



InCAS has now  
evolved into  
**Cambridge  
Primary  
Insight**



## Enabling each child to excel at St Paul's School, Brazil

**St Paul's School in São Paulo, Brazil, was established in 1926 by the British community to serve children of those working on the railroad system in Brazil. St Paul's School currently educates approximately 1,000 pupils across the entire 3-18 school with around 170 teaching staff.**

With approximately 380 pupils in the Prep School, Head of Prep, Siobhain Allum, explains some of the benefits of using CEM's InCAS assessment with pupils in Years 1 to 6.

At St Paul's School our key objectives are to ensure that we deliver a top quality British education to our pupils and enable them to achieve at the highest standards across all areas. Our pupils follow the English national curriculum delivered through the IPC (the international primary curriculum).

Challenges come from the fact that we are a largely Brazilian cohort with regard to our pupils, so we have an immersion approach to developing their English language skills. That said, given that most speak Portuguese at home, this takes longer than it would in a more traditional UK prep school.

Pupils come to us at aged 6 and often have a 2 to 3 year gap in their reading skills. We believe that each child has the right to excel, and our ambitious aim is to close the gap in reading as quickly as possible and help them move past their chronological age in their reading skills.

We started using InCAS in 2009. I had decided that we would no longer use the KS 1 and 2 assessments and the optional SATs because they took up a lot of time and there was very little real return in terms of what we could use for more effective teaching.

Given that the InCAS assessment is adaptive, and not paper-based, there are some immediate advantages – for example, the longitudinal tracking as well as the breakdown of results within the different sections and so on.

We have been able to make significant improvements by attention to the data. It has been a fantastic experience to see the children improve and it definitely would not have happened without InCAS.

We do the InCAS assessments every June, as we feel it allows us to get a better measure of progress made over the current academic year. This enables me to have a conversation with current class teachers about value-added for individual pupils as well as classes as a whole.

Information on individual pupils is then also available for new class teachers in August and this enables them to get great initial data about their new pupils, and they can also form support and extension groups with the data across the year groups, for example spelling groups, comprehension groups etc.

We do triangulate with other sources, but InCAS provides a great starting point which other simple standardised assessments would not.

We also look at the data at a more macro level; so, how pupils have progressed in English and maths across year groups and across the school as a whole. We aim for an average of a year's progress in each area in each year group and for the whole school.



We analyse which areas may have prevented year groups from making this progress and then work towards improving this. For example, four years ago we realised that the data scores in maths were very low and that this was an area that was not being taught enough in the curriculum. The Head of Maths ensured this was taken account of, as necessary, and the improvements the following year were significant.

We also noticed that, as a school, we were very good at bringing our weakest pupils up but were neglecting to stretch our top achievers - the InCAS info helped us to see this and we tackled it with more extension activities and opportunities. We would not have realised either of these things without the data provided by InCAS.

We give parents the reading and maths ages and age-standardised scores. We do not do lots of formal testing so this gives them an idea of progress. We also provide the reading scores breakdown to some of the outside specialists we work with because it helps them to triangulate their findings as well.

We use InCAS to help us triangulate information on pupils. We have end of topic tests, maths assessments every 6 weeks or so (at the end of a teaching block), writing assessments and use a computerised reading programme to help us plot progress in reading, comprehension and fluency. For us InCAS has proved to be very compatible with our education programme. I went to a workshop right at the start with Professor Christine Merrell, one of the developers of InCAS, and she explained that the way the assessment is set up is equally bias neutral/loaded for native English speakers and non-natives.

We also especially like that the non-verbal score helps us to get a more accurate picture of the ability of our younger pupils where their weaker language skills may not be allowing them to perform at their best.



I really value so many aspects of InCAS and so many children have benefitted. I think the fact that teachers have some really specific information about pupils to get started with is crucial. This helps them target learning much more specifically and effectively.

I sometimes sit with individual parents to look at their children's entire set of results and this has proved to be very effective in a variety of situations.

I also like that it is longitudinal and given that our cohort is very stable it really allows us to track progress over the 5 years. The graph is usually very pleasing showing year on year value-added to learning and progress.

For me personally, as Head of Prep, I can see how the school is doing as a whole and use this for reports to the Board and parents.

The InCAS data really helps us to see - we might think we know something but InCAS really gives us the proof.'