



Skt. Josef's International School, Denmark

## Supporting school decisions with research and evidence



Skt. Josef's International School in Denmark offers Cambridge Primary, Cambridge Lower Secondary and Cambridge IGCSE. Head of School Kevin Goggins explains how Cambridge International's Self-Evaluation service supported the school in its development.

### Using self-evaluation to shape school development

Skt. Josef's International School was established in 2012. The first few years were concentrated on setting up the programme, engaging with the community, increasing awareness of our school, welcoming students and becoming established. I call this the introductory stage.

Moving from this into the growth stage meant a new development and operational plan to start looking forward. We read about the School Self-Evaluation service on Cambridge International's website and decided to use this comprehensive service to examine where we were currently and where we needed to focus our attention for development over the next few years.



*Kevin Goggins,  
Head of School*





### Support from Cambridge International from day one

We felt very supported from our initial contact expressing our interest in the service. We had the opportunity to discuss why we wanted to do the self-evaluation and how it would cater for our needs. There was ample support during and after the evaluation in the form of discussions with Cambridge experts. I felt very supported in the questions and reflections we had and the experts offered a wealth of knowledge.

### An adaptable and robust evaluation

There was the option for flexibility in the surveys and some questions were adapted to suit our individual needs, such as specifics to our local environment and community.

Where possible, we like to support the decisions we make with research and evidence. The experience provided a trusted evaluation of where we were at that point in time by receiving feedback from all the relevant stakeholders.

### Analysing the feedback

In my role you do not always receive positive feedback and it was a nice surprise to see such positivity come through in the survey. The School Self-Evaluation service, together with other feedback, observations and research, provided the basis for our current school development plan. Many of the areas for development stem from analysis of the self-evaluation.

### Addressing areas for improvement

It was pleasing to see that students, teachers and parents felt the overall performance of the school was outstanding. However, analysing the results did highlight areas that could

be improved, such as finding ways to access professional development for teachers, which can often prove tricky in a country where English is not the native language.

The development plan has initiated the need for a development group made up of teachers and leadership. This group has weekly meetings to focus on areas of the plan and, where necessary, involve other stakeholders. The introduction of the development plan and group has resulted in improvements such as a 'teachers as researchers' culture, active peer to peer observations, a better playground environment for students and a clearer school vision.

### Measuring progress and re-evaluating needs

The impact of the changes we have made as a result of the School Self-Evaluation process have been very positive. Ideally, we would complete the self-evaluation service again in the future to fully measure progress and re-evaluate our needs.

I would not suggest the service as a means to 'grade' the school. Instead, it is a great service for any school looking to get feedback from all stakeholders and an external, unbiased evaluation of their current position, whilst looking to make continuous improvements and developments.

