**School Code:** 007062

**School Address:** Rye Road Hastings, East Sussex TN35 4LT

**IB Programme(s):** Diploma Programme

**Programme Coordinator:** Carol Richards

**Date:** Thursday 10 November 2022

### Evaluation Team

#### Diploma Programme

**Programme Leader:** Christian Hoffmann-Pickenhahn

## School and Programme Leadership

Dear Michael Shaw,

Thank you for completing the programme evaluation self-study process. The International Baccalaureate (IB) recognizes that this process requires considerable time and effort from the entire school community. We appreciate the effort that you have made and hope that the insights gained along the way will be valuable in further developing your programme(s).

Please review the feedback in this report carefully as it provides important guidance for the development of the programme(s) that will help your school achieve the optimum outcomes for students.

IB programme evaluation is built on the premise that IB programmes, when implemented with fidelity, ultimately lead to the achievement of the IB mission. The primary aim is to support schools in continuously developing their capacity to implement IB programmes in order to have a greater impact on student outcomes through the development of teacher and leader practice.

We hope that through this process school leadership will gain a deeper understanding of both the aspects of the programme that are being implemented effectively and the aspects that need further development. The process supports the school—as a learning community—to develop the capacity to work intentionally and strategically to develop its IB programme(s) and enable school leaders and teachers to better direct their efforts and resources.

## A. School Context

### School & Community Description

Buckswood School is a private, co-educational boarding school for students aged 10-18 years old, located in the South East of the UK, near Hastings. The school comprises the Junior School for students aged 10-13 years, the Middle School for students aged 14-16 years and the Sixth Form for students aged 17-18 years. The school aims to cater for all needs, offering a variety of curriculum options, for example, one-year and two-year GCSE programmes, A levels, IBDP and UFC. The school has a competitive fee structure with scholarships and bursaries available. The school is not academically selective and welcomes students who can benefit from the environment as long as there are sufficient resources to meet the needs of the particular student.

Most of the students are boarding students and have a lively weekend programme. Buckswood has a unique environment compared to similar schools. The ethos focuses not on being the best, but on being 'your best'. This is expressed in the school prayer: 'Let us remember that at Buckswood every child has a talent. It is our job to firstly find that talent and to encourage each and every child to be the best at what they do. Here at Buckswood it is our responsibility to cast the net of opportunity so wide that any talent gets a chance to develop and to ensure that many of these talents should be just as highly ranked as academic scholarship. The concept of the average pupil must give way to the concept of an infinite variety of youngsters heading for an infinite variety of successes.' The Buckswood difference is the name given to this wide range of opportunities.

The school provides for successful sports academies. The football programme is a major attraction for some of the international students. Relationships are especially important to the school, it has a family, friendly, and purposeful atmosphere. Staff invest considerable time into building relationships within school and with families and agents. The school is not rigid in their approach and believe that students can learn from their mistakes if given the opportunity to try again.

Buckswood is located in the countryside, a few kilometres from Hastings. Whilst the South East of the UK is considered to be one of the UK's most affluent areas, Hastings is not. There is a wide disparity of income and wealth. Hastings is a fishing port with the UK's largest beach-based fishing fleet. It has an estimated population of 92,855 as of 2018. Hastings has a range of cultural activities from theatre to cinema, museums and art galleries, parks and open spaces including the promenade.

Buckswood is an international community with staff and students from over 48 countries speaking many languages. The school considers its international community, internationalism and diversity its greatest strength.

## B. Programme strengths

### Purpose: Sharing an important mission

- Purpose (0101)
  - **Purpose 1:** The governing body and school leaders articulate a purpose for learning that aligns with the IB's philosophy and mission. (0101-01)
    - The school's identity is shaped by the IB philosophy and programme implementation as well as principles of an IB education. School leadership demonstrate strong commitment to implement IB philosophy throughout the school.
  - **Purpose 2:** The school's pedagogical leadership team embraces educational approaches that encourage students to become active, compassionate lifelong learners. (0101-02)
    - The concepts of community, diversity, inclusion and compassion (essential to nurturing inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people) permeate and frame the work of all members in the school community.

### Environments: Providing essential structures, systems and resources

- Leadership and governance (0201)
  - **Leadership 2:** The school includes on its pedagogical leadership team an IB-trained programme coordinator who is empowered to facilitate successful programme implementation. (0201-02)
    - The school benefits from leadership and governance that demonstrates a commitment to providing high-quality learning environments. This is apparent in the school's development of the 12 pillars. The school is committed to use these to build and foster a learning environment that is aligned with IB philosophy.
- Student support (0202)
  - **Student support 1:** The school provides relevant human, natural, built and virtual resources to implement its IB programme(s). (0202-01)
    - The school substantially invested into digital platforms such as Managebac, Turnitin and MS Teams to further strengthen communication, collaboration and student agency.
  - **Student support 3:** The school fosters the social, emotional, and physical well-being of its students and teachers. (0202-03)

- The school provides services and strategies to support students' well-being and enhance access to learning opportunities. School leadership clearly commit to an individualized and differentiated approach to meet all students' needs.
- Teacher support (0203)
  - **Teacher support 1:** The school ensures that teachers use current IB resources and regularly review their implementation of the programme. (0203-01)
    - The school ensures that teachers use current IB resources and review their practice through a professional learning community structure and a range of opportunities for continuous professional development related to students' learning, individual teachers' needs and school-wide priorities.

### Culture: Creating positive school cultures

- Culture through policy implementation (0301)
  - **Culture 4:** The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews a language policy that helps to foster intercultural understanding through communicating in a variety of ways in more than one language (0301-04)
    - The roles and responsibilities of stakeholder groups in the school community are clearly defined and articulated in policy, supporting a culture in which IB philosophy can thrive. The language policy provides clear expectations for a thriving multilingual community.

### Learning: Ensuring effective education

- Designing a coherent curriculum (0401)
  - **Coherent curriculum 1:** The school plans and implements a coherent curriculum that organizes learning and teaching within and across the years of its IB programme(s). (0401-01)
    - The curriculum is broad, balanced and sequenced in a way to support students' progression. The school actively seeks opportunities to further broaden the curriculum, based on students' interests and needs.
- Students as lifelong learners (0402)
  - **Lifelong learners 1:** Students actively develop thinking, research, communication, social and self-management skills. (0402-01)
    - Students are actively involved in their own learning, as demonstrated by the examples of independent inquiry, self-reflection and peer evaluation shared.

- **Lifelong learners 3:** Students identify and foster healthy relationships, an understanding of shared responsibility, and the ability to collaborate effectively. (0402-03)
  - The design of learning spaces and learning engagements reflects the strong emphasis and explicit focus the school has on developing a culture that supports healthy relationships, shared responsibility and effective collaboration. This is particularly recognisable in the development of the Buckswood Educational Philosophy.
- **Lifelong learners 6:** Students take ownership of their learning by setting challenging goals and pursuing personal inquiries. (0402-06)
  - The school provides students with a variety of reflection tools to self-assess and monitor their progress and to identify and shape their personal goals.
- Approaches to teaching (0403)
  - **Approaches to teaching 1:** Teachers use inquiry, action and reflection to develop natural curiosity in students. (0403-01)
    - Examples of learning engagements and teaching strategies in a variety of subjects clearly demonstrate the focus on developing students as inquirers and thinkers.
  - **Approaches to teaching 4:** Teachers promote effective relationships and purposeful collaboration to create a positive and dynamic learning community. (0403-04)
    - Planning documentation and conversation with school leaders provide clear evidence of a strong emphasis on collaboration between students and teachers to create a positive and dynamic learning community.
- Approaches to assessment (0404)
  - **Approaches to assessment 1:** Students and teachers use feedback to improve learning, teaching and assessment. (0404-01)
    - Samples of marked student work provide good evidence of meaningful teacher feedback to improve students' learning and understanding.

## C. Requirements

Based on the review of the programme documentation, observations of the team during the visit and in conversations with members of the school community, all requirements are in place.

## D. Development of IB Standards

<b>Purpose:</b> Sharing an important mission	<b>School Self-Assessment</b>	<b>IB Evaluation Team</b>	<b>Comments on School Development of IB Standards</b>
<b>Purpose (0101)</b> Schools implement IB programmes to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.	<b>DP:</b> Shows development beyond requirements	<b>DP:</b> Shows development beyond requirements	

<b>Environments:</b> Providing essential structures, systems and resources	<b>School Self-Assessment</b>	<b>IB Evaluation Team</b>	<b>Comments on School Development of IB Standards</b>
<b>Leadership and governance (0201)</b> The leadership and governance of IB World Schools create and sustain high-quality learning environments.	<b>DP:</b> Shows development beyond requirements	<b>DP:</b> Shows development beyond requirements	
<b>Student support (0202)</b> Learning environments in IB World Schools support student success.	<b>DP:</b> Offers opportunity for further development	<b>DP:</b> Shows development beyond requirements	<b>DP:</b> While it is clear that the school needs to rebuild connections with the wider community following the impact of covid, there is plenty of evidence that the school has established good practices to support students in their development and well-being.
<b>Teacher support (0203)</b> Learning environments in IB World Schools support and empower teachers.	<b>DP:</b> Offers opportunity for further development	<b>DP:</b> Offers opportunity for further development	

<b>Culture:</b> Creating positive school cultures	<b>School Self-Assessment</b>	<b>IB Evaluation Team</b>	<b>Comments on School Development of IB Standards</b>
<b>Culture through policy implementation (0301)</b> Schools develop, implement, communicate and review effective policies that help to create a school culture in which IB philosophy can thrive.	<b>DP:</b> Shows development beyond requirements	<b>DP:</b> Shows development beyond requirements	



<b>Learning:</b> Ensuring effective education	<b>School Self-Assessment</b>	<b>IB Evaluation Team</b>	<b>Comments on School Development of IB Standards</b>
<b>Designing a coherent curriculum (0401)</b> Learning in IB World Schools is based on a coherent curriculum.	<b>DP:</b> Offers opportunity for further development	<b>DP:</b> Offers opportunity for further development	
<b>Students as lifelong learners (0402)</b> Learning in IB schools aims to develop students ready for further education and life beyond the classroom.	<b>DP:</b> Offers opportunity for further development	<b>DP:</b> Shows development beyond requirements	<b>DP:</b> The school is very clearly committed to a culture that supports healthy relationships, collaboration and shared responsibility. Students are actively encouraged to take ownership and reflect on their continued development.
<b>Approaches to teaching (0403)</b> IB programmes encourage approaches to teaching that create learning experiences that are shown to be meaningful to the school community.	<b>DP:</b> Offers opportunity for further development	<b>DP:</b> Shows development beyond requirements	<b>DP:</b> In its planning documentation, the school provides good evidence of inquiry focused activities, conceptual understanding, as well as local and global contexts in learning opportunities. There is a clear sense of the importance of effective relationships and purposeful collaboration.
<b>Approaches to assessment (0404)</b> Learning, teaching, and assessment effectively inform and influence one another.	<b>DP:</b> Shows development beyond requirements	<b>DP:</b> Shows development beyond requirements	

## E. Feedback on the planning and analysis and reflection of programme development

### Programme development strengths

#### Planning

- The plan clearly outlines the impact the school wishes to achieve and the activities to do this. The school team identified a range of resources and training opportunities to support the work.
- The school clearly identified a question and achievable goal in the area of focus for programme development.
- The school identified IB practices that supported the achievement of their goal.

#### Evidencing and analysing

- In establishing the process, the school examined structures and support mechanisms that currently exist and looked at what needs to be improved in relation to student learning and the programme.
- The school adapted the plan appropriately, based on interim feedback from stakeholders. Further elements and functions of Managebac, Turnitin and MS Teams were added as the implementation process evolved.
- School leadership convincingly shared how the process resulted in a positive improvement in the student experience.

#### Reflection

- The development team identified a number of factors that led to the work having the intended impact, namely improved monitoring of unit planning, increased communication opportunities with students and parents on students' learning progress, and more consistent implementation of expectations for academic integrity.
- The school was able to make systemic improvements as a result of the programme development process. The integration of new platforms to improve oversight, learning and communication has had a sustainable impact on school structures.

### Areas for consideration

As the school engages in further efforts to develop the programme, it may wish to consider:

#### Planning

- ensuring that the efforts are aligned with the school's strategic plan.
- initiating further programme development plans to capture and organise the identified development needs.

#### Evidencing and analysing

- setting up structures that encourage or incentivize learning and adaptation.

## Reflection

- ensuring that time is set aside to engage in meaningful reflection.
- using an established protocol for the reflection process.
- including measurable indicators with milestones and people responsible for various aspects of the plan.
- including in the plan a review cycle for ongoing monitoring and adjustment; and consider update presentations to the community at key points.

## **F. Opportunities for future or further programme development**

### **The school identified the following areas as priorities for programme development**

#### **Priorities:**

- Technology well used can be an enormous asset to students and staff in delivering the programme when used effectively. Things can take longer to embed with teachers than with more tech experienced students. The school recently added JSTOR, this adds an online academic library, and Turnitin Draft Coach, this helps students to check their work as they go to school systems. The school is developing the goal setting and language portfolio elements of Managebac and further improving their use for all stages of CORE.

### **The Evaluation team has identified the following areas of the programme(s) for the school to consider for future or further development**

#### **Future or further development:**

##### **Environments / Student support (0202) / Student support 5:**

- The school has identified the need to rebuild and strengthen relationships with the wider community, following the impact of covid.

##### **Environments / Teacher support (0203) / Teacher support 3:**

- The school might benefit from planning teachers' collaborative discussions with an emphasis on IB philosophy and IB education topics, such as approaches to learning, approaches to teaching, the learner profile, or international-mindedness when designing their collaborative professional learning programme for the year. School leadership recognize that a strategic approach is required.

##### **Learning / Designing a coherent curriculum (0401) / Coherent curriculum 2:**

- The school might benefit from an increased collaborative learning focus on connections and relationships between different subject areas as well as on elements of an IB education.

##### **Learning / Students as lifelong learners (0402) / Lifelong learners 2:**

- The school is committed to further and more consistently implement their defined 12 pillars, closely aligned with the IB learner profile.

## G. Conclusions of the Evaluation team

Documentation provided as well as the conversation with school leaders demonstrated a commitment to improving consistent programme implementation and communication with all stakeholders by introducing platforms such as Managebac, MS Teams and Turnitin. From the conversation, it has been very clear how school leaders employ IB education elements to have a sustainable impact on the development of the whole school.

While it was also clear that covid has had an impact on the community, school leadership confirmed a strong commitment to rebuilding connections and relations with the school and the local community.

## H. Conclusion of the IB on the school status as an IB World School

We trust that the information found in this report will support the school's continued development of its IB programme(s). Your IB World School manager, Proserpina Dhlamini-Fisher ([proserpina.dhlaminifisher@ibo.org](mailto:proserpina.dhlaminifisher@ibo.org)), will be in touch with you to follow up on this report and to support your school's ongoing efforts.

Yours Sincerely,

Adrian Kearney  
Director, IB World Schools