

FAME

Assessment Report



Introduction

Name	Sophia High School (SHS)
Founded	2020
Location	British Online School, main office UK, global reach
Website	sophiahigh.school
Director of Education	David McCarthy doe@sophiahigh.school
Number of students	40
Nationalities	Multinational
Years of Study	Nursery to Year 9
Teachers	ALL UK qualified teachers
Curriculum	British National Curriculum (International Primary Curriculum & International Middle Years Curriculum) https://sophiahigh.school/partnerships/

ACADEMICS

Sophia High School (SHS) is an online school that teaches the British National Curriculum for children aged 5 – 14. Their academic year runs from September to June,

Sophia High School uses Google Classroom to deliver interactive lessons online. This platform provides many functions to enable effective teaching and interaction between teachers and students in a safe, protected environment. Google Classroom enables teachers to provide their students all materials and resources required for lessons. The children (and their parents) have continuous access to classwork, recorded lessons, resources, and a means of communicating within the class environment.

In the Foundation Stage, Reception children are taught the UK Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Development Matters curriculum. English and Maths are taught alongside a thematic and creative based curriculum approach. This is in alignment with the International Primary Curriculum. The Foundation Stage supports children in reaching their Early Learning Goals in preparation for their journey into the Primary School.

The Primary School consists of Key Stage 1 (UK Years 1 and 2) and Key Stage 2 (UK Years 3 to Year 6). In the Primary School the school has a thematic and creative curriculum approach that uses the International Primary Curriculum (IPC). This is taught alongside the British National Curriculum. The curriculum applies a global approach that helps children connect learning to where they are currently living, and to view learning from the perspectives of people in other countries. The IPC is structured into mileposts over Years 1 to 6; children aim to achieve specific learning goals, catered to their ages, in all core subjects.

The Secondary School consists of Key Stage 3 (UK Years 7 to 9). In the Secondary School, the school has a thematic, creative curriculum approach that uses the International Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC). This is taught alongside the British National Curriculum. The curriculum employs specific goals for learning in each subject as well as goals for personal development. The curriculum applies a global approach that also helps students connect learning to where they are living now and view learning from the perspectives of people in other countries.

The school uses a range of highly effective resources to deliver an up-to-date curriculum. This is done in conjunction with educational apps that support learning outside of the classroom. Examples are: White Rose Maths, the Literacy Tree and apps such as Reading Eggs and Mathletics. There are daily scheduled lessons for core subjects in English and Maths and weekly Science and French lessons; these have a maximum class size of 6 children. The IPC and IMYC provides a curriculum where the children study Society, International, Art, Design Technology and Innovation, Geography, History, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Music, PSHEE and Physical Education. This is accomplished through enquiry based, cross-curricular learning.

Sophia High School employs highly qualified, UK trained teachers. In addition, SHS employs subject specialists to teach Math, Science, French, PSHEE and Mental Wellbeing, Performance Arts and Drama and Computer Science.

Planning

Schemes of work provide the structure and learning goals for the curriculum. Learning goals are taken from the UK National Curriculum for core subjects and

from the IPC or IMYC for all other subjects. Weekly planning provides the focus of teaching for each lesson, including differentiation, resources, and assessment. These are continually adapted to meet the needs of the students based on continual teacher assessment and reflection. There is identifiable structure and progression through both subjects and Key Stages to build on students' knowledge, understanding and skills.

SHS has subject coordinators who lead and guide their subject's curriculum. These coordinators have regular meetings to discuss, monitor and review the curriculum. Teachers meet across Key Stages; there is evidence of training and moderation to share best practices and effective strategies for teaching and learning.

Lessons

Online, live lessons are delivered in the mornings, with a focus on students completing independent, project-based work. Afternoons are for homework. Team Meetings are held daily; these provide a time for all teachers and children to 'touch base'. A themed weekly assembly is held where the whole school participates. This provides the opportunity to celebrate individual children's successes and achievements.

Sophia High School provides an impressive student to teacher ratio, with class numbers at a maximum of 6 for core subjects. Children receive individualised education where they can be challenged or supported in specific ways to meet their needs.

When observing lessons, there is evidence of strong relationships, collaboration and respect between teachers and students. In IPC and IMYC lessons, the children work together in smaller groups (via break-out rooms) to discuss questions, then join back to the main class to share what they have learned. In a Team Meeting, there was a PSHEE discussion about friendships and role play to demonstrate how the children could actively engage in conflict resolution. There was strong classroom management from all staff and clear expectations were set and understood by all. In lessons, teachers reinforced the expectation of using the hands-up function to take turns to speak and listen to peer responses. Lesson objectives are shared and discussed both on screen and in digital notebooks. Students' thoughts and opinions are valued; high expectations are set for all to achieve. In an IMYC lesson, children were given the opportunity to add to the discussion based on their prior experiences. Many different teaching techniques and Google classroom tools were observed, providing interactive and collaborative learning. The use of: Jam Boards for collaborative whole-class

learning, break-out rooms to promote group work, message boards for children to answer questions and children videoing their work to record evidence of their learning, were just some of the different tools used and observed during lessons. The children have digital notebooks for schoolwork. These are used in subjects to record their work. Teachers mark their work and provide feedback within the notebooks. Not only are digital resources used but the school encourages the use of physical books and resources to enhance the students learning. Families are provided with a list of resources to enable children to make use of physical resources. Examples include textbooks, reading books, whiteboards, stationery, and crafts to enhance their online learning experiences and participate in project-based work. The children are not only expected to be able to use technology to present and complete their work, but to submit written work and create projects. Within the Google classroom, students and parents have access to all the student's work and teachers' recorded lessons and resources.

During lessons, it was evident that teachers are aware that they need to balance providing high quality lesson instruction with appropriate screen time. Within lessons, teachers reinforce the importance of providing short eye and brain breaks, as well as movement breaks, to encourage the children to get outside and get some fresh air.

Not only is there a focus on the importance of delivering high quality education; teachers also work to ensure that student's emotional well-being is supported. The teaching of the IPC and IMYC encourages students to become global citizens. There are weekly PSHEE lessons taught by classroom teachers, as well as a specialist PSHEE teacher and Mindfulness and Wellbeing Coach. The school has partnered with Linden Global Learning Support to offer additional educational and therapeutic support to families. When speaking with teachers they referred to having a 'family community' feel within the school. This is evident in the care and attention provided to students not only in lessons, but during Team Meetings and Social Time which aims to nurture the students' emotional and social wellbeing.

To enhance learning experiences, Sophia High School organises different events to support global learning and international awareness. Examples include Book Day and celebrations around the Platinum Jubilee. The school aims to continually introduce new resources to deepen and enhance student's experiences, for example, Athenaverse and Virtual Reality.

Assessment

During the school year, there is a cyclic assessment schedule used to assess and monitor student's progress. Teachers use a variety of summative and formative assessments to monitor and track the student's progress. Examples include UK Standardised tests, end of topic tests and teacher-based

assessments. All these results feed into a whole school assessment tracking system called 'Classroom Monitor' where student's progress is tracked against subject objectives. Teachers are trained in the use of all assessments and take part in moderating student's work to ensure continuity and consistency of marking and assessment.

Teachers use all this information to help inform future planning and target setting, both for and with the students. The marking of student's work is thorough; work is graded against lesson objectives and comments are provided as feedback. Children use these lesson objectives to self-assess their own work. At the beginning of lessons, there was evidence that children review their marked work and were given the opportunity to discuss their work and clarify their understanding with the teacher. Target setting is done in a variety of ways depending on age and stage of students. For example, there is evidence that Secondary students are using 'DIRT' (Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time) where they are given time to reflect and improve their work.

There is strong evidence of good communication between teachers and parents. Sophia High School promotes the importance of both a strong community and a well-connected family-school relationship. Parents can meet with their child's teacher regularly, either weekly or bi-weekly, to discuss progress and next steps. Parents receive formal written reports within the school's assessment cycle. Teachers comment on how they have good relationships with parents; this creates a positive home-school education experience.

To celebrate success students are awarded certificates for 'Star of the Week', as well as other educational achievements, in a weekly assembly. End of Term Awards are given to students for values, attendance, and contributions to broader school life in addition to subject specific achievements.

EAL

The language of instruction of all lessons is English. Children require an age-related standard of English to access the curriculum and socially take part in the school community. The school can support EAL learners with additional 1:1 sessions outside of curriculum time (at an additional cost) to develop and support students' language skills and thereby improve their ability to access the curriculum and develop their social and emotional skills and wellbeing. Within lessons, teachers provide support for EAL children through differentiated resources, as well as additional apps and platforms to support and practise language skills and development outside school time. Sophia High School also offers a range of after school and holiday programs. Their objective is to help with the development of life skills and socialisation.

SEND

Sophia High School caters to a range of SEND needs through the expertise and experiences of their teachers. The key requirements are that (1) children can access the curriculum offered without the need for specific 1:1 support during live lessons and (2) are able to work within an online environment without the requirement of 1:1 support outside of their age-related requirements. The school has a partnership with The Linden Global Learning Support Company. Linden provides children with additional support online, from their team of experts, outside of the Sophia High School curriculum.

Beyond the curriculum

Beyond the Curriculum provides extra-curricular options for after school activities and holiday clubs and camps. This gives the children the opportunity to explore and be involved in experiences that are beyond the curriculum. There are a variety of different online experiences from drama and musicals, to coding and art activities.

Teachers have an excellent rapport with their students and not only have an educational interest in the children but are aware of their home-life situations. Teachers are aware of children's out of the school activities and hobbies. During Team Meetings we witnessed discussions regarding these other endeavours.

Communication (from interviewing the teachers)

Teachers speak very positively of the open and regular communication they have with parents. When joining Sophia High School, there is clear and transparent communication from the outset. Management and teachers spend time gaining an insight into each new student's previous educational experiences to ensure smooth transitions. Google camps are provided by the Head of Digital Learning before a family starts with Sophia High School. Google camps assist families with initial training to support their use of Google Classroom and the various other platforms used during the school day.

Regular, weekly staff meetings provide opportunities for discussion around the school, curriculum, and children. Teachers feel there is a strong sense of community and are supported by management and one another. Teachers have the opportunity for professional development both with ongoing school training and specific training and development based on individual teachers interests and needs (more details in the paragraph below).

MANAGEMENT

For this assessment we interviewed both the CEO and the DoE (Director of Education) of SHS and the Early Years Coordinator. The team is friendly, approachable, and fully answered all questions. The team has created a shared purpose; they all believe in the SHS vision and its future potential. They are all highly qualified educators and heads of school with extensive international experience in both brick-and-mortar schools as well as online learning. They have all lived as expatriates around the globe and can identify with the needs and requirements of expat parents around the world. They are relentlessly striving to have the latest qualifications in online teaching and update their systems to provide a personalised learning experience. They know their students by heart, their parents and their students' learning history. They know very well their respective reasons for choosing SHS. They also conduct surveys to take the pulse of the community and ensure the best service. They respond to email on the same day and there are very clear mechanisms in place for the parents to understand who to reach and when.

Policies

All policies are available online; they are up to date and reviewed annually. Staff must read them, understand them, and complete training at the beginning of each school year, independently of how long they have worked for SHS. These policies are valid and reinforced throughout the school year from the CEO down to all school staff, parents, and students. These policies include Online Safeguarding Training, Antbullying, Behaviour and Assessment, to name just a few. Here is a link to all SHS policies available to everyone considering joining SHS: [Sophia High School Policies](#)

1. Online safeguarding and child protection policy. This is probably one of the most important policies when it comes to online studying. Whilst

it is published on their website and easily accessible to anyone interested in finding out more about this policy, we wanted to find out how it was reinforced to ensure that everyone is up to date and in compliance. Here are some examples the school gave us during the interview:

- a. The school conducts an induction at the beginning of the school year where all staff and parents are trained in the procedures and available tools.
 - b. Students sign a contract of behaviour which stipulates the rules on how they are expected to behave online. In other words, the dos and don'ts of online behaviour.
 - c. All staff must complete the assessment every year. Management vets reports to ensure that they have completed it.
 - d. There are discussion sessions on the subject and all parties participate: parents, students, and teachers.
 - e. The school keeps track of all behaviour incidents and safeguarding incidents. While no major incidents have been reported in the two years since the school was founded, one of the most common misconducts is that students switch off their cameras during teaching/learning. Students at SHS know that the most important rule is to always keep the cameras on during live sessions.
 - f. The school's anti-bullying policy is specially enforced with respect to online harassment. There are lessons, discussions, online research, case studies and teacher- students' classes on the subject.
 - g. The system used by the school also tracks the student's learning journey; it identifies and can report to parents when the student connects/disconnects,
2. Sophia High School follows the Learning Effectively Online, an IBC Scheme of Work Methodology. This ensures the platform they employ is interactive. As there is great feedback from teachers, reliance on parents to assess the students' progress is minimised. Students interact both inside and outside the classroom. Learning is highly personalised. This user-friendly platform is cost effective from the point of view of schoolbooks.
- a. Children are taught the value and composition of safe passwords; how to research and differentiate fake news from real news
 - b. Children, parents, and teachers are all made aware of their overall wellbeing when it comes to screen time. They are taught how to balance on/off screen time, ways to relax, what to do during class breaks, the importance of physically socialising outside SHS and community building both online and offline
 - c. SHS reinforces all the above by asking teachers of all years, and parents, to undergo such training. Students must learn the

IBC Scheme of Work Methodology before they embark upon online learning at Sophia.

3. Effective communication

One of the most impressive policies at Sophia High School is the weekly Parent/Teacher Conference. This ensures parents are continuously updated on the student's progress, immediate action is taken when needed and parents are aware at all times of their children's learning journey. Sometimes the students are present in these conferences, sometimes the conferences are just between the parents and the teachers.

All classes are recorded. This allows parents tangible evidence of the class quality and their children's performance. Additionally, it provides perspicuous evidence in case of behavioural or academic issues and lack of academic progression. At lunch there are 30 minutes of non-recorded free conversation between the students without a teacher present. The students felt that they could handle it. They also expressed that they felt a need for a space where they could speak freely without the interference of an adult.

As much of the school communication, as well as communication within the community, takes place via emails, special attention has been dedicated to ensuring effective written communication and that appropriate language is used of when communicating with peers, staff, parents and leadership.

SHS helps children transition to new schools when they decide to continue their learning elsewhere. SHS communicates with the new school, informs them of their progress, their workstyle and gives advice on what they feel is the best way forward for the student. The student and their family know that SHS will always be there for them to support them with whatever information may be needed to perform well in their new environment. SHS can also continue to support the student on a particular subject, when the case arises, by giving online support classes for that weak subject.

4. Behaviour policy

SHS is proud to say that in their two years of teaching, there have been no major behavioural issues to report. Nevertheless, SHS has a rigorous action plan should any issues arise. The first step would be to provide proof of suboptimal conduct; all parties would be able to review the recording of the session in question. It is available for all parties involved to review, enabling any potential situation to be resolved easily with a mutually agreed upon resolution.

The second step would be for the teacher to conduct lessons on the issues that happened during the class, orally or in writing.

Another step would be to discuss the specific case with the parents, or in their weekly teachers' meeting.

The only minor behavioural issues so far have been switching off the cameras during teaching/learning and using upsetting language in emails. The protocol in place has proven effective in dealing with these situations; students came to understand why having their camera turned on is one of the most important safety elements of online learning. Together with the teacher they learnt how to best communicate in writing to avoid misunderstandings and disrespect.

5. Complaint procedure

SHS takes pride in the quality of their teaching as well as the pastoral care they provide to the students. However, should parents wish to make a complaint, SHS has a very easy to read procedure available on their website. The steps to take and who to contact in different circumstances are clearly listed. On top of that, there is an official complaint form which ensures all responsible parties have been informed and a formal solution furnished and well documented.

6. Health and safety

Health and Safety measures are adapted to both everyday life and life online. We have more details about this aspect of teaching/learning in the paragraph on *digital*. We interviewed the IT manager of SHS to learn how this policy is applied.

7. Online wellbeing

There is policy in place to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for the school community. SHS recognises that mental health is just as important as physical health. Again, these policies are all available for a more detailed inspection via the link provided above.

Hiring process for teaching personnel

Teachers at SHS are required to have the following qualifications: a degree, a teacher's qualification like PGCE and ideally more than three years of teaching experience.

Teachers new to SHS work with a teacher coordinator who oversees helping the new staff familiarise themselves with the school's technology, rules, and procedures.

While working at SHS, teachers benefit from a complete Continuous Professional Development scheme. This continuous training ensures that teachers acquire knowledge and skills that enable them to perform their tasks and duties efficiently. The training may involve reinforcing existing skills, learning new skills, acquiring new knowledge and/or updating their present skills to the latest technologies and online practices.

SHS shared with us their teacher training plan for the ongoing year, and the preceding summer, before the next school year commences. Here are some examples:

- Language for resilience: Teaching English to refugee and displaced learners. As soon as the Russian/Ukrainian war began, SHS decided to step up and do something for Ukrainian refugees. They invited some children to study at SHS free of charge. Some of these children received school scholarships and have moved on to other schools, but some of them continue to study at SHS. SHS quickly got everyone trained to ensure that they were prepared to properly cater to these cases.
- SHS reinforces/updates teaching strategies to ensure that all students can make at least good progress.
- Marking: The school marks at different stages of the learning process and different times of the year.
- Academic targets and students' progress is tracked at different stages of the learning process.
- Curriculum: there are schemes of work for different subjects
- Time management
- Embracing digital curriculum
- Online Safeguarding
- School policies: Teachers are told which policies they need to learn and given dates for them to be studied and reviewed.

- Classroom training: Teachers are trained in the digital tools used to manage online classrooms and teach students using digital resources

SHS has a wealth of CPD training sessions, but for the present assessment we believe the above examples are sufficient to indicate their solid and consistent staff training program.

Admissions

The admission process for new students proceeds in a few clearly indicated steps. After parents express interest in studying at SHS, the admission officer schedules a phone call with them to find out details about the future student. After the interview, they are invited to pay a fee of 50 GBP to sit for the admission tests which are either PUMA or PIRA.

Apart from the written tests, the students are interviewed to gauge their social interaction and online abilities. The school might want to see, and analyse, previous school reports and records. SHS might decide to move the student higher or lower in different subjects depending on their performance. At SHS students work in pods, which enables them to go faster or slower in different subjects according to their needs. Some Year 2 students might do Year 4 Maths because they are an overachiever at that subject; other students might be slow learners, or join SHS with learning gaps in a subject, and thus be put in a lower pod until they catch up.

If a student wanting to join SHS is behind in their learning, whether overall or in a particular subject, SHS offers the possibility of hiring teachers to help them level up. Those students might need to study individually until they are ready to join their classmates.

The next step in the admissions process is to award a place to the student. A deposit of 1,000 GBP is expected to reserve the place.

Tuition can be paid each term or annually. A discount is given when tuition is paid annually.

The teacher, student and parents are invited to a meeting in which the school policies are presented and discussed until they are fully understood. Key digital skills are brushed up, so that everyone knows what they are doing. This enables parents to trust the school and know that their continuous surveillance is not necessary unless they choose to always be present during classes.

SEN students are admitted to SHS, provided their learning skills allow for a smooth integration into the SHS learning system. Students with dyslexia, dyspraxia and ADHD are some examples of SEN students currently studying at SHS.

EAL students are also tested and integrated according to their linguistic abilities. At times, more English lessons might be indicated before becoming full time SHS students. Age and year of study play decisive roles. The younger the students, the quicker they tend to brush up on their English and start normal classes.

Risk management plan

SHS's risk management plan stipulates the requirements for the school to identify and manage risks that might affect their students, staff and parents. SHS's mission is to deliver the best possible outcomes for their students and their community; to safeguard their students and the wellbeing of their staff. Some examples are given in the paragraph detailing CPD (continuous professional development), but here are a few others:

- All leadership team have been trained and achieved Excellence in Online Safeguarding. They have been awarded a Cyber Essentials Certificate, which is a UK government led program.
- SHS has a solid School Improvement Program.
- SHS conducts evaluation and self-evaluation surveys.
- SHS dedicates time and efforts to revising standards and tracking students' achievement/progress.
- Organisation targets are set.
- Achievement and Intervention Plans are set for students
- The staff is trained in the latest and most effective software for online teaching/learning.

Additionally, there is an intervention plan in place in case a student cannot connect to the class when they should. Here are some solutions:

1. They can view the recordings since all classes are fully recorded and do their homework as usual. The student can ask the teacher questions in an email for further clarification.
2. Students must ensure they use a laptop or desktop; the screen might be too small on other devices, thus the various digital tools at their disposal would be inaccessible.
3. An IT specialist is always available to help students connect or obtain a better performing computer.

Digital learning

SHS has an IT specialist available to assist with all IT issues for both the school's systems and students' private computers. SHS also has a teacher trainer who conducts the beginning of the year training sessions with staff, parents, and new students.

Probably one of the most important questions when it comes to online studying is: How much screen time is involved? The best way to answer this question is to provide parents with a sample of the timetable at SHS. Here is a link to some sample schedules: [Sample Timetable Lower KS2](#)

Another important matter to consider is parental involvement. How much time would parents need to spend helping their children connect/disconnect from their devices, help them upload their homework and understand the different digital tools they need to operate successfully during the lesson?

SHS has a thorough system which takes around 30 minutes of training at the onset of the school year to master. From their experience, children can connect completely independently from the age of 4. When conducting this assessment, as observers, we must admit that we were impressed by how easily and smoothly everything works. All students seemed comfortable and accustomed to writing in their answers, 'raising' their hand when wishing to speak, muting/unmuting their microphone, sharing their screens, using the teacher's screen when needed, etc.

Another question parents frequently ask is: Who is available to help a student struggling with technology when there is no one at home to help? In this situation, the SHS IT specialist will intervene in the presence of either the CEO or the Director of Education (DoE). He can be contacted directly by the student. Alternatively, the classroom teacher can raise the alarm for the student.

A further question concerns the reliability of the system. How can parents be sure that the system cannot be hacked, and no one can access their children's recorded lessons, credentials and/or personal information? SHS runs on Google Enterprise Education, where all data is uploaded and stored on Google's servers, not the school's platform/website. This ensures high safety standards. There are various layers of security via passwords, anti-virus software, anti-hacking security systems and firewalls. Everyone studying at SHS receives this package of computer safety systems to protect their personal computer.

Another concern regarding online learning regards socialising in the physical world. Parents worry their children won't have contact with others, aside from computers and online school mates. SHS are planning to partner with entities who would provide socializing for students in different parts of the world. In the meantime, the families we interviewed do not worry about this, as they have all easily managed to help their children form circles of friends apart from SHS.

EXPAT SUPPORT

Sophia High School has a series of systems in place to welcome new parents, show all existing parents support and to actively partner with them on their children's' learning journeys. For this part of the assessment, we interviewed the management as well as some existing parents and students.

Our interviews demonstrated that SHS helps parents constantly via various communication channels. Here are some examples:

- **Welcoming sessions.** These happen at the beginning of every school year. They are not just for new parents; all school parents are invited.
- **Weekly Parent/teacher conferences.** Weekly, parents learn first-hand how their children are performing in all subjects.
- **DIRT initiative or Dedicated Improvement Reflexion Time.** This is where students can reflect on feedback they have received and understand the way forward to achieve their maximum potential.
- **Reflection time** is also in the logged students' notebook. It happens in a variety of ways: self-assessment, peer- assessment, class assessment and via the teachers' assessment.
- **ESL (English as a Second Language) support.** The school has hired a new teacher who, while a native French speaker, is also an ESL qualified teacher. ESL support is vital both for those students whose first language is not English and for those whose parents do not master English.
- **All SHA classes are recorded live.** Therefore, parents can keep a close eye on their children in class and see for themselves how things evolve.
- **Newsletters** Management keeps parents informed through regular newsletters.
- **Email:** Parents can email the teacher and arrange a meeting at the most convenient time
- **The leadership team (CEO, DoE) believes in transparency and shared purpose.** Therefore, they keep the community updated on summer courses, reports, assessments, workshops, etc.
- **SHS ensures overall prompt and fluid communication.**

In the future, SHS would like to explore partnering with physical entities for more social support. They are also studying the idea of organising a residential campus where SHS students can physically interact.

One of the star features of SHS is the fact that while they offer personalised support to every student, they also offer accelerated learning for overachievers. To facilitate this, the school teaches students in pods according to their ability. This means that a Year 2 student might study English for Year 2, but study Math for Year 4 because they outperform in the subject for their age. It also means that students may have different peers in different subjects.

SHS runs from Nursery to Year 9. However, the leadership team has established a partnership with Minerva Virtual Academy to support students who want to continue their online studying from IGCSE onward. The leadership team has assured us that when any of their students move on from SHS, they leverage their extensive educational network and contacts around the world to help their families find the best schools for their children.

Overall, the SHS staff is very supportive in advising on future education. Another way they support parents is by connecting them with parents of similar backgrounds or educational needs to share their experiences and learn from each other.

For slow learners, if the typical school timetable and recommended work is not sufficient to bring the student up to the year's target, SHS may offer private tuition support. In practice, this private tuition support is open to any student around the world who might need that extra push to achieve their goals.

Teachers do move around, i.e., they do not teach the same age of students every year. However, as students at SHS learn in pods, they are accustomed to a variety of teachers teaching different subjects. As in many schools, some parents/students may have a strong preference for a certain teacher. The school is willing to sit down with the family, understand the reason behind their request, explain their stance on the matter and then meet the parents in the middle; all of this is done in the child's best interest. Such situations have never occurred, but the system is there in place, should they arise.

We also spoke to the children in the student council. They were from 6 to 14 years old, of various nationalities and domiciled in different countries. Most of them explained to us that the reason they started up SHS was due to the worldwide pandemic and because their parents wanted them to have a solid British education, even when not based in the UK. They are continuing at SHS because they enjoy it so much and their parents have full confidence in the system. They have become digital experts, they find the system very easy to manage, have never had any major issues and enjoy that they can study when traveling or on holiday. When asked their favourite thing about SHS, they indicated socialising after school or play time at lunch without the teacher. Other favourite things about SHS were theme days, art activities and "really nice teachers".

When we interviewed the parents, their reason for choosing SHS was more due to unhappy past experiences in physical schools. Such experiences included bullying and its impact on the emotional and cognitive wellbeing of the child, and a lack of academic progress- or more frankly, the student failing behind so drastically that nothing could help the child but a complete change of setting. The parents reported how their children transformed when they began studying at SHS. They have become confident, outspoken, made real progress and even started to outperform in certain subjects where they were considered a failure in previous schools. They credit such successes to the personalised teaching at SHS, their accelerated program for overachievers and their effort to teach the student as a whole and fully engage with them. The parents are confident in the

digital aspect of learning; they do not feel that their children are missing out on anything because they all have friends outside the school. They are also positive about their children's schedules and do not fear too much screen time; they feel there is a proper balance.

