



**British School  
Overseas**  
Inspected by Penta International

**Inspection report**

**British School  
Al Khubairat**

**Abu Dhabi  
United Arab Emirates**

Date **9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023**  
Inspection number **20231009**

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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 governors 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 pupils; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation 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 pupils and pupils' 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 90 lesson observations took place, as well as a series of learning walks. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the governors and a range of teachers, parents and groups of pupils. The inspection team were in school for three days.

The lead inspector was Colin Dyson. The team members were Mary Rose Connolly, Justin Harris, Glynn Kilsby, Amy Murphy and David Pontich.

## 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

The British School Al Khubairat (BSAK) offers a premium standard of education and care. The quality of education provided by the school is outstanding. The personal development of the pupils is outstanding. Leadership and management is very high quality. The pupils, parents and staff are strongly supportive of the school.

#### 3.1 What the school does well

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

- Staff ensure all students feel valued and heard which results in them feeling empowered to initiate change;
- There is a genuine community feel of the school for all stakeholders;
- Teaching and learning encourage a genuine holistic development for each student;
- All staff in the school encourage a strong growth mindset in the students;
- Students are well supported through effective pastoral care as well as the implementation of high-quality welfare, health and safety policies and procedures;
- The school is held in high regard by the wider community and parents;
- Leadership and management are very effective;
- Students are happy, articulate and confident learners: their attitudes, values, and behaviours are outstanding;
- Consistent assessment practices provide clear support enabling high levels of student attainment;
- The school successfully ensures a breadth and depth of the enriched curriculum;
- The inclusive nature of the school is a strength and all students are supported to achieve their very best;
- The shared drive to create a school that is a 'Beacon of Excellence', willing to share its expertise in the wider community and internationally.

## 3.2 Points for improvement

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

- i. Based on the current 10 year plan, develop a 21<sup>st</sup> Century campus based on sustainability, that not only benefits the environment but also provides progressive thinking and innovative learning for all students.
- ii. Encourage all staff to further embrace creative and inspirational pedagogical approaches.
- iii. Continue to embed recent curriculum developments to maximise fully students' learning experiences.

## 4. The context of the school

Full name of school	The British School Al Khubairat				
Address	PO Box 4001 Abu Dhabi UAE				
Telephone Number/s	+97122040200				
Fax Number	N/A				
Website Address	www.britishschool.sch.ae				
Key Email Address/s	mleppard@britishschool.sch.ae				
Headteacher/Principal	Mr Mark Leppard MBE				
Chair of Board of Governors	Mr Sean Magee				
Age Range	Age 3 – 18 years				
<b>Total number of pupils</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>1,024</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>983</b>
Numbers by age	<i>0-2 years</i>	0	<i>12-16 years</i>	550	
	<i>3-5 years</i>	277	<i>17-18 years</i>	355	
	<i>6-11 years</i>	822	<i>18+ years</i>	3	
Total number of part-time children	0				

The British School Al Khubairat (BSAK) is the oldest British curriculum school in Abu Dhabi. BSAK was originally opened by Emiri decree as the 'Al Khubairat Community School' by His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, founder of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), to serve the families of British expatriates working in the region. The school is a not for profit, non-selective co-educational day school which has been operating in conjunction with the British Embassy Since 1971.

The school provides an education for 2000 plus students between the ages of 3-18, representing 56 nationalities.

The school follows the National Curriculum of England adapted to meet Ministry requirements. Students sit GCSE, iGCSE, GCE A Level and BTEC examinations. The school is an examination centre for AQA, Edexcel and CIE Boards.

The school is a member of the Headmasters and Headmistresses Conference (HMC), Independent Association of Prep Schools (IAPS) and British Schools in the Middle East (BSME). The school is accredited by BSME and British Schools Overseas (BSO). The BSO Inspection report of 2019 rated the school overall as outstanding. The most recent Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) inspection was in May 2023 rating the school as outstanding.

## 4.1 British nature of the school

BISAK is proud to be a British school, and this is reflected in many aspects of the school's operations. The ethos and culture of the school are clearly British in nature and fully meet the standard.

- The appearance, nature and ethos of the school are recognisably British. Nearly all the teaching staff, with the exception of Arabic and Islamic staff, have qualifications recognised by the UK. Staff are mainly recruited from the UK. The leadership structure of the school is recognisably British;
- Classroom management, displays of work, three term year and age-related year groups contribute to a British feel of the school;
- There is a school uniform that varies depending on the age and activity of the students;
- The importance of extra-curricular provision including clubs and school trips are in line with British best practice;
- The culture and values support and encourage good practice leading to enhanced child protection. Curriculum events support an understanding of issues such as mental health and wellbeing;
- The school complies with all legal and statutory requirements / obligations in relation to child protection within the country in which it operates;
- There is a rich and varied programme of extra-curricular activities, off-site visits and visiting speakers to the school;
- Students are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment and have attained relevant qualifications;
- There is a strong culture of vigilance where students' welfare is actively promoted and they feel safe at all times;
- Teaching is consistently of a high quality, so that all students understand that the school has high expectations of their good behaviour, concentration and engagement;

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- The curriculum is broad, balanced, relevant and innovative. UK-based resources (LifeTalk in form time, Let's Think in English short story stimulus) support the curriculum;
- The introduction of BTECs support high-quality, career-focused qualifications grounded in the real world of work;
- Strong links have been established with UK universities.



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

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

### 5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum across the whole school is outstanding.

Children across the Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) show very high levels of engagement, courtesy, collaboration and cooperation. They are enthusiastic learners with excellent attitudes; this ensures learning activities are highly effective.

Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge. Consistent and high expectations of children evoke high levels of enthusiasm for, participation in and commitment to learning. Teaching strategies are well judged and often imaginative; they support rapid progress and a good pace of learning ensuring opportunities to successfully develop crucial skills, including literacy and numeracy. Each lesson is planned with a keen awareness of children's prior knowledge, skills and understanding, leading to appropriately challenging tasks that are frequently directed by the personal interest of each child. Teachers establish what learners already know through classroom activities that show evidence of learning. Teachers promote learner confidence and make it clear that all learners can improve and will be supported to do so. The delivery of diverse learning outcomes to meet the needs of all children are further aided by the support of a highly effective inclusion team.

Children explored their physical environment through a wide range of indoor and outdoor learning experiences. Children trying to get a solar water fountain working was a moment of awe and wonder leading to enthusiastic discussion. The quality of Arabic lessons is a further strength of the EYFS Classrooms as teachers provide lively and engaging learning opportunities. Shared spaces throughout the early years are inviting, stimulating and well resourced. There are clear links between classroom displays and the activities going on in lessons. Through all activities teachers ensure consistently high behaviour expectations, promoting resilience, confidence and independence when tackling challenging activities.

The strong curriculum continues across the primary years. Teachers use a wide range of interesting and creative resources, techniques and technology to maximise learning.

Planning is regular and thorough and involves the learning assistants and the inclusion team. Lesson plans are detailed showing learning objectives, evidence of differentiation and the learning needs of students. Questioning is challenging demonstrating the strong subject knowledge of staff and support assistants. Teaching is captivating, the students are happy and immersed in their learning. Classes are inclusive. Marking and

assessment is regular and evidence of a clear marking policy can be observed across subjects. This area is consistently observed.

Throughout the primary years (KS1 & 2) the curriculum is stimulating, broad and balanced. There is a strong emphasis on creating independence of learning and students are encouraged to take a responsibility for learning outcomes. The curriculum is underpinned by the recently introduced framework that arranges content in innovative ways, develops a rich vocabulary and systematically builds knowledge and understanding. The curriculum is continually reviewed through lesson drop ins and learning walks and data on progress is used to monitor curriculum developments. Planning is thorough and regular involving the learning assistants and inclusion team to ensure all students needs are planned for. The high quality of curriculum support is a strength providing inclusive support for all. The curriculum is successfully enhanced by the recent introduction of CUSP (Curriculum with Unity Schools Partnership) which is underpinned by evidence, research and cognitive science.

Curriculum content is innovative and provides rich opportunities for vocabulary development building on systematic knowledge and understanding. The school has recognised the needs of students with English as a second language however, in some lessons more scaffolding and a focus on vocabulary could further support needs.

Teachers effectively use a range of student progress data to support planning that leads to effective levels of differentiation and accurate target setting. Teaching within year groups is consistently planned and delivered actively to high standards. Students' interactive white boards are utilised well and the children respond to their applications. Classroom resources are excellent; the rooms and working areas are vibrant and welcoming.

Within primary, music, MFL, Arabic, Islamic studies, social studies, computer science and PE are taught by experienced subject specialists. Support is a strength; inclusive learning needs are strong and fully enhance the delivery of the curriculum to all. The Individual Learning Plans for the SEN students are thorough and detailed.

For students who speak English with difficulty, provision is made but this could be more impactful. There is excellent provision for IT with smart boards used extensively. Students are comfortable using technology to support their learning and this is encouraged.

The Key Stage (KS) 3 curriculum is broad and balanced and delivered by knowledgeable and skilled practitioners. The curriculum is well planned and adapted to meet the needs of students. There is a strong focus on simultaneously developing knowledge and skills and schemes of work show how these are developed over time. The school recognises the role that cognitive skills play in a student's overall development and as such these skills are embedded across the entire KS3 curriculum. Students have a choice of MFL

and there is clear passion for developing multilingualism. The KS3 curriculum effectively prepares students for success in KS4 and KS5.

Students have one lesson every two weeks which is dedicated to developing literacy and oracy skills; in this lesson students also have the opportunity to deliver presentations on books they have read. This offers students the opportunity to develop confidence in their own presentational skills while simultaneously encouraging a love of reading.

The delivery of lessons is enriched by the judicious and effective use of Chromebooks and Google classroom and there is a strong sense that IT is used to enhance learning opportunities and outcomes for all students effectively.

At KS4, the curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. Students take a combination of the core subjects at GCSE/IGCSE: English, mathematics and science (either combined or as separate sciences), and optional subjects from a wide range of disciplines including the humanities, arts, DT, and languages including Arabic. Stretch and challenge is available in mathematics through the offer of further mathematics. The options decision-making process is supported by the head of year 9, careers and university guidance counsellors, and the pastoral team where necessary. Comprehensive digital information ensures students are encouraged to consider the next stage of their educational journey as they make their choices. Three distinct pathways are offered, reflecting the inclusive philosophy of the school. The curriculum is enriched by the excellent co-curricular activities. There is a vast array of activities with over 100 activities on offer, from sports to performing arts to Duke of Edinburgh (DoE) and beyond. Students participate in the Young Musicians of the Gulf (YMoG), BSME sporting activities and engage in other opportunities outside the school community, and these are celebrated in school.

In KS5, there are a wide range of subject choices on offer. The option of BTECs is available to students to offer an additional pathway making the option process more inclusive to the students. The curriculum offer is broad, balanced and in the most successful lessons, innovative.

The co-curricular activities offered by the school are extensive. The role several sixth form students play in leading activities is beneficial to the entire community. Furthermore, off-site visits, such as the recent trip to New York, which had a cross-curricular emphasis between business studies and the arts helped to ensure students are well-rounded, internationally minded young adults. Students benefit from two careers guidance counsellors that help prepare them for life after BSAK.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment across the school is outstanding.

Teacher-student interactions are excellent and this supports a rich environment of continuous provision that the children can self-select and use to move learning forward. Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, with highly effective AFL. The teacher uses AFL to anticipate where they may need to intervene and do it with notable impact on the quality of learning. Teachers across the EYFS give a great deal of attention to improving the quality of their assessment practices. They have ensured that assessment is not only used for measuring achievement standards, it also helps children understand their own strengths and limitations, and know what they need to do to improve. Parents feel highly supported in understanding their son's/daughter's progress. EYFS teachers recognised that strong partnerships with parents and carers help to provide the best start for all children.

During the primary years, the quality of teaching and learning is a strength building on the students' early experiences. Teachers use a wide range of interesting and creative resources. In the best lessons, the creative use of technology enhances learning. Collaborative planning helps to ensure consistent delivery across all age groups. Teachers use a wide range of interesting and creative resources, techniques and technology to maximise learning. Teaching within year groups is consistently planned and delivered effectively to high standards. Students' interactive white boards are utilised well and the children respond to their applications. Teachers ensure consistent curriculum coverage through the planning and differentiated work is evident. Data is used to identify students who may require support, have specific learning difficulties or would benefit from more challenging work.

Classroom resources are excellent, the rooms and working areas are vibrant and welcoming. Teaching is captivating, the students are happy and immersed in their learning. Classes are inclusive. Marking and assessment is regular and evidence of a clear marking policy can be observed across subjects.

The behaviour of students in the primary years is exemplary and they show a delightful enthusiasm for learning. They show respect towards each other, their teachers and the school, and are positive and caring. The relationships between staff and students are warm, positive and respectful. The students are confident and articulate young people and willingly discuss their learning and their enjoyment of school.

In the best lessons, the teaching is imaginative and student activities are skilfully differentiated. For example, in one year 5 writing lesson tasks, were set at three ability levels and the students, with guidance from the teacher, selected the most appropriate level of challenge. In a year 4 English lesson, newspaper reports provided a creative stimulus for students to learn about grammatical structures and text conventions. In

some less successful lessons there was an over reliance on teacher talk, with students being rather passive in their learning.

The use of learning support assistants and individual student support staff is a strength throughout the key stage. These staff work effectively, calmly and unobtrusively to support the students in their care and make a significant contribution to student progress.

Teachers use of ICT is excellent and across the primary years, it is skilfully employed to enhance learning. The use of cameras linked to screens enabled teachers to model expected outcomes and demonstrate the next steps in an activity. Lesson objectives, learning tasks and feedback to students were all shared effectively using the school's excellent ICT facilities. The use of iPads, Chromebooks and Google Classroom ensure that there is a high level of digital literacy and these tools are used effectively to enrich the curriculum. Computer science is a timetabled lesson in KS2 and the specialist computer science teacher is developing a progressive and challenging curriculum.

Students are supported by an experienced team of learning support teachers and by well trained learning assistants. Progress data is used by teachers in their planning to differentiate the curriculum and target learning to meet the needs of all students.

The effective use of questioning is challenging, demonstrating a strong subject knowledge that encourages students to explore their learning in depth. Teaching has a strong focus on how students learn. The classroom activities develop strong personal learning skills alongside high academic outcomes. Teachers successfully develop the characteristics of perseverance, resilience, resourcefulness and reflectiveness in students. This strong focus on developing the whole child strengthens the progress in learning producing confident individuals and highly successful learners.

Robust lesson planning continues across the secondary years. Scaffolding of learning is a strength and it is evident in the progress students make in lessons and over time. Pedagogical approaches are consistent across all subjects and feedback effectively drives progress. Behaviour is predominantly excellent and ensures that learning environments are focused and productive. Teachers know students very well and plan lessons which meet the needs of most. High expectations are typically embedded within lesson routines and most students are driven to learn by the desire to meet the success criteria.

Students regularly get the opportunity to assess their own work and identify where they are in relation to learning outcomes. Self-assessment techniques are modelled in most lessons and therefore students are very good at effectively critiquing their own work with a view to improving it. They are acutely aware of what they are working towards and success criteria are almost always linked to assessment rubrics. Active listening skills are particularly well developed and as such classroom discussions offer high quality learning opportunities. In some lessons, literacy support underpins learning and subject

specific vocabulary is judiciously encouraged to improve outcomes. A focus on oracy and critical thinking skills development is evident, notably in *Let's Think in English* lessons; in these lessons, students demonstrated their growing maturity of thought and articulacy, and were able to build on and challenge the ideas of others. Conversely, some lessons were overly structured with significant amounts of teacher talk and more limited opportunities for students to demonstrate these skills. Students are frequently exposed to assessment rubrics and learning is explicitly tied to these: they know what success looks like and are supported on how to achieve it.

In the best lessons, pace created a positive challenge for students and resulted in high levels of engagement which ensured students made progress. In these lessons, teachers demonstrate a passion for their subject which results in students having an enthusiasm for learning and a willingness to take risks when completing tasks. In one particularly lively year 7 French lesson, students demonstrated high levels of enthusiasm for developing their French vocabulary and accents when sharing their opinions. In less successful lessons, teachers rely heavily on teacher talk and whole class discussion as the main pedagogical approach. In these lessons, students focus on completing a task rather than actively learning.

Students are relaxed, alert, motivated and positive during lessons. This is in part due to the infectious enthusiasm that most teachers engender whilst delivering lessons. For example, a maths lesson was observed where students worked in teams to solve challenging problems and were incredibly enthusiastic in their quest to demonstrate their understanding and progress with further challenging questions. The behaviour of students in all lessons observed was excellent.

Teachers and students regularly demonstrate an exceptional understanding of the demands of public examinations. Specifically, teachers consistently ensure an awareness and understanding of how to realise the top part of the mark schemes through the regular practice of analysing previous exam questions and the corresponding mark schemes. In almost every observed lesson, assessment objectives related to the topic being covered formed a major part of classroom discussions where students were able to self-assess their work.

All lessons observed were thoroughly planned and identified students with additional learning needs. The best lessons were differentiated to cater to the needs of all learners in the classroom and were not overly reliant on teacher talk time.

As attested by alumni's university placements, students are extremely well prepared to attend universities in the UK and elsewhere throughout the world. The school is inspirational in developing links with universities and further education establishments.

## 5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

The standards achieved by students at BSAK are outstanding.

Throughout the whole school, there is highly effective and robust use of technology to track, monitor and disseminate progress and attainment data; staff have been supported in developing their understanding of how to use this at both a broad and fine level, entirely focused on meeting the needs of the children in their classes. As a non-selective school, this process begins at the point of admission to the school - regardless of point of entry - with a range of quantitative and qualitative baseline assessments carried out to identify strengths as well as areas of focus for students. Many students are 'lifers' and, as such, this enables highly effective data tracking over an extended period of time which supports progress and all aspects of transition. The EAL and inclusion teams will consult in more complex cases and the 'Team around the Child' (TAC) approach has been utilised successfully. The school is committed to being fully inclusive, using academic and pastoral data in an intelligent way to know the students, to identify and respond to expected progress not being made, and to review and improve curriculum and pedagogical approaches.

In EYFS, the observation of play and learning (OPAL) approach supports meaningful and reliable baseline and ongoing assessments against age-related developmental milestones, as well as ensuring consistency. Phonics screening complements this; where students are not making expected progress, 'keep up and catch up' interventions are implemented to mitigate less than expected progress. In primary, the CUSP pedagogy and curriculum again ensures consistency of provision; external standardised assessments are used (CAT4, GL Progress Tests No More Marking comparative writing assessments) to triangulate internal assessment data and support strategic decision making around targeted interventions. In the Secondary school, CAT4, GL Progress Tests and Komodo are used in conjunction with internal assessment data to track and monitor progress and wellbeing; routines are established which ensure that middle and senior leaders, working collaboratively with internal support and inclusion teams, are sharply focused on supporting and meeting the needs of all students. There is a secure understanding of where there are marginal gains to be made and a determination to achieve this. Consequently, outcomes achieved by the students are excellent.

Students are exceptionally well supported to prepare them for the next stage of their education and cite the high levels of care extended to them by staff as an integral part of this. Transition between phases is very well managed, with new students joining in Year 7 invited to be part of the transition programme for Year 6. Options pathways at KS4 and KS5 are complemented by guidance and University counsellors. Occasional careers lessons lower down the school as part of the MELS programme, fortnightly careers lessons in Year 12 and the Unifrog and VESPA platforms effectively facilitate university research and application processes, along with in person and virtual visits and workshops by UK and other universities.

Behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons and around the school is of a very high standard. Students are evidently proud to be part of the BSAK community: they describe the school as exceptionally positive, encouraging, caring, and open. Their holistic development is valued and encouraged; successes are celebrated in every respect. As a result of students feeling so valued, they are fully committed to the school, and their learning and progress.

The quality, breadth and depth of provision for the enriched curriculum and co-curricular activities is to be commended. The sharing and communication of this could be more centralised and celebrated as a holistic program.



## 6. *Standard 2* Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students are outstanding.

Students within the school cultivate a profound sense of social and moral responsibility, thanks to the school's strong child-centred approach. This is achieved through various means, including moral education and life skills (MELS) lessons, assemblies, an extensive selection of co-curricular activities (CCAs), and a wide array of opportunities for personal growth beyond the classroom. These initiatives ensure that students at BSAK develop a strong sense of self.

A culture of wellbeing is evident across the school, particularly in the shared language employed by staff and students and which is cultivated and exemplified by the headmaster. The introduction of Komodo, an online application, empowers students to reflect on their individual wellbeing and enables the school to track this in a way which supports positive and effective interventions. BSAK makes significant investments in the school and its priorities, thereby setting a strong example of identity and commitment.

All stakeholders take immense pride in being part of the BSAK community. Students speak confidently about the positive impact that staff members have on their learning journeys, acknowledging the continuous efforts of teachers in supporting their development. Likewise, teachers possess a deep understanding of their students, with positive relationships serving as the foundation for conducive learning environments throughout the school.

The behaviour of students is exemplary and characterised by friendly and respectful interactions among peers and teachers. These strong relationships are upheld through a culture of mutual respect. The assembly program, which incorporates global perspectives and aligns with the school's core values, offers a diverse range of engaging and interactive activities. It also complements the Life Lessons curriculum, which is integrated into form time as well as one dedicated MELS lesson each week. A standout feature of the school is their ability to innovate in response to evolving needs and is exemplified by the development of the MELS program and the incorporation of the Life Lessons curriculum in secondary education. Structured objectives combined with discussion-based tasks enable students to delve into pertinent topics relevant to young people today.

Reflection and evaluation skills are integral components of the curriculum and enrichment programs. The leadership team leads by example and demonstrates a growth mindset, fostering innovation across the school. Reflective practices are integrated into lessons and subject feedback processes, allowing students to consider their actions and behaviours and make necessary adjustments. When students enter the sixth form, they complete a reflective questionnaire to identify their challenges. One-to-one meetings with tutors provide opportunities for students to plan their next steps in resolving concerns.

Student voice is a strong force, with high levels of engagement in student leadership programs spanning primary and secondary phases. This engagement is driven by the tangible impact of student-led initiatives; students are listened to and changes are enacted based on their suggestions. This reinforces their belief in the power of student voice and encourages involvement across the school community. The school's systematic approach involves students sharing ideas with school leaders, conducting surveys, identifying key actions and taking steps to implement change. This process exemplifies empowerment; students genuinely feel heard and valued and are thriving within the BSAK community.

The arts are celebrated extensively throughout the school, with artwork on display in many open areas and musical performances every Friday in the main school reception. Events like 'Music Week' provide students with opportunities to showcase their musical talents. Sixth form students pursuing A-level art and textiles have individual spaces where they prepare and store their work, creating an inspiring visual display for all entering the school reception area.

The careers provision is a testament to the remarkable achievements of BSAK students, with students from year seven onwards actively engaging with the programme. A visual display celebrating the class of 2022, their university choices and locations serves as inspiration to younger students and underscores the significance of BSAK alumni, an area the school is currently focusing on developing further.

The school places great emphasis on attendance and punctuality, employing proactive tracking procedures that span both primary and secondary education. Pastoral leaders offer individualised support to families in need and recognise and applaud improvements through positive communications. Habitually late students attend reflection and education sessions to enhance their organisational skills.

There is a strong sense of connection with the UK and the promotion of core British values permeates both learning environments and social spaces. Teachers frequently reference examples from the UK to enhance understanding of concepts in lessons. The student council processes are grounded in democratic principles.

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

The provision for welfare, health and safety is outstanding. The leadership of the school gives the highest priority to safety and the safeguarding of students. Well considered policies and routines are in place for all essential issues related to health and safety.

Student safeguarding is managed through the online system, My Concern, and detailed records are kept to help track and record the support given to students. All staff, including support staff, have training in safeguarding. The safeguarding team meet every two weeks to review cases, and more often if there is a serious situation. Senior staff also meet with a member of the school governors every half term to review safeguarding issues.

The school gives great emphasis to student wellbeing and strategies such as Girls on Board and Little Spots of Emotion are embedded from the foundation stage to foster a caring, open and supportive ethos throughout the school. The behaviour of students and their positive attitudes towards each other is a strength throughout the school. Moral education is an important aspect of the school and weekly lessons encourage students to discuss and reflect upon a wide range of topics including diversity and discrimination, wellbeing, the safe use of social media and physical and mental health. Two year 12 students have completed an off-site training programme and now act as wellbeing ambassadors within the school.

The school has three full-time nurses and a well-resourced clinic. As well as providing medical support the nurses are also involved with health education throughout the school. The majority of teachers are first aid trained and there are first aid boxes at strategic locations around the school. Fire drills are carried out at least four times a year and these are continually reviewed to see if improvements can be made. Two full time counsellors work with students throughout the school, utilising a range of approaches including play therapy and cognitive behavioural therapy. Meaningful links with Maudsley Hospital support with more complex cases.

The school is a safe and secure site, with security staff at all three entrances. A new electronic signing in system is currently being used by staff and will be investigated to possibly include students during the school year. CCTV cameras are widely used within the school and are monitored to ensure safety and security. The school is maintained to an extremely high standard by teams of maintenance and cleaning staff, who keep detailed records of daily safety checks.

A team of senior staff form a health and safety committee which meets four times a year to review all aspects of safety, related policies and procedures. Play areas and break time locations are well supervised by teaching staff. Risk assessments, for both on site and off-site activities, are well managed and retained in a comprehensive central log. The school meets all the health and safety requirements of the local education authority and local government

bodies. There are monthly internal health and safety inspections and a rigorous external annual inspection.

## 8. *Standard 4*

### The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The suitability of the proprietor of the school and of the staff appointed to work there is excellent.

The school's governing body are highly effective in their role as 'critical friends' and have made a valuable contribution to ensuring BSAK is a school with many outstanding aspects. Regular briefings by the school's leadership team aim to ensure all governors have a clear insight into the working of the school throughout all key stages. By creating working parties, members are encouraged to focus on key aspects of the school's work, this has enabled a good level of 'expertise' from board members to be utilised in moving the school forward.

Governors have a clear understanding of their individual and collective responsibilities. The effective collective contribution of the governing body adds significantly to the continual process of improvement at BSAK.

Responsibilities with regard to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils are clearly understood and effectively discharged. Clear procedures have been implemented to ensure staff appointed meet best practices regarding safe recruitment procedures. Staff are well trained and qualified for their roles. All teaching staff hold appropriate qualifications. The school has highly effective recruitment procedures and these are overseen by the governing body.

## 9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are outstanding: the school exceeds the requirements for this standard.

The school buildings and sport facilities provide an environment which enhances the learning experiences of students. At the start of this academic year, the school opened a new Science and Innovation Centre building, which has already made a positive impact on teaching and learning during science lessons. The school is encouraged to explore the opportunities for innovation and utilising educational technology to maximise learning opportunities for students in the sciences and other curricular areas as they utilise this fantastic, new learning environment. Since the recent launch of the building, they have fully upgraded the former science labs to provide a vibrant area for their Sixth Form students.

Entry and exit to and from the building are secure. The school recognises the challenges associated with having a public street at the entrance and takes the necessary preventative measures to ensure everyone's safety when entering/exiting the facilities.

The school has taken exceptional measures to ensure access for everyone with limited mobility including having 5 elevators, accessibility in their new gymnasium, Food Technology labs and evacuation chairs at the staircases. All community members have access to these facilities.

There are age-appropriate washroom facilities in the school which are located very close to the classrooms for the youngest students. These facilities are separate to staff facilities, both of which have clear signs. The shower and changing facilities are clearly separated for boys and girls near to the sports hall and swimming pool.

The medical centre is staffed by three qualified nurses and is well-stocked and includes a washing facility. The school have worked extensively on their procedures for tracking pupils who need medical attention.

Sport facilities and the school libraries are of a high standard. The library facilities are enjoyed by the students and are very welcoming. The swimming pool is well utilised by the PE department with a comprehensive programme of regular, well-supervised swimming lessons taking place throughout the timetable.

Outdoor areas enhance the opportunities for all students. The youngest children have constant access to inspiring outdoor play and learning areas. A wide range of sports facilities enrich the physical curriculum. Shaded seating areas are well used by students at break times. The school needs to ensure that all walkways are in good condition and do not present a trip hazard.

High quality maintenance procedures ensure all areas of the school are safe, clean and appropriate to meet the needs of students at all times. The classroom environment is welcoming with well controlled air-conditioning that can be altered by the teaching staff to ensure comfort throughout the day and at all times of the year. Corridors are very wide and well-lit allowing for efficient and safe movement around the school.

The acoustic conditions and sound insulation of each learning space is suitable for the activities which normally take place.

## 10. Standard 6

### The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The quality of information provided by the school for parents, carers and others is comprehensive and excellent. Important information is available on the school web site, through publications, flyers, regular communications and social media platforms.

The school's vision statement and aims, contact details, curriculum information, key policy document information, relating to admissions, health and safety, bullying rewards and sanctions and child protection are easily accessible.

Parents said that they were extremely happy with the education provided for their children. Focus groups and feedback from parents is extremely complimentary. The stability of staffing and longevity of tenure was of particular note as the staff really know the children. This, along with high quality standards, an inclusive environment and a sense of community made the school an attractive choice for their children.

Regular communications from the Senior Leadership Team, pastoral and class teachers were seen as very informative. The communications team work hard to streamline information, make it relevant and succinct.

The holistic approach to education is seen as a positive by the parents and the opportunities for enriched learning is to be celebrated. There are a wide range of co curricular activities and community service learning activities available to their children. Equal opportunities and the level of pastoral care available to their children are excellent.

Parents feel fully engaged in their children's education and also feel they have a voice. Staff availability for questions and meetings are always welcomed and parents felt that going the extra mile to pick up the phone to discuss things was a very positive, personal move, rather than email. Informal meetings at the front gate can take place in the morning or at the end of the school day if parents have any concerns. More formal appointments can be arranged through the office when needed. Parents have opportunities to be fully involved in the school through Friends of BSAK, class volunteers, readers, trips and celebration days. This is seen as a positive link. Talks, webinars, seminars and coffee mornings are well attended by parents. Parent surveys have constructive feedback.

Recent initiatives to develop communication has been very well received by the parents and students. The parental One Stop Shop for Wellbeing is a welcome addition and is a great forum for information dissemination. Newsletters also contain a wellbeing element. Parents are involved in the development of the MELS program. The upgrade of the parent portal is receiving good feedback.

The reporting procedures are clear and the school regularly reports to parents, in either verbal or written form. Parents meet formally with class teachers to discuss progress and pastoral

issues. They receive a written report detailing their child's progress, effort, attainment and next steps in learning.

Parents commented positively on the genuine family/community feel of the school. The school feels safe and students are very comfortable being in school which reflects the school's genuine caring nature and feel.



## 11. Standard 7

### The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school procedure for handling complaints fully meets the requirements for BSO.

A robust policy is in place which details steps which would be taken to resolve any complaint raised. The policy is simple to understand and use. It is impartial and non-adversarial. This is available on the school's website and on request from the school.

In the first instance a complainant should speak directly to the class teacher or a head of year. Procedures outline how the protocols enable a full and fair investigation. The policy explains that concerns are initially dealt with at an informal level before moving to the formal processes if necessary.

However, if parents choose to approach the headmaster directly, he will evaluate whether the complaint should be handled by him or referred to a colleague who is better suited to address it initially. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, the situation can escalate to a member of the leadership team or board where appropriate.

Clear timelines are set out for each section of the process. Escalation of concerns is quick and responsive ensuring that all concerns are investigated thoroughly and in a timely fashion.

The aim of the procedure is to ensure a fair, effective and as rapid as possible resolution of all parent complaints. It is clear about time limits; record keeping correspondence and matters of professional judgement. The policy also clearly states the role of the board of governors. Complaints are reviewed and provide information to the school's senior leadership team so that services can be improved if required.

## 12. Standard 8

### Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding.

The school is led by an inspirational, highly effective and talented headmaster, who holds a central role in the delivery of high-quality education for the school and its sustained continuous development. Leaders and governors have articulated a clear vision and ambition for the school which is built around achieving excellence. Led by the headmaster, the SLT is a team of highly competent leaders in their fields who work collaboratively to provide a strong motivating force and direction for the whole school.

Leaders and managers engage in all aspects of the school and have an impactful effect upon the school community and beyond and have proved themselves capable of sustaining outstanding outcomes for students, including very high student achievement and well-being, and an excellent quality of education.

Through a close working partnership and clear sharing of school values, leaders and managers at all levels have a highly accurate understanding of how well the school functions and what needs improving. Self-evaluation and performance management are integral and a driving force for improvement. Careful and accurate evaluation ensures development goals are challenging and resources identified to achieve them. Leaders and governors have a deep and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They use this knowledge to plan and drive forward school improvement. There is a relentless focus on maintaining the outstanding quality of the school and securing its constant improvement. The actions of school leaders have resulted in substantial improvement in the quality of education and in excellent progress and achievement for all students. The school is ensuring further investment in major projects to enhance and enrich the opportunities for all students.

Relationships in the school are exemplary. Leaders have the highest expectations of behaviour, so that respect, courtesy and good manners are the norm. Governance is actively involved with the school including carrying out regular learning walks, meeting groups of students and receiving feedback from staff. Communication between middle and senior leaders is a strength of the school, staff feel supported and challenged. Middle leaders are very comfortable liaising with SLT; they feel that they are heard and make a valuable contribution to continuous school development.

Performance management is highly effective and leads to professional development that encourages, challenges and supports staff. Teaching is highly effective across the school, and staff are well motivated. Safeguarding is integral to the life of the school. Leaders and managers have created a culture of vigilance where pupils' welfare is actively promoted and they feel safe. The school actively seeks to recruit staff of the highest calibre and ensures all safeguarding procedures are in place. In partnership with the Human Resource team, school

leaders have implemented safe recruitment processes that are both secure and comprehensive.

Staff value the high quality and extensive training available to them which provides a wide range of professional development opportunities. Leaders communicate in a highly effective manner with parents, providing them with the information they need about the school and their child's progress. Parents are given extensive guidance about how to support their child to improve. The school involves parents fully in the life of the school, and it enjoys very strong support from parents. The school is run in a highly efficient manner that is recognised as a key strength by parents.

The leaders support the ambition of the school to be a beacon of excellence within the wider community. Partnerships with other schools and educational bodies support the development of impactful educational innovation. The school willingly supports a wide range of initiatives that enhance educational outcomes for many beyond the immediate school community and internationally.