



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

Al Basma British School

Abu Dhabi

United Arab Emirates

Date
Inspection number

25th - 27th April 2022
20220425

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1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education has put in place a voluntary scheme for the inspection of British schools overseas, whereby schools are inspected against a common set of standards that British schools overseas can choose to adopt.

The inspection and this report follow the Department for Education (DFE) schedule for the inspection of British Schools overseas.

The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's management on the overall effectiveness of the school, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent schools in the United Kingdom.

The inspection and report will cover the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation (including boarding); and the school's complaints procedures. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for students and students' achievements.

This inspection was completed by Penta International. Penta International is approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the English Department for Education (DFE) on the extent to which schools meet the standards for British Schools Overseas.

During the inspection visit, over 70 lesson observations took place, as well as a series of learning walks. school documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, and a range of teachers, parents and groups of students. The inspection team were in school for three days.

The lead inspector was Colin Dyson. The team members were Siobhan Brady, Elizabeth Clancy, Alistair Downes and Phillipe Poulain.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

Al Basma school meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

Al Basma School, Abu Dhabi is a highly effective school. Most teaching is at least good and a significant number of observed lessons were outstanding. The curriculum is highly effective with some outstanding elements.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including the following:

- The clear vision and drive the principal displays in the continued development of the school.
- The happy and secure learning environment that puts the students at the heart of all decisions
- The implementation of an effective range of teaching strategies to support learners who speak English as an additional language (EAL)
- The high quality subject knowledge and planning implemented by teachers
- Outstanding results in external examinations
- The campus provides a rich learning environment
- The behaviour and attitude of nearly all students creates a positive learning environment
- The highly positive impact of all staff both teaching and non-teaching to support students' wellbeing

3.2 Points for improvement

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following development points:

- Ensure teacher feedback to students provides clear 'next steps' in learning more consistently;
- Develop the engagement of students in Key Stages (KS) 3 and 4 by encouraging a wider range of 21st Century learning skills, including by providing more memorable learning opportunities through enhanced teaching and effective use of IT where appropriate;
- Implement the parent portal to share key information more easily.

4. The context of the school

Full name of school	Al Basma British School				
Address	Al Bahia, behind Deerfields Mall, PO Box 45994 Abu Dhabi, UAE				
Telephone Number/s	+971 2 562 3454				
Fax Number	+971 2 563 9895				
Website Address	www.albasmaschool.ae				
Key Email Address/s	reception@albasmaschool.ae				
Headteacher/Principal	Mrs Allison MacDonald				
Chair of Board of Governors/Proprietor	Mr KK Ashraf				
Age Range	3 to 18 years				
Total number of students	1,588	Boys	821	Girls	767
Numbers by age	0-2 years	0	12-16 years	401	
	3-5 years	248	17-18 years	53	
	6-11 years	886	18+ years	N/A	
Total number of part-time children	N/A				

Al Basma British school is a co-educational independent all-through school. It is based in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. The school opened its doors in 2014. Students follow the National Curriculum of England, with additional lessons in Arabic language, UAE Social Studies and Islamic Studies (for Muslim students) to meet the requirements of the UAE Ministry of Education.

4.1 British nature of the school

The school is organised according to the structures used in UK Schools with separate sections for Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS), primary and secondary. The National Curriculum of England is followed, as well as the EYFS guidance. The school follows a three-term academic calendar and has a uniform policy, as in many UK Schools.

English is the language of instruction throughout the school, apart from in Modern Foreign Languages (MfL), Arabic language and Islamic studies lessons, unless to non-Arab speakers. Parents receive all the school's letters and reports in English and the school website and social media channels are also in English. Parents are highly supportive of and enthusiastic about the British nature of the curriculum.

Policies and procedures, including classroom management, are in line with those expected in the UK and approaches to performance management also mirror those in UK Schools. Student assessments are based on national standards and the curriculum for England. Students study towards GCSE and A-Level examinations in KSs 4 and 5 respectively.

The majority of the teaching staff are UK trained and benefit from continued CPD aligned to UK practice. Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) are supported by a mentor and the school has invested further in this area by appointing a second NQT staff leader to ensure the successful mentoring and professional development of all NQTs.

A house system is well established similar to those in UK schools and core values, aligned to British values, are used as topics for assemblies.

5. Standard 1 The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided is overall good. The school meets the standards for BSO.

This is a highly effective school, due to strong leadership from the principal. The quality of teaching is consistently good and many lessons are outstanding. As a result, students achieve well in all aspects of their education and development. Students and their teachers enjoy school. Strong relationships based on mutual trust and understanding are evident throughout the school. The school has confidence in the rigour, accuracy and consistency of its internal processes. This is based on complementary UK standards, for example, UK diagnostic tests, assessments, curriculum resources and other complementary measures.

5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

The curriculum within the Foundation Stage is developed in line with the aims and standards of the UK Early Years Curriculum. The curriculum is well planned and offers progress across all seven areas of learning. Whilst students enter school below the expected range for their age the curriculum opportunities ensure rapid progress is made. The curriculum is planned around a thematic storybook approach. There is evidence of a recent review to enhance opportunities for engagement through the addition of new storybook themes. Once Covid-19 restrictions are fully lifted, the curriculum will be further enhanced through the development of the outdoor facilities allowing for greater physical development opportunities. The curriculum is delivered in mostly teacher-initiated tabletop activities.

In the best of lessons child-initiated activities were observed although they were not common practice. The school is developing opportunities to enhance integrated learning through student-initiated activities, allowing for greater challenge and more opportunities for student discussion through play. There is a well-planned phonics programme ensuring good progress is made. Training is provided for all staff in the delivery and planning of the programme. In the best lessons, teachers engaged the students in a variety of well-paced learning opportunities, which promoted good standards of reading and writing skills for most students. The curriculum is shared weekly with the parents allowing them to see coverage and support at home. The curriculum is enhanced through a selection of themed activity days.

The primary school's curriculum is designed to reflect a traditional style of British education that embraces its Middle Eastern location ensuring that children thrive as they are growing up in Abu Dhabi. The school's values and ethos underpin a broad and balanced curriculum. It is closely aligned to the National Curriculum for England and

promotes the best of British education for all students, at the same time embracing the school's diverse international context. The primary curriculum is well matched to the needs of the students and builds very effectively upon the learning in foundation stage. There is an appropriately strong focus on the development of students' literacy skills; phonics, reading and vocabulary development is delivered regularly across the key stages. English lessons are carefully planned to incorporate high quality, example texts with rich vocabulary. Students in Year 2 demonstrated empathy as they shared the book 'My Mum' and happily shared what made their mother special. A range of resources are used effectively to engage students in the learning, encouraging them to become independent and embed concepts. Lessons are not always enhanced by developing the resources and use of technology to support more memorable learning activities. Reading has a high profile within the curriculum, guided reading is delivered by teachers to groups and there is a strong focus on developing the reading through effective home school links.

Some students found it challenging to fully access the in-class learning; the school has developed robust methods to support these students and the use of IEPs to highlight differentiation for these students are embedded in most classrooms. Teaching assistants provide support to both individuals and small groups of students, working under the close supervision and direction of class teachers. All students have opportunities to learn about the important values of tolerance and respect for others, most notably through the moral-education programme. Students say the school encourages friendship and acceptance of all.

At KS3, the school provides a broad, balanced curriculum adapted to suit the needs and interests of the students. KS3 students take part in lessons in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, in addition to drama, French, robotics, Arabic language, history, geography, computing, music, art, design technology, PE, moral education, Islamic Studies and UAE Social Studies. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, students are grouped in ability sets enabling the teachers to tailor lesson planning and set an appropriate pace for lessons. Teachers are supported with adequate resources and make use of them during lesson time.

Many planned opportunities for speaking and listening activities are provided within the curriculum. Communication skills are developed in lessons. In a Year 8 English ESL girls' lesson, students worked to develop core competency skills of communication and critical thinking. Differentiation was evident in the planning and opportunity was provided to build confidence through individual delivery of set texts followed by verbal feedback.

Students with specific learning needs are identified and individually assessed. Individual Education Programmes are provided for staff to use in their planning to support students. Departments maintain detailed tracking and assessment data to monitor the progress of students across all phases and core subjects provide streamed teaching to allow students to work at the relevant pace. More able students are provided with

extension work in lessons. A structured enrichment programme for the whole school will be back in place for the next academic year 2022-23.

The middle and secondary school leadership team regularly monitors department plans to ensure that curriculum planning is strong. Weekly meetings are held, students of concern monitored, focus given to key words and vocabulary, class observations, peer and team observations and learning walks are conducted regularly and the school encourages an open-door policy around school. There is evidence that teachers use effective planning to help students learn well.

Because of Covid-19 restrictions, there is currently no homework timetable in place, but the school will introduce this next term to support students. For the same reason, there is also no extra-curricular programme operating in the school, but an after-school programme is planned for the next academic year 2022-23.

In KS4 and KS5 students follow the syllabi for GCSE and A level. The curriculum is diverse and alternative pathways such as BTEC qualifications have been introduced in some subjects. There are plans in place to offer this qualification in more subjects next year. The learning and progress across subjects are outstanding. Results achieved by students in examinations are well beyond CAT predictions.

Careers guidance is part of the KS4 and KS5 curriculum, through the PSHE programme. Students in KS4 and KS5 have access to a range of local professionals, including parents, who are invited into school to speak with students about their careers. Students receive personalised support with university applications, tailored to meet the requirements of the desired destination and career path.

The reward system in the school includes ClassDojo golden time, reward trips and incentives such as movie night certificates; praise is frequently communicated to parents by email or more informally at pickup and drop off times. KS5 students whose behaviour and academic performance have been consistently excellent get offered the chance to get on a trip to a local event, such as the Expo in 2020.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is good.

Teaching across the EYFS was good or better. The relationships between the students and teachers are outstanding and ensure a positive learning environment. The teachers and learning assistants have a detailed understanding of the students ability. It is evident that time is spent establishing very good routines and classroom management is strong.

Students were confident to take part in their lessons, demonstrating their developing knowledge. Teachers place a high focus on the development of key vocabulary and take all opportunities to increase the language acquisition of the students. In the best lessons teachers allowed opportunities for students to discuss and share their knowledge and challenged students to make significant progress within the lesson. The teachers used the available resources to engage and enhance students learning. The management is developing the outdoor learning environment to enhance opportunities beyond the classroom.

A range of data is gathered in EYFS, including a baseline assessment and regular reading and phonics assessments. The updated evidence tracker allows teachers to monitor the progress of students against the EYFS objectives. Further time is required to embed child-centred planning to ensure teachers are delivering a curriculum that matches the requirements of all students.

Teaching across the primary school is good with a significant number of outstanding lessons. In many lessons, prior learning is reviewed at the start of the lesson and links are made to other subjects to support students understanding and help them make connections across the curriculum. For example, students in Year 6 were using knowledge about deforestation gained in topic lessons during persuasive writing in English.

Positive relationships are evident between teachers and students. In lessons, teachers are confident and offer praise and encouragement. Teachers manage classroom time and students' behaviour very effectively. In the best lessons, there are obviously well-embedded routines and students demonstrate respectful behaviour towards their peers and adults in the room, by putting their hands up, taking turns, listening and responding to others' ideas/thoughts.

The students communicated confidently with each other and with the adults in the room. There was a very calm atmosphere and social skills as well as personal development was a significant element. The most effective teachers challenged the learners. In a Year 3 English lesson, there were a wide range of open-ended questions, seeking answers by asking 'how/what/who/can you work out/ give me an example of...'

A clear learning objective enabled some teachers to measure which students were making progress and the impact of the teaching.

In the best lessons teaching is well paced with a good balance between direct teacher input, independent work and opportunities for collaboration. When learning was highly successful teachers planned for collaboration and students were able to learn from each other. Year 3 students discussed and modified their ideas as they learnt to add and subtract mass in KG and grams and Year 6 students shared suggestions for using emotive language in letter writing. Targeted questioning was used effectively to move learning forward. Year 2 children enthusiastically engaged in the 'What Who? game' to explore the importance and variety of adjectives. Nearly all teachers ensure their lessons are language rich with a strong focus on key words. The learning of key vocabulary has been well embedded consistently across the primary school. 'Knowledge mats' containing new vocabulary are sent home prior to a new topic which also helps strengthen home school links.

Good or better lessons were often characterised by the encouragement and correct use of subject specific vocabulary, reflecting the competent subject knowledge of the teacher. Students' excellent use of scientific vocabulary enables them to articulate their understanding accurately, for example, students in Year 3 discussed the importance of making accurate predictions as they investigated the variation in bone sizes between animals, and Year 5 students were encouraged to use the correct vocabulary when discussing solutions.

Planning, assessment and tracking procedures are in place, monitored regularly by middle and senior leaders. All students have termly targets in their books. The marking policy, although comprehensive, is not implemented consistently across the primary School. Displays are used to support learning and celebrate achievement; however, this is not consistent across all classrooms. Teachers work with dedication to plan lessons which are tailored to meet the needs of students. They demonstrate a deep understanding of the curriculum and the subject being taught. Teachers have good expectations of all students, in terms of attitude, behaviour and learning outcomes.

Across KS3, teaching enables students to develop good language skills and strategies for learning. The school's drive to promote key vocabulary across all phases has supported EAL students in their learning. In a Year 10 English language and literacy girls' lesson, students demonstrated excellent behaviour and clear engagement as they analysed the poem, 'An Unknown Girl' and discovered the journey of the UK/Pakistani author to India. Support was provided for EAL students through visual aids, language prompts, repetition, collaborative learning and writing frames.

Differentiation is evident in planning but not consistently in lessons. Verbal feedback is shared regularly in lessons. Written feedback is not shared consistently across the curriculum. Most lessons maintained a good pace although it would be good for teachers to include an element of risk taking and supporting student led activity in their

lessons. In some of the lessons observed, there was a clear gap between boys' and girls' classroom attitude to learning. Girls' lessons demonstrated clear focus and enjoyment in subjects. In some of the boys' lessons from Years 8 to 10, whilst behaviour was well managed, there was lack of engagement from some students. Opportunities for independent, practical, collaborative tasks and student-led tasks benefit students and provide a 'buzz' in lessons, for some areas of the curriculum.

In lessons where students made the most progress, there was excellent balance between teacher talk and collaborative paired work. For example, in a Y8 girls' history lesson, students discovered the role of workers in the Industrial Revolution through teacher introduction and class discussion and then worked in pairs to identify, explain and evaluate how much they would like to fulfil such a role.

Summative assessments are set across KS3 every half term. The results along with CAT4 data form the basis of a tracking system across the curriculum. Formative assessment was seen in many lessons observed.

Teachers have positive relationships with students. All students feel safe in the classroom environment and ask for help and answer questions when required. Students are generally happy at school and well supported in their learning.

The style of teaching, learning and assessment equips most students with the knowledge and skills necessary to enter or re-enter the UK educational system at the appropriate level.

In Years 10 to 13, class sizes are kept small. This allows for personalised learning to take place and students are well supported by their teachers. The majority of lessons are well structured with some lessons delivered in a manner which both engages and promotes positive attitudes to learning. Clear links between current learning intentions and previous learning are created and shared with students, future outcomes in terms of next steps are highlighted at times. In some lessons, students are given clear success criteria by which they can judge their own progress towards these learning goals.

Most teachers use questioning skilfully to check understanding whilst also extending students' thinking and learning. Technology is used in lessons to enhance students' learning: at the time of the inspection, EYFS, secondary and some primary classes were taught using a hybrid model, effectively combining live streaming and face-to-face teaching. Teachers use projectors and presentation software in their lesson delivery, however, a better balance created between teacher talk, student interaction and digital input could further enhance learning outcomes.

Individual students' progress is monitored and tracked, using gap analysis; regular student progress meetings ensure that planning in classes and across teams is appropriate. Support is catered for across the school for students who require specific, individualised intervention. The senior management team has plans to centralise the

data using the database school management system called “Engage”. This should allow key leaders as well as teachers to track progress as well as underachievement in a more efficient way.

5.3 Standards achieved by students

Overall, the standards achieved by students are good with some outstanding attainment and progress at the end of KSs 4 and 5.

The school has systems in place to assess and track students attainment and plans are in place to further develop this.

In EYFS attainment and progress is good. Almost all students enter FS1 working below expectations but make rapid progress in all areas of learning during their first year in school. Progress in writing and number are particular strengths, highlighted by the school's data from academic year 2020/21 which shows that by the end of FS1 45% and 39% of students are exceeding expectations in writing and number respectively. A large majority of students are working at the expected level as they move into the primary school.

In the primary school, attainment is good. The school's data demonstrates some outstanding progress, most notably in English where students are consistently making better than expected progress. However, such progress is not consistent across all year groups and subjects. In the most recent standardised assessments administered by the school, boys outperformed girls in mathematics and English across all year groups assessed in Key Stage 2, with the exception of Year 5 English where scores were similar for both.

At KS3, students' attainment is in line with the expected UK standards. CAT4 testing is used as a baseline assessment and in target setting. Both external and internal assessments are used to ensure that students are challenged in lessons. At KS3, external and internal assessments are used to ensure that students are challenged in lessons. The lessons' success criteria are consistently shared to ensure that students know the expected standard for the lesson. CAT4 testing is completed by students in Years 4 to Year 13, biannually. Monitoring and evaluation of academic standards shows that teachers use both formative and summative assessment to inform planning. This is helping to address gaps in learning, to ensure and support improvement in student progress. Written feedback is an area for development. However, pockets of meaningful feedback were identified that were used highly effectively.

Students' progress at KSs 4 and 5 is outstanding in relation to CAT4 predicted scores. In 2020/2021, Y11 students performed well in most subjects achieving level 5 and above. At AS and A-Level, students' performance was excellent and exceeded CAT4 predictions, with a high number of students achieving A* to B grades.

Most students across the school have at least 96% attendance. Parents and students are aware of the negative impact of poor attendance on attainment and progress. The school aims to improve attendance and punctuality in its new working week.

6. *Standard 2* Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development of students

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students at Al Basma is outstanding.

The school enables students to develop their self-esteem and self-confidence by establishing good relationships. In nearly all lessons students were confident to share their opinions and answer questions in class. Teachers were successful at using class management techniques to ensure a variety of students had the opportunity to participate. Across the primary years, students are encouraged to reflect on their wellbeing by completing a daily check in. Over the course of the year students take part in whole school wellbeing and mental health opportunities such as anti-bullying week. Opportunities are available at all levels to seek the support and guidance of the school counsellor, the school leadership structure effectively supports pastoral care.

Throughout the school, there is evidence of the high expectations of behaviour and attitude through the 'Al Basma Student' poster. The core values link closely with the student competency framework of the local government establishing students who are 'future ready'. The leadership team spend dedicated time with all teachers during the induction week reviewing the code of conduct and the expected behaviours for staff and students. This includes the review of Al Basma's vision and values including tolerance, diversity, and UAE culture. Displays on a variety of topics include health, hygiene and safety, social responsibility, and cultural diversity, all of which are related to expected British values.

The students explore their diverse cultures through the UAE's moral education curriculum and through cross curricular links within the UK national curriculum. There is a selection of celebration days across the year, such as International Day, Tolerance Day and National Day all of which celebrate the diverse community. The curriculum is planned to ensure that the students have the opportunity to explore a selection of topics which exposes them to cultures of the world and global communities. In Year 6 students discussed the effects of deforestation on global communities and in Year 11, students debated the morality considerations within artificial intelligence. The students have supported the wider community through charitable activities such as the giving of care packages and raising charity funds through bake sales. Although hindered by the pandemic they hope to re-establish many of the social, spiritual and cultural practices in the near future.

Many students display pride in their work and achievements. The students within primary spoke positively of the rewards system and enjoyed being rewarded for good work and progress. In secondary, good work is celebrated through online assemblies and the issuing of certificates for achieving high standards, making good progress and effort. The students understand the importance of their education and are confident when discussing their aspirations and how their time in school is preparing them for their future. The school has a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere that is focused on learning. Students enjoy being part of Al Basma School, they speak confidently and are proud to be members of the community. In

lessons across the school, students displayed positive attitudes, good behaviour and courtesy towards their peers, staff and visitors. Behaviour was good, with students demonstrating a good understanding of right and wrong. Within primary, all interactions proved positive, students were supportive and caring towards their peers. The school has a behaviour policy which is used to establish a positive environment. The teachers spend time at the start of the academic year establishing class rules. These routines ensure students are aware of the expected behaviours including respect and tolerance for each other. Students at all levels understand the sanctions in place in the event of poor behaviour. They generally engage well with the rewards points system.

When interviewed, the students confidently discussed their opinions on many aspects of school life. They spoke of the lessons they enjoyed, the discipline processes and their positive experiences with their teachers. Teachers across all departments are a strength of the school. To allow for greater student voice, once Covid-19 restrictions allow, the school is planning to enhance student leadership opportunities by further expanding the student council responsibilities and impact across the school.

The secondary school follows a clearly defined behaviour policy that aligns to the local authority ADEK behaviour process. Students understand the system of levels and the consequences that follow. Behaviour in the secondary school is well-managed, and incidents are dealt with consistently. Positive behaviour is celebrated through the *praise* system when students will be rewarded by emails to parents, personal praise and a place on an end of term trip.

The attendance is typically at 96%, although there has been some variation during Ramadan. The policy and guidance for parents is detailed and shared annually in parents' presentations. There are effective systems in place to manage attendance and punctuality.

7. *Standard 3* The welfare, health and safety of the students

The provision for welfare, health and safety is excellent.

The school staff are highly committed to promoting students' health and safety. The safeguarding of students is assured through annual mandatory training for all staff, for which a central attendance log is kept. Bullying and other forms of harassment do not occur often, and the school has systems in place to deal with these issues in a timely and effective manner. There are 3 different levels of misbehaviour, the most severe of which (rarely used) requires parents to be met in school to discuss. Detailed behaviour records are kept by the school. Both primary and secondary students feel safe from bullying and confident that issues brought to the attention of their teachers or a trusted adult in the school, will be handled sensitively and effectively. An anti-bullying week and a tolerance day were implemented at the school in November 2021.

Teachers supervise children well in the different parts of the school before, during and after lessons have taken place. Staff interact with students appropriately to maintain safe and orderly conduct. The stairway and corridors have clear signage to mark which side of the stairway to use.

The school site is very secure. Surveillance cameras are installed all around the facilities. Each person wanting access to the site requires an entry pass or lanyard delivered after checks and registering personal details. Teachers wear their lanyard visibly across the school.

There is adequate outdoor space for children to access during break and at lunchtime and shaded areas are appropriate. Students who arrive late to school are registered by the school personnel on entry. In the event of a student not having an explanation note for lateness or absence, the school would ring up or email parents on the same day. Procedures at the beginning and end of the school day are closely monitored by school staff. The procedures to enter and leave the school site are very efficient. Students and parents arrive and leave the premises in a very orderly manner. School transportation is good, buses are checked routinely for their safety. The school keeps the chemicals used in science locked securely. The Lab Technician has the relevant training to keep students safe during practical experiments. There are clear signs of safe practice within the classrooms.

The school has a fire drill and lock down procedure. Regular testing and evacuation of students take place at least three times during the year. Fire safety meets the local Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) requirements. In case of a fire emergency, fire exits unlock automatically to allow students to leave the building. Throughout the school there are fire extinguishers and additional units can be found in science laboratories. Fire extinguishers are maintained and there is a record of this on each unit. A significant number of staff have completed fire safety training.

The toilet facilities around the school are suitable but could be improved in terms of size and numbers in the secondary areas. Increasing student numbers may require the school to expand the size of the changing facilities in the future, although a staggered timetable may be sufficient for the short term.

Students openly say they feel safe. They have had opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe. They say there is an adult they can turn to with concerns. Students have a good understanding of how to stay safe online and have been taught the dangers of inappropriate use of mobile technology and social networking sites as part of the PSHE programme during online learning. A safer internet day took place in February 2022, and has been repeated annually since 2016.

The school has a well-appointed clinic, with two qualified nurses and a detailed flowchart showing the steps taken if a child is reported hurt. Key staff around the school, such as physical education teachers and science technicians are first-aid trained to support first aid requirements. The school may want to make it compulsory for all teachers and staff alike to be fully trained.

The school made a very positive response to putting in place measures to reduce the spread of Covid-19, exceeding local requirements. The school is frequently inspected by compliance teams to ensure the school meets the country's requirements. Rigorous measures are taken daily to provide a safe and secure environment for students, staff, and visitors. There are clear signs of safe practice within the classrooms. Risk assessments for the school site and trips are in place. These are used effectively to keep all stakeholders safe.

8. *Standard 4* The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school fully meets the requirements of this standard.

The rigorous procedures to verify the health, identity, employment history, qualifications and references of leaders and staff at all levels are applied before appointments are made. Vetting of applicants' suitability to work with children is thorough. Records also include official signed documents showing the right to live and work in the UAE. All information is held on a single central register (SCR). Background checks comply with the expectations for the suitability of staff working with children and young people in schools in England. The recruitment procedures check the identity of prospective staff, their qualifications and references from their previous position to determine their suitability to work with the children at the school. Background and police checks, together with the right to work in the UAE, are verified before potential candidates join the school.

The school is committed to recruitment processes that reflect the highest standards, to meet and exceed the expectations for safer recruitment. Safeguarding, child protection and safer recruitment procedures are followed and are compliant with UK and UAE requirements.

Visitors to the school wear badges to indicate this and are escorted when on the school premises. No external contractors are allowed on the site unsupervised while any students are in school. All aspects of staff recruitment and vetting are led by the principal and an effective team in the school.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are excellent.

The school expanded the primary school facilities in 2020, providing students with an excellent learning environment. Lessons can be delivered using large breakout rooms. All classrooms are equipped with modern technology such as interactive panels.

Corridors and classroom displays in primary are a good balance of students' work and information. In the secondary school, the displays are effective in the corridors but there is room for improvement inside the classrooms, especially those which are shared between a number of teachers. The library is sited in the secondary section of the school and is of a fair size. There is a good stock of books, and seating areas are conducive to reading. Books are stored appropriately and can be borrowed by students for up to 14 days. There are plans for a library in the primary section.

Overall, the school is well maintained, clean and well-presented. The buildings are ventilated and well lit. The facilities manager ensures that all furniture is to a good standard. Recently, a secondary school DT suite was equipped with extractor fans.

Science labs and art suites are very modern and purposeful. They are bright, well lit, well equipped and enhance the students' learning experience, but the secondary school classes would benefit from redecorating to create a more appealing learning environment for the students. The canteens are spacious and there is ample space for students to sit and move around safely. Particular care is given to the hygiene and cleanliness of those areas. The staff in the canteen follow the ministerial hygiene directives and receive appropriate training.

Specialist facilities include science laboratories, DT workshops, sports areas, computing and art suites, drama and music spaces. They are well appointed and beneficial to high achievement. By contrast with the primary school facilities, secondary classrooms are equipped with digital projectors and whiteboards. Installing interactive panels in some of the secondary classrooms is aimed at increasing students' participation in some subjects, with teachers trained up to utilise them and keen to make best use of them.

A staggered timetable is in place to enable all students to have access to the different play areas throughout the day and week. All floors are equipped with disabled toilets and, for those who are unable to use the stairs, there is lift access on all floors.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information provided by the school to parents, prospective parents and its wider community is excellent and fully meets BSO standards.

Key policy documents are available on the school website together with basic contact details and information about the school. The school calendar approved by ADEK was shared with parents at the beginning of the year. Parents speak very positively about the high quality of communication and availability of information. Most information including reporting is sent home by email. However, the school aims to launch its parent portal on Engage next term.

The Admissions team works closely with new parents at the beginning of the academic year to ensure that they have received and understood all key documents.

Parents have been satisfied with the regular use of *Google Classroom*, *Google Meet*, *Zoom* and *Seesaw* for teaching during the distance learning period. They also report that they enjoy the sense of community and togetherness that the school gives them.

Until 2019-20, a parent handbook was produced for parents. This will be relaunched again for the academic year 2022-23 to include key information, reporting and updates.

In Early Years, *Seesaw* is used as a daily means of communication with parents and to share examples of work. Weekly letters are also emailed home. Primary teachers interact regularly with parents; a weekly overview is sent home to include topic news, updates and reflections on the week. *Meet the Teacher* and parent webinars are also regular events.

The principal works closely with a small group of elected volunteer parents to develop joint initiatives, organise events and rebuild the school community, after a long period of Covid-19 driven distance learning.

Parents are generally satisfied with the reporting system. Face-to-face progress meetings will be reintroduced as soon as pandemic restrictions allow.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school meets the requirements of this BSO standard.

The complaints policy is on the school's website. It is annually reviewed and updated and provides parents and students with clear guidance on how to raise concerns and the procedures that should be followed. School leaders are keen to listen to any concerns and are quick to resolve any issues before they escalate into formal complaints. Parents and students are positive about leaders' rapid response to any concerns. Since the school opened there have been few formal complaints. All complaints are exceptionally well documented and only a few become formal complaints. The policy allows for an external panel to review the most serious complaints. In the few instances where this has been necessary, leaders were quick to respond, and issues were suitably resolved to parents' satisfaction.

12. Standard 8

Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are good, with some outstanding elements.

The highly effective senior leadership team ensures that the school's vision, ambitions and ethos are understood by all. The principal is supported by four senior leaders, two of whom are new to role. They are dedicated, energetic, hardworking, and ambitious for the school. The senior leadership team is diligent and demonstrates commitment in executing their wide remit of responsibilities. The day-to-day management of the school is highly efficient. Leaders at all levels ensure that the facilities and resources are of an exceptionally high quality and staff members are appropriately qualified and deployed effectively.

The school's organisational structure makes appropriate distinctions between the roles given to each senior leader. Relationships between leaders are collegiate, highly positive and professional. Systems for communication are excellent and ensure that the views of all stakeholders are considered during decision making.

The school seeks to adapt to the needs of the child to ensure a personalised path to success for all. Leaders ensure that there is equality, diversity, inclusion and respect for all people. At all levels, leaders have a deep-rooted understanding of how to keep children safe in education and the well-being of students and staff is given a high priority. The importance of the school community is understood and so leaders work hard to maintain the strong community feel of the school.

The school's leadership has successfully secured high-quality teaching and ongoing improvements in assessment aim to ensure outcome data has a highly positive impact on students' achievements. This is enabling students of all ages enrolled at the school to make good or better progress. Leaders ensured that the school effectively adapted teaching and learning to provide a successful programme of online lessons and virtual schooling during the recent covid restrictions.

Rigorous recruitment and high retention of staff allow the school to build capacity and maintain high standards. This is especially successful because of the principal's commitment to developing existing staff to become future school leaders. Quality assurance processes are in place to monitor and track performance. Observation of teaching in lessons is regular and used to give focused feedback to teachers. If teachers do not maintain the high standards expected by leaders, they are coached and monitored more frequently. Performance management and appraisal is a supportive and reflective process leading to personal development and raised aspirations.

The school board has secure systems of checks and balances to assess the effectiveness of the school. The separate responsibilities of the governors and the school's professional leadership are understood and respected. Collectively governance has a highly effective oversight of the school's work. It ensures that the school operates legally, has clear financial policies,

maintains high standards and manages the school's continuing growth well. Governance provides strong support, focused challenge and appropriately holds senior leaders to account.