



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

Al Rabeeh Academy

**Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates**

Date **13th – 15th March 2023**
Inspection number **20230313**

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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 50 lesson observations and a series of learning walks took place. School documentation, data and policies were analysed and 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 was in school for three days.

The lead inspector was Dr Mark Evans. The team members were John Lambert and Vicki Price.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection, the school has shown that it meets the standards for British Schools Overseas, except for those that cannot be achieved legally in the host country. These pertain to aspects of the UK Equality Act 2010. The school actively promotes tolerance and a respect for all human differences, within the confines of the law. This is embedded in the culture and ethos of the school. This judgement is endorsed by the British Government and is valid for three years. The inspection process is quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED).

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

Al Rabeeh Academy (ARA) provides a high quality UK-style education that meets the needs of its pupils well: as a result, they enjoy school, learn fast and thrive socially. Relationships are excellent and pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Teachers are passionate about improving their skills. The senior leaders drive school improvement with energy, determination, and enthusiasm: the continuous professional development provided for staff has had a real and obvious impact. Middle leaders are eager and keen to increase their effectiveness even more. The school's ability to plan forward with recruitment by training staff internally, leads to effective succession planning as for example, with senior and middle leadership opportunities, teaching assistants (TAs) become teachers.

3.1 What the school does well

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

- the executive principal and leadership team have high aspirations: they identify challenges and take steps to ensure that barriers to achievement are removed;
- the team/culture approach to school development, which has had a very positive impact;
- a genuine willingness to look for ways to make improvements, and staff who are keen to invest time in implementing these: there is a growth mentality amongst the staff;
- the spread of nationalities/cultures in the school's staff, as well as in senior roles which gives the school a truly inclusive feel;
- ARA provides the environment and opportunities that girls as well as boys really thrive, both academically and socially;
- the real warmth between students and staff (and amongst the staff);
- Leaders and staff have the same goal: students' improvement/progress and success, as well as feeling happy, safe and valued;
- The Early Years Foundation Stage, which provides a highly supportive learning environment for the youngest students;
- Positive relationships are valued highly throughout the school. This is evident in interactions within the class and beyond. Pupils and parents feel that their input is valued;
- A proactive approach is taken to developing English language skills: Makaton and Widgets symbols are used to support understanding, for example.
- Students who are identified as requiring additional support are invited to attend after-school sessions to support language development. Use of target sheets in the majority of Secondary exercise books.
- Student voice is strong;
- Parent governors play a very active role in the life of the school and are clearly part of the decision-making process to raise the quality of education.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

- i. Further improve the quality of learning, teaching, and assessment, so that all matches that of the best, for example by:
 - encouraging the highest possible expectations from teachers and students alike
 - ensuring that classroom display is equally good across all classrooms, including between primary and secondary, and is based on the students' work
 - helping staff to be cognisant of students who are speaking English as an additional language (EAL), and support them providing more opportunities where putting something in a different form of words, slowing speech and checking that they really understand a word, when they are not really sure if they have
 - accepting variation between lessons and teachers' methods, without hampering the focus on progress and achievement.
- ii. make a concerted effort to raise standards in the presentation of bookwork by boys in KS3
- iii. promote the performing arts, creative art, music, (including world and local), dance, and possibly think about offering examinations from ABRSM (as an example)/ LAMDA etc.

4. The context of the school

Full name of school	Al Rabeeh Academy LLC				
Address	Mohammed Bin Zayed City, Zone 23, near Injazat, Abu Dhabi, UAE 41832				
Telephone Number/s	+971 2 6795991				
Website Address	https://www.alrabeehacademy.ae/				
Key Email Address/s	principal@alrabeehacademy.ae				
Executive Principal	Mr. Riaan Huyser – Executive Principal				
Chair of Board of Governors/ Proprietor	Mr. Fouad Darwish – Director of the Board of Governors				
Age Range	3-16 years				
Total number of students	684	Boys	366	Girls	318
Numbers by age	0-2 years	0	12-16 years	181	
	3-5 years	180	17-18 years	0	
	6-11 years	323	18+ years	0	
Total number of part-time children	0				

Al Rabeeh Academy opened in September 2017 with 600 students from affluent families. A privately owned school, it now has over 684 students on roll, with 100% of students who attend being Muslim and 98% Emirati nationals. The school has established a good reputation with its parent body and in the wider community, for delivering a quality British education with a strong sense of inclusion and community. The school is owned by the Royal Family and is part of the Royal Group in Abu Dhabi. It is one of two Al Rabeeh schools in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. ARA is in Mohammed Bin Zayed City, a largely residential area of Abu Dhabi. The school accepts students from across Abu Dhabi into Foundation Stage 1 upwards.

4.1 British nature of the school

The ethos and culture of ARA are clearly British in nature and fully meet the standard.

- The school follows the English national curriculum;
- The language of instruction is English;
- The National Curriculum for England is fully implemented at ARA and is carefully designed and adapted to suit the local environment;
- Pupils are supported by an effective pastoral care structure, which is very similar to that found in many UK private schools;
- Organisational structure is recognisably British: the school is organised into four sections, Foundation Stage (FS1 – FS2), primary (Y1-Y6), secondary (Y7-Y11), and sixth form (Y12-13).
- The executive principal/CEO and vice-principal oversee the whole school with a primary and secondary headteacher overseeing different phases of the school.
- Almost all teachers have qualified teacher status (QTS), as given in the UK;
- Professional development is delivered through a combination of internal expertise, through the sister school Al Rabeeh School and through external agencies such as British Schools of the Middle East (BSME).
- The principal is the BSME Country representative for Abu Dhabi and works alongside the executive committee to support BSME schools across the emirate.
- Similarly, the vice-principal is the BSME designated safeguarding committee leader in Abu Dhabi supporting all the BSME schools and working closely with the local regulatory body ADEK, to support schools with safeguarding.

5. Standard 1

The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided is excellent. The school fully meets the standards for BSO.

5.1 Curriculum

The curriculum at ARA is excellent.

The Curriculum Policy is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work. These are written in a standardised format using the bespoke ARA template. The school delivers the English National Curriculum (ENC) and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) adapted to meet the requirements of the Abu Dhabi Education & Knowledge (ADEK). Specialist teachers deliver Arabic, Islamic and Social Studies (the Ministry Moral Education programme), PE, and swimming.

In EYFS, the school day is from 07:40, finishing at 12:30 in FS1 and 14:00 in FS2 with a half day on Friday. In primary and secondary, the school week runs from Monday to Thursday, 07:40 – 14:10, and Friday 07:40 – 12:00, amounting to 30.5 hours per week, including breaks, lunch and assembly time.

The Early Years use the Statutory EYFS Framework 2022, supported by the *Development Matters* framework, delivered through the *Curiosity Approach*; this is most effective in achieving the early learning goals. Post-Covid, this has been a transformational approach, helping the youngest children to ‘heal’ and show a higher level of well-being. Parents are involved in workshops and have shown enthusiastic buy-in, sending in resources for the class. Accreditation within three years is on track. Seesaw is used to share information with parents. In FS1 and FS2, the Arabic team teach the MOE Islamic and Arabic programme, whilst PSED is delivered through a curriculum of care and healing, blended in with the day’s teaching. Termly projects link work between home and school. Phonics is taught through *Read Write Inc.* scheme.

The primary curriculum is mapped, and the curriculum review ensuring that there is a blended transition from FS2 into Year 1. The primary curriculum is delivered through a variety of schemes, including the *White Rose* mathematics-mastery approach, *Read Write Inc.* phonics, *Talk for Writing*, *Oxford Owl Reading*, *No Nonsense Spelling* and *Times Tables Rockstars*. Teaching is through the topic approach, including the Romans, Egyptians, and a comparison of the Royal families and homes of the UAE and UK, linking with writing. It is recognised that the curriculum needs to offer more support to the boys who are slightly behind the girls academically. To support the teaching of phonics in EYFS and KS1, parents receive CPD so that they can work with their children at home.

In secondary, the school does not as yet offer music, drama or modern foreign languages. However, separate sciences, design and technology, and psychology are offered at IGCSE, with the prospect of media studies in 2023-2024. Social studies is taught up to the end of Year 10.

Computing is taught as a separate subject from Year 1 upwards. Years 1 and 2 use iPads and learn coding, with 30 Chromebooks available in Years 3 and 4, whilst students in Years 5 and 6 use the computer suite. 'BYOD' will be trialled in Years 5 and 6, and KS4 in Term 3, 2023, with a secure online working environment assured through the National Online Safety Programme.

The school is inclusive and caters for pupils who are unable to access the curriculum. Pupils with specific needs are identified early and are supported in class. There are seven in FS, 32 in primary, and 15 in secondary, supported additionally from wave 1 to wave 3. Waves 2 and 3 have IEPs, with wave 3 having a weekly report that goes home, whilst wave 2 have at least a termly meeting.

Gifted and talented (G&T)/most able students are identified as achieving a standardised score of 120+ on the CAT4. Thereafter, subject specialist teachers identify whether a student is G&T in their subject or not. In KS1 and KS2, there are challenge stations in class, whilst in Secondary there are challenge areas in the corridors. ARA prefers to view all students as talented and has high expectations for all, with stretch and challenge being integral to lesson planning. G&T students can take part in the 'Future Leaders' programme where termly projects allow opportunities for independent learning.

Parents are encouraged to support their children with learning at home. Homework in Years 1 – 3 is set weekly using the *Class Dojo* portfolio, based on the core subjects. In Years 4 – 6, homework in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is set from workbooks. In primary, the *Accelerated Reading* programme is carried out in school so that students work their way through it at the expected pace. In secondary, homework is set as appropriate according to the subject and homework policy and is dependent upon the number of lessons taught weekly in that subject.

The transition between the EYFS and KS1, and Year 6 to Year 7 is carefully blended, ensuring it is smooth. Students in Year 1 work with those in FS2, helping the process. Likewise, there are working links between students in Years 7 and 6, in both cases staff collaborate across phases to ensure information passed upwards is coherent and the curriculum offers a natural progression. Teachers and other staff know students across the school, helping them to feel at home during transition.

There is a range of extra-curricular activities across the school, offered by teachers and external providers. In EYFS, these include ballet and dance, coding and make-a-space. From primary upwards, there is golf, Jiu-Jitsu, MMA and a host of other activities, including intervention sessions in a variety of subjects for students taking external examinations.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is excellent.

In the best lessons, the emphasis is on engaging the students and helping them to learn in a practical way. This was very evident in the EYFS classes, where students were frequently excited by the activities they were doing. Also in primary classes, pupils learn best through challenging and engaging lessons. In a Year 4 English lesson, a clearly structured lesson made strong links to prior learning. Behaviour and levels of engagement were excellent: the strong relationships built by the teacher with his students was evident through the positive interactions. The teacher took time to give the class opportunities to clarify the meaning of new vocabulary and any misunderstandings were addressed sensitively, when they arose.

The learning environment and teaching materials have been thoughtfully designed to support all areas of learning. For example within the EYFS curriculum, the use of Makaton signs and pictures supports the development of language effectively. Supportive relationships were evident between the children and adults in the classroom and behaviour was managed effectively through restorative conversations. The teacher-led input was engaging and students were confident when accessing the independent learning opportunities.

In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, planning was annotated and adapted to address the needs of the class. The students were focused and engaged throughout. At the start of the lesson, no-one could remember what an improper fraction was. The teacher wrote that 4 and $\frac{5}{3}$ was the same as $\frac{17}{3}$ on the board and asked everyone to test whether that was true or not: they worked together to discuss. The teacher used a good visual image to support their understanding. Within 20 minutes all students were able to write a definition of an improper fraction, using proper mathematical vocabulary.

Another characteristic of the best lessons was the appropriate challenge and pace. In a Year 11 history lesson for girls, students were asked to give reasons contributing to the Cold War. The pace of the well-crafted lesson was fast, but the students coped with that well. Students were very focussed and engaged; questioning by the teacher demonstrated that they brought prior knowledge to the lesson with them, and they were able to build on that. Bookwork was very neat, with target sheets in the front of each.

In the slightly less successful lessons, teachers did not manage to engage the students as well. For example in one primary English lesson, the students entered quietly and calmly, wrote the learning objectives in their books and began working on a starter activity. But once the main input began, behaviour deteriorated. Attention and engagement levels were low, despite the use of an engaging lesson hook. The teacher allowed low-level disruptive behaviours such as talking and playing with objects on the

table to continue which limited the understanding and progress made by many students. When asked about their targets, they were aware of where they were displayed but could not say what they were or how they helped them.

Students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) each have an individual education plan (IEP) which follows UK practice. This ensures that the outcomes set for the students are based on their personal progress, not solely on their academic needs. Where appropriate, SEND students are involved in creating their IEP and are encouraged to participate in the decisions made regarding their schooling and social-emotional development along with input from their parents. Students with SEND are identified at different levels based on their specific requirements. Students who are deemed as requiring Wave 3 or Wave 2 have appropriate support based on their individual needs.

There is a clear and robust framework in place to assess students' work. Teachers show a sound understanding of the abilities, needs and prior attainment of the students. Students are assessed in many ways: teacher judgement, end-of-unit assessment and end-of-term of term assessments. There is a mixture of formative and summative assessment methods, which provide a good balance of attainment data and an overall picture of the child. Internal and external assessment, as well as pupil progress evaluation processes are consistent across the school. Internal, external and international benchmark data are used effectively to guide learning to meet the needs of students, including GL Progress Tests, Cat 4 (from Y3 upwards) and Arabic pre-assessments (ABT). In Early Years, daily observations of children engaged in play, alongside open-ended questions, and resources and when necessary, teacher-facilitated play, inform the steps of learning and progress. Children's learning is evidenced and shared with parents weekly via the online learning platform *Seesaw*. Progression of writing and mathematics tracking sheets are implemented to ensure children are challenged to their next step. Contributions to the 'Proud Wall' displays in every classroom are reflective of the individual child's learning journey and interests.

From Key Stage 1 and above, at the beginning of each academic year, students take part in baseline assessments which allow teachers to identify students' levels of attainment upon entry to the year. These assessments provide teachers with accurate information about the starting points. Assessments are quality assured and standardised against the National Curriculum and also *Rising Stars* and *White Rose Maths* assessments. In Year 3 and above, students also complete a CAT4 assessment at the start of each year which provides a standardised 'cognitive ability score' which is used as a comparison point for data throughout the year.

At the end of each term, summative assessments cover mathematics, reading, spelling and grammar, science, topic, Arabic and Islamic. Students' writing is assessed termly against the National Curriculum and is moderated in year groups and across key stages.

5.3 Standards achieved by students

The academic standards achieved by students are good and progress made by students is excellent.

The majority of students at ARA are EAL learners. The leadership and staff at ARA have embraced the challenge and have high aspirations for students. A strong focus on language development is evident through the use of Makaton signs and Widget symbols to support understanding, 'Talk for Writing' and specific vocabulary teaching techniques used across all subjects. The Staff Induction Week focus this academic year of 'Every Teacher is an English Teacher' has ensured a consistent approach. All SENCOs and LSAs are trained to support language development and are matched with classes according to need. The impact of this focus is evident through the use of English throughout the school and increasingly high attainment in English as students' progress through the year groups.

Inclusion has been identified by ADEK as a strength of the school. Early identification of and support for SEN students, in addition to provision for Gifted and Talented students, ensures that progress is made by all students, and that challenge is provided where appropriate.

Baseline assessments are carried out for all cohorts from FS1 upwards and predictions for end of year attainment are made from these, taking into account the CAT4 Indicator. The school places a high importance on progress, aiming to add value each year.

Results for reading and writing for this academic year show that all senior school cohorts exceeded attainment expectations by the end of term 1. Almost all primary cohorts are on track to exceed attainment expectations in reading and writing by the end of the year. In mathematics, most year groups across the school are on track to meet or exceed attainment expectations by the end of the academic year. Mid-year results in both English and mathematics this year are stronger than in previous years.

By the end of the EYFS, the majority of students reach their Early Learning Goals and have a good foundation in all areas for accessing the English National Curriculum.

Synthetic phonics is taught in EYFS and KS1, and as an intervention in KS2 if required. The 'Read, Write, Inc.' scheme is used and students are taught in ability groups. Students make good progress and apply their knowledge to support reading and writing.

In the current GCSE cohort (Year 11), in English reading and writing, 72% of students were working at or above expected standards for the end of the year by the end of Term 1. The CAT4 indicator for the cohort is 41% so progress made is excellent. The current trajectory suggests that GCSE results will be likely to be higher than the UK national average pass rate of 69.8% for the previous academic year.

In the current GCSE cohort (Year 11), students are on target to exceed the CAT4 indicator end-of-year predictions in mathematics although not by as great a margin as in English. About 38% of students were working at or above expected standards by the end of term 1. The UK average pass rate in mathematics in the year 2022 was 56.6%. ARA students are on target to meet or exceed this given the current rate of progress this academic year.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is excellent, and is a significant strength of the school.

The dual nature (Emirati/British) of the school is evident throughout the school through displays, routines and celebrations. Each day starts with the playing of the Emirati National Anthem, British and Emirati values are taught alongside each other and celebrations include British events such as The Queen's Jubilee and a British Tea Party, in addition to Islamic religious events such as The Prophet's birthday, Hag al Laila and Ramadan. National statutory requirements as required by the MOE and ADEK are fully met.

The concept of democracy is introduced in the EYFS with children voting for which story they would like. This is developed through the voting system for student leaders as children progress through the school. The opportunity to develop leadership skills is available to all through peer mentoring and volunteering. Recently senior school students have assisted with primary sports day, acted as academic mentors and organised charity events.

The key values of being respectful, resilient, and responsible are consistently reinforced by staff. Respectful behaviour towards all members of the school community is modelled and students are polite and respectful towards each other and visitors to the school. Resilience is encouraged during lessons as well as through the range of ECAs on offer. Students are expected to take responsibility for their learning behaviour and are given opportunities to develop leadership skills from a young age.

Assemblies focus on the teaching of values such as respect and tolerance. A strong moral education curriculum is in place supporting the development of character and morality and an understanding of principles such as equality, fairness and justice. The impact of this teaching was evident through the students' views regarding the importance of not being a bystander when another is being unkind.

Supportive relationships are central to the ethos of the school. These are valued by all stakeholders with students, parents and staff referring to the family feeling of the school. The strength of these relationships is seen in the classroom through the students' confidence and is an important factor for supporting progress.

Behaviour across the school is of a high standard. The behaviour management policy sets out the use of restorative practices, encouraging students to reflect on their choices. There has been a significant reduction in the number of behavioural incidents this academic year compared to the same period of time the previous year. Further personalised support is put in place for students who require additional assistance.

The newly developed pastoral team which includes the deputy head, heads of boys and girls from the secondary school, heads of year from across the school, heads of inclusion and EAL meets weekly to review support for students. In collaboration with two school social workers, the team takes a child-centred approach to support identified individuals and groups in a variety of different ways. The use of SNAP behavioural profiles provides a start for discussions with parents and the development of individual behaviour plans (IBPs). These are reviewed and updated regularly. Students know that there are adults in school who will listen to them and help them should they need support.

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

The welfare, health and safety of pupils is excellent.

The values of *Respect*, *Resilience* and *Responsibility* (the 3Rs) are central to the school's ethos. The school has the required policies in place including health and safety, first aid, E-Safety and child protection. These are effectively implemented. Parents feel very strongly that the school is safe, indicated by the outcome of recent parent surveys in which 96% said their children were happy in school. Many students were spoken to during the inspection, and all said they enjoyed coming to school, feeling happy and safe there, and that ARA was a great school. Parent governors feel that they are part of the positive change taking place in the school.

Designated safeguarding leads are appointed and trained to level 3 standards, with wellbeing posters located around the campus identifying them. All staff are at least Level 1 trained annually and understand and implement the necessary measures to keep children safe in school. Indeed, there is a genuine, palpable feeling of care, friendship and wellbeing amongst the whole ARA community.

Pupils' attendance is above the UK average. In 2022-'23 it stood at 96% and during the inspection it was 96%. Students arriving at school after 08:10 are late and receive a late slip. The PRE calls home at 09:00, with daily attendance figures reported to the Ministry at 09:00. The primary and secondary senior leadership teams (SLT) have a very robust system for monitoring lates and absences and follow these up weekly. Medical absences are verified by parental letters and recorded.

Students in primary are not allowed to bring a phone into school, whilst those in secondary may, but it must be switched off. Year 12 students may use their phones in the Sixth Form common room. If a student breaches the mobile phone rules, the phone is confiscated and handed to an adult at the end of the day. ARA has subscribed to the National Online Safety platform which provides lesson plans, videos and resources about a range of themes within 'e-Safety'. These are taught at least once per half term during timetabled ICT lessons. Parents are also provided with training and documents that support them at home. Teachers and Form Tutors regularly remind students of the need for e-Safety. The lead for *TikTok* in Abu Dhabi has visited the school to advise students on the safe use of social media platforms.

Qualified male and female nurses are employed full-time. They work from separate, well-equipped clinics situated just inside the main reception area, with the school's AED located in the male clinic. They maintain up to date records and are vigilant in supporting pupils with specific medical needs and allergies. All incidents involving medical support are logged. The school clinic is informed of upcoming dates for vaccinations by SEHA which are communicated directly to parents. Vaccinations take place within the school clinic. Students who have missed vaccinations are included in 'mop-up sessions'. There are 18 trained first aiders within the school plus the two clinic staff. All 20 First Aiders have received training to use the AED.

Bullying is rare at the school and when it does occur it is dealt with sensitively but firmly, focusing on conflict resolution, starting at the Form Tutor level and escalating up to Head of Year and the SLT if necessary. When suspension is necessary it is managed internally, and for serious incidents, the ELT works with the school's ADEK Liaison Officer and ADEK to ensure procedure is followed. One student said, 'if we see bullying we say 'no' and stop it.'

The school has extensive risk assessments for school trips, activities and the school campus and procedures, managed by the health and safety officer and health and safety committee, whose recommendations are actioned promptly. Appropriate actions are always taken to reduce the risks identified.

The school carries out an emergency evacuation each term which is logged. Evacuation of students and staff is achieved promptly, in under five minutes. Form tutors then raise a green or red sign to indicate whether or not students are all present, or not. Evacuation route maps are visible around the school, and assembly points are clearly indicated with signs and fire extinguishers and hoses sited in key areas. The approved service agent makes regular checks on the school's fire safety systems. 176 CCTV cameras provide additional security and reference material when incidents occur. The security team works on campus 24/7. There is no lockdown procedure in place, which is something that should be considered.

Inclusion is a strength of the school. The inclusion department includes two SENCOs and works with the most able as well as those with SEND. SEND students identified as Wave 2 and Wave 3 have IEPs. Teachers and teaching assistants help with the monitoring of IEPs. There are also in-school therapy sessions taking place to provide accessible intervention for children who require it.

There are two qualified counsellors, one of whom is an Emirati to ensure that they understand any cultural issues, whilst the head of sixth form supports careers and third-level education next steps as well as counselling. There is also an Emirati school development officer, to further support the link between the students, parents and the school.

Healthy lifestyles are promoted through assemblies, curriculum activities and newsletters to parents. Primary students are encouraged to live healthy lifestyles with the weekly Health Lunchbox Award and participation in Manchester City Healthy Lifestyle Programme. Each year the Secondary students take part in a Well-being and Mental Health Survey (Warwick-Edinburgh).

Visitors sign the visitor's log and receive lanyards at the entrance. External, and many internal doors, have restricted access and can only be opened using the electronic staff lanyard. Clear procedures for children leaving the school during the day, and by school bus, ensure pupils are safe. The eight buses are fitted with cameras, and have a bus guardian on board, as well as being tracked by the bus company. Students wear seat belts. Security staff are proactive at the entrance and exit points at all times. The principal, SLT, security and duty staff ensure pupils are safe at pick up and drop off times.

A/C and fresh air machines are serviced according to Ministry schedules.

The science department is a member of the UK's science advisory service CLEAPSS, adhering to their recommendations for the safe storage of chemicals and procedures during practical experiments. Chemicals are stored inside a ventilated chemical cabinet, and corrosive substances are stored in cabinets with spill-absorbing granules.

The swimming pool is maintained/cleaned by external contractors who carry out checks daily after school hours. All chemicals kept on site are inspected to ensure compliance.

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

The suitability of the proprietor and staff meets the standard for BSO.

The school is owned by the Royal Family and is part of the Royal Group in Abu Dhabi. It is one of two Al Rabeeh schools in the emirate of Abu Dhabi.

The school implements a single central register system to record all staff, paid and unpaid: it includes the name, job title, start and finish dates, qualifications, police clearance, UAE good conduct certificate, and at least two references. Host country *good conduct* certificates are obtained where possible and applicable.

All staff, including temporary teachers, proprietors, volunteers, and third-party providers who work at ARA are checked to ensure that there are no restrictions to their working in schools. Prior to appointment, all potential candidates undergo a rigorous two-stage interview process. In addition to this, all candidates have appropriate background checks, and references are requested to ensure that staff are suitable to work in a school, physically fit to work and have the correct qualifications. All staff obtain ADEK approval to be able to teach in any school in Abu Dhabi. The safer recruitment policy and safe onboarding procedures are rigorously followed at ARA.

Staff and the senior leadership team are trained appropriately to deliver high-quality learning and provision in accordance with the National Curriculum of England, with at the same time recognising the local context. The majority of staff have UK qualifications: all staff hold relevant teaching qualifications.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation of ARA are excellent.

It was purpose-built in 2017, and as such the facilities are state of the art. It even smells nice. The premises are safe, well-maintained, clean, and tidy. Windows and doors prevent the ingress of fine sand and rain. The perimeter is secured by a wall with railings above. Exit routes are clearly signed. Gates are secure and access is restricted by security guards. Internal lighting, cooling and ventilation are most effective, providing a safe and comfortable environment. There is a ramp at the main entrance for wheelchairs and those with limited mobility. Lifts provide access to all floors. There is a 'disabled' toilet adjacent to the main reception area on the ground floor. Office and administration space is more than ample. Toilets are signed for male and female students from age 6 years, as well as adults. Drinking fountains are located in corridors. All water meets local standards and in bathrooms are cold or warm, to prevent scalding. Secondary students from Year 7 upwards are taught separately; boys and girls, as are their play areas 'segregated.' Girls and boys teaching areas are in opposite 'wings,' girls' classrooms have pink doors and boys' have blue.

The EYFS (FS1 and FS2), is located in their own Nursery 'mini-wing,' with its own external entrance. Classrooms there are bright, colourful and very spacious, provided with the expected resources in abundance. There are open play/breakout areas within the building. Resources are ample, with a wooden playhouse, shop and vehicle. The outside play area is covered, the floor being the regulation soft rubberised matting. Play equipment includes slides, a seesaw, playhouses, log walk, ladders, balance bars and stepping logs, and a wide range of age appropriate toys, including musical instruments. Water play is refreshed daily.

The primary and secondary phases are located in the 'main' building, laid out like the outstretched wings of a bird. Indoor facilities include very spacious classrooms, each equipped with an interactive whiteboard and age appropriate classroom furniture. Junior classrooms have direct access to indoor play areas. Specialist facilities include a large gymnasium, a room for dance and ballet, a large library, a multi-purpose hall for sports (football and basketball etc.) and formal events, and specialist rooms for music, the sciences, design and technology, SEND inclusion rooms and therapy room, art and a design and technology room. ICT suites include one with Windows PCs and one with Apple desktops. Students in Years 1 and 2 use iPads, and those in Years 3 and 4 have access to 30 Chromebooks for use in classrooms. From Year 5 upwards the ICT suites are used. Science labs are of a modern/ practical design and well equipped, supported by an experienced and charismatic lab technician who works with the Science team to bring the sciences to life, practically. The Academy has plans to build a state of the art Sixth Form Centre, once the current Year 12 moves into Year 13 and student numbers in KS5 grow.

Male and female medical clinics are well equipped/furnished, with refrigerators and lockable cabinets to store medicines. There is an isolation room attached to one of the medical clinics

in the case of any sign or symptom of a transmissible disease. This follows up-to-date guidance from the Health Authority.

The school premises also include outdoor facilities; a large AstroTurf area for break times and games/football matches, large, shaded, and unshaded play areas, two covered basketball courts and two Padel tennis courts.

Suitable changing rooms and showers (showers for students aged 11 and up) are provided. The indoor 25 metre six lane swimming pool is secure. Water hygiene in the pool is monitored regularly and the floor surrounds are anti-slip.

There is an isolation room attached to one of the medical clinics in the case of any sign or symptom of a transmissible disease. This follows up-to-date guidance from the local health authority.

There are boys' and girls' canteens which meet Abu Dhabi Municipality/Food Control Authority standards in terms of facilities and food preparation and service. These are inspected by the ministry at least twice a year.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

Communication with parents is a strength of the school.

In response to feedback, changes have been made to improve the methods of sharing information and to engage parents in their children's education. As a result of these changes parents report that they are very satisfied with communication with the school.

A whole school termly update is provided in the form of a video by the principal with contributions from staff and students. Half termly Year Group curriculum overviews are shared with parents in addition to weekly newsletters communicating learning objectives, upcoming events and parental involvement opportunities. *Class Dojo* and *Engage* are used to send out communications. The school operates an Open Door Policy. Many initial queries are answered by the administration team and parents may request meetings with teaching staff or members of the Leadership Team at any time. *Class Dojo*, in addition to *Seesaw* in the Early Years, is used effectively to share children's daily achievements at home and at school.

Weekly year group newsletters are shared with parents providing curriculum information and news of any special events. Half termly updates are provided in video format by the principal and the leadership team.

Class Dojo is used across the school for day to day communication. Teachers share students' achievements with parents on a regular basis. In the EYFS, *Seesaw* is also used enabling parents to contribute to their child's learning journal.

Parents report that teachers are extremely responsive to all communications. *Class Dojo* is also monitored by the administration team in order to enable them to support class teachers by ensuring that parental communications are responded to promptly. Staff make phone calls to parents when an issue arises during the school day. Parents are also invited to attend meetings when additional behavioural or academic support is deemed to be necessary.

At the beginning of the academic year, parents are invited to school for a 'Meet the Teacher' session and are also provided with curriculum booklets. There are regular parent workshop sessions to help parents' understanding of the curriculum. These are well supported. Attendance at events when parents can see their children learning in class are particularly well received. In addition to curriculum information evenings, the secondary School hosts additional parent events to share information about exam options.

Written reports are provided termly to share information about attainment, effort and progress. Parents are also invited to attend termly parent-teacher meetings, two of which are whole school academic review days during the school day. There is an open door policy at the school and parents are invited to make additional appointments as needed. Additional Parent-teacher conferences are held in the secondary school following mock examinations.

The admissions process is led by the admissions team. The majority of enquiries are made by phone calls that are responded to within 48 hours. Parents are then invited for a school tour and children are assessed onsite. The SEN department may be involved in the assessment process, if appropriate. The school takes pride in being inclusive. EYFS applicants join a group play assessment. Following assessment, an offer of a place is made providing the school is able to meet the student's needs.

Attainment data is shared annually with ADEK and is available publicly on the TAMM website or directly from the school at parental request.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

ARA meets the BSO standard fully.

The complaints procedure is known as the 'escalation policy' and is shared with all stakeholders. It is also available on the school website with a shortened version visible around the school.

ARA ensures that all existing families and new admissions follow procedures as outlined in the home-school agreement that is signed at the beginning of each academic year. The school follows guidance from ADEK requirements to ensure that correct procedures are followed when dealing with parent complaints. The school's parental relations executive (pre) and front of house are usually the first point of contact for a parent complaint.

The pre/front of house can then direct the complaint to the appropriate teacher or leader depending on the nature of the complaint. Members of the executive leadership team may be included, depending on the complaint. All complaints are logged and recorded on the school management system.

The school offers an open-door policy where parents are welcomed to come and discuss their concerns when suitable. In many cases, this de-escalates the complaints and allows the school to deal with the issue in a timely and effective manner. Parents are also welcome to make appointments to see any teacher or member of the leadership team, including the principal, at a mutually agreed time.

If a complaint comes in the form of an email, it is directed to the appropriate department of the school. Staff are trained to support parents through this process and all complaints must be recorded, written up, and officially closed in writing. The policy replicates that of the management structure of the school. In most cases, many minor complaints can be resolved at the class teacher level and in an informal manner. If this is not possible this is then escalated through the organisational chart including middle leadership, senior leadership, and finally at the executive leadership level including the school principal.

Parents who are still unhappy that a complaint has not been handled correctly through the escalation policy procedure, may then subsequently log this complaint with ADEK. Any complaint of this nature is dealt with by the ADEK liaison officer and the school principal.

The school offers several platforms affording parents the opportunity to voice their concerns, raise a query or offer a suggestion, throughout the school year. Monthly coffee mornings, termly parental engagements, and yearly parental surveys, to name but a few, are platforms where parents can voice suggestions and support the school. Examples of where the school has acted on the parent voice are on communication methods in secondary, Ramadan timings, and curriculum academic pathways.

12. Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are excellent.

Leadership is highly effective because the executive principal leads as the captain of a strong team: he is sensitive, hard-working, talented and innovative, but his greatest strength is his ability to create and nurture the team around him. He is very highly thought of in the school community and beyond.

The leadership team works in unity. It is organised and structured to meet the strategic needs of the school, and clearly enjoys working together. The executive principal and vice principal delegate and trust their colleagues: the executive head of early years, executive SENCO, and head of primary, now with heads of year too, worked effectively and created significant leadership capacity within the school. The structure also replicates that of a traditional primary and secondary school in the UK.

There is a highly effective whole school teaching and learning coach with a specific remit to develop the quality of teaching and learning across the school: this is already having a positive impact. Leaders at all levels are dynamic, hard-working, forward-thinking and strategic in their thinking, ensuring that there are high standards across the school.

The governing body has grown over the past two years which consists of parents, members of the *Royal Group*, teachers and leaders from the sister school. Each governor has responsibility linked to an ADEK performance standard and provides the role of a critical friend. They meet half termly to perform learning walks, feedback to the whole group and to support the strategic direction of the school.

Communication has improved even more since the introduction of this strong parent-governor team. The governors play a very active role in the life of the school and are clearly part of the decision-making process. The team meets half termly and provides written reports and testimonials on the progress that is being made in each priority area of the school.

There is thus a high level of accountability present, ensuring that the 'critical friend' relationship exists in key areas of the school. The leadership team is supported by external bodies, such as its sister school Al Rabeeh School, the governors and the owners' *The Royal Group*.