



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

**The English College
Dubai**

United Arab Emirates

Date **3rd – 5th October 2022**
Inspection number **20221003**

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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 pupils; 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 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, about 75 lesson observations took place. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were seen in lessons and work stored online was looked at. Discussions were held with the staff, parents and informally with students. The inspection took place over three days.

The lead inspector was Dr Mark Evans. The team members were Andrew Bray, Rhys Redman and Jillian Reilly.

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 strong sense of community spirit, excellent leadership and the high quality of teaching and learning, combine to ensure that the English College Dubai (ECD) provides a high standard of education and care: students come to school with a desire and the confidence to achieve.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including the:

- impeccable behaviour, respect and self awareness from students across the whole school;
- a broad and balanced curriculum that supports learning very well;
- strong teaching and assessment;
- the integration of technology to genuinely enhance the learning at the correct times;
- support networks in place whole school to support staff development and integration into the school community;
- very high standards of attainment;
- communication and interaction with parents to create a strong, unified school community which students, staff and parents are proud to be a part of;
- excellent leadership and management: the senior leaders are highly reflective and have taken effective action to ensure sustainable improvement over time in all areas, for example investing in developing middle leadership, the Foundation Stage and Arabic language teaching;
- robust systems in place to support the development of teaching, assessment and learning;
- exemplary self regulation skills from students meaning they can effectively manage their own learning.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

1. Further support learning by ensuring the quality of teaching is as high for all as it is in the best lessons;
2. Support teachers to use all available data to personalise further learning for every child in every subject;
3. Ensure curriculum mapping is developed to enrich further the curriculum for the international cohort of students.

4. The context of the school

Full name of School	The English College, Dubai				
Address	Al Safa 1, Dubai, UAE				
Telephone Number/s	+971 4 394 3465				
Website Address	https://englishcollegedubai.com/				
Key Email Address	info@englishcollege.ac.ae				
Headteacher/ Principal	Mr. Mark Ford				
Chair of board/Proprietor	Mr Bilbo Perrot Mr Christian Peter Ms Maud Forrest				
Age Range	3-18 years				
Total number of pupils	1,160	Boys	576	Girls	584
Numbers by age	<i>0-2 years</i>	0	<i>12-16 years</i>	579	
	<i>3-5 years</i>	83	<i>17-18 years</i>	123	
	<i>6-11 years</i>	373	<i>18+ years</i>	2	
Total number of part-time children	0				

4.1 British nature of the school

ECD fully meets the standard.

The school's ethos and approach to education is recognisably British. The school values of aspiration, gratitude, integrity, resilience and respect align well with British values. Further evidence of the Britishness of the school are clear:

- The organisational structure reflects what you would see in a typical British school from Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) through to Year 13, all following the National Curriculum of England.
- Teachers are from the UK and/or are UK trained and qualified in all subjects except modern foreign languages and Islamic education.
- The primary school successfully uses schemes of learning and approaches to teaching which were developed in the UK. These include the *Talk for Writing* and *Read Write Inc* approaches to English as well as *White Rose Maths* for their numeracy teaching. Teachers are skilled in these initiatives and there is a clear consistency across the school. This trend continues as students work their way through the Secondary School towards the more formal examination years where GCSE and A Levels are in line with what would be on offer in a British school.
- The school is a member of British Schools in the Middle East (BSME).
- The school libraries contain a wealth of English literature which students have regular access to under the supervision of a knowledgeable librarian.
- 19% of pupils are British and the school celebrates the diversity of many other cultures with over 80 different nationalities represented.
- Performance management and staff target setting follow a similar approach to many British schools.
- Communication to parents in written in English as is the school website.
- Evidence of strong alignment to a British curriculum was seen in many lessons and corridors, such as in Year 1 where they have a ECD red letter box. In FS1 there is a heavy focus on using manners and the students are beginning to understand the value and importance of *please* and *thank you*.
- Students know which house they are in, the colour of that house and most were aware of who their house captain was. There are displays around school, in some classrooms, which relate to the houses.
- The Duke of Edinburgh Award is being re-introduced this year after a necessary break due to Covid restrictions and teachers often volunteer to support the programme as well as delivering an extra curricular activity (ECA).

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

The quality of education provided is outstanding.

5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is excellent and fully meets the standard.

It is broad, balanced, relevant and in many subjects, innovative. As it is strongly based on the English National curriculum, students would be readily able to transfer to the UK education system. It meets the needs of students and enables them to make good levels of progress whilst also allowing students to develop personally. Schemes of work plan to challenge the most able as well as to support those with additional learning needs. There is clear progression in the activities planned for year groups with effective transitions for students between year groups and key stages. There is a comprehensive extra-curricular program across subjects with expectation that all staff offer two clubs per academic year to students. The off-site visits schedule supports the in-school curriculum well. There is a clear vision to help students to become well-rounded individuals who are able to thrive in higher education and in later life.

The school deploys staff and resources effectively to support students who have additional learning needs and for those whom English is an additional language. There is a clear focus in the school to stretch and challenge all learners to become high achievers. Students who require additional support or catch-up are assisted, particularly by the form tutor in the secondary phase.

There has been a focus on curriculum development in EYFS, with the restructuring of the management and investment in continuing professional development (CPD). Emphasis is placed on independent choices, especially with the free-flow provision and use of indoor and outdoor play areas, which are used effectively to support student learning development. Assessment processes are well-embedded with support teachers being particularly effective.

There is a broad and balanced range of subjects delivered to students which enable students to acquire knowledge and skills which prepare them for the next stage of their academic development. Reading, writing, numeracy and communication skills are well-embedded across the curriculum which allow students to make good levels of progress. The *Read, Write, Inc* programme is used up to the end of year 1 which enables children to progress well in literacy. Resourcing within the school libraries is

extensive with strong literature shared with students, such as ‘The Secret of Black Rock’ by Joe Todd-Stanton.

The primary and secondary phases offer a balanced range of subjects in line with the UK education system with a range of options for students in Key Stages 4 and 5. The option of BTECs is available to students to offer an additional pathway making the option process more inclusive to the students.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is excellent. A significant number of the lessons were outstanding. ICT is used well to assist in the learning process.

The effective teaching at ECD enables students to acquire new knowledge, develop new skills and make progress according to their ability. The teachers plan lessons that encourage students to apply intellectual, physical and creative effort, to show interest in their work, to develop their critical and creative thinking and enable them to learn for themselves. This was reflected in many lessons seen. The excellent use of effective teaching tools in some lessons such as interactive whiteboards, enriches the learning. ECD students are adept users of technology, and many examples were observed of the effective use of technology to support learning by teachers and students.

In the best lessons, students are ready and keen to learn. They are provided with 'hooks' to engage them in their learning and are willing to have a go and take risks. They work collaboratively with their peers and use resources to support their learning. Learning environments in the best lesson are very well established to allow students to make independent choices in their learning and students were confident to move around the room collecting resources to create and initiate play. Communication and language was a strength.

Nearly all lessons are well planned and teaching methods are effective. In the best lessons, teachers used a wide variety of pedagogy methodologies and activities ensuring an appropriate pace which maximises learning opportunities and provides for different learning needs. For example, an outstanding lesson was observed in year 8 on surface area and its effect on food digestion where the lesson objectives and success criteria were fully differentiated. Resources used for recording and assessment for learning purposes were excellent. Another outstanding lesson was observed on the improvement of a homework task: it involved a personalised follow-up task in the lesson tailored specifically for the aspect of the homework that required improvement. Assessment for learning involved students showing how they improved on the homework task.

There are high expectations of behaviour, personal responsibility and achievement. In the best lessons, teachers provide students with numerous opportunities to learn collaboratively and work cooperatively with their peers. For example, in a year 6 music lesson, every stage of the lesson was efficient and students were learning throughout. Technology was used seamlessly and this enhanced student progress. The teacher had excellent subject knowledge and provided purposeful verbal feedback to a wide range of the students.

The teachers have a good understanding of the aptitudes, cultural background, and prior attainments of the students, including those who speak English as an additional language. For example, in a year 5 mathematics lesson, the teacher had several small areas of group work running simultaneously, showing outstanding differentiation. The pace was excellent, but the classroom was calm. Students were keen to discuss their learning and were always on task.

Across all phases, from Early Years to Key Stage 5, the students are engaged and enjoy their lessons. In one FS2 lesson, students demonstrated that they felt very much at home both in and outside the classroom, helped by appropriate resources at a sensible height and real emphasis on independent learning. They showed particularly interest in the scented garden and shared resources well.

Conversations with students illustrated that they are very positive about their learning. They value the learning opportunities provided both in the classroom and in the numerous extra-curricular activities afforded to them. Many teachers use humour very effectively, such as in a year 9 science lesson about the rate of reaction of pH on the enzyme amylase. Teachers often give time and space for the students to talk and learn from one another, such as in a year 2 English lesson about vocabulary for describing settings: in the exploration box, there were such items as fish, rope, a shell and some seaweed, and the teacher encouraged the students to talk to each other about what they could feel.

The school has a clear assessment policy and has introduced a range of strategies which enable students to be tracked more effectively. The collection, analysis and use of data across all phases has been enhanced as a result of the strategic focus on implementing and embedding online platforms. Moderation of judgements and intensive CPD linking internal assessment processes to the curriculum standards in all phases have been effective. All internal data, across all phases, is benchmarked against external and international assessments and expectations. International benchmarking data, including Progress tests, IBT, TIMSS and PISA, is used to inform curriculum modifications and focus areas for skills development.

The leaders especially are highly skilled at using and analysing data to monitor progress, modify the curriculum and recognise trends to inform decisions. This includes the triangulation of international benchmark data, contextual data and teacher assessment data, which supports validity.

The school carefully triangulates the data through PTE, PTM and PTS assessments, CAT4 assessments and formative tracking through Sonar in primary school and SISRA in secondary. An increased focus on independent learning has helped to ensure that students are able to use assessment data to reflect on and evaluate their learning, as well how to measure their progress against personalised targets.

5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

The standards achieved by students are excellent.

The school has seen a significant growth in the number of students since the 2019-2020 academic year when there was 146 primary students and 609 secondary students. The standards achieved by students has increased year-on-year during this time, despite the significant growth.

The youngest students follow the EYFS curriculum and observations of all students are regularly inputted onto *Tapestry*, particularly to highlight 'wow' moments. The school are quick to identify any students who are having difficulties and they are monitored closely to ensure support is provided. All students are given regular targets which feed into the follow week's 'continuous provision planning' and the teachers and support staff annotate the planning when progress is identified. *Read Write Inc* was introduced two years ago as the school's phonics system and there is evidence that this is becoming a strength across EYFS and into Key Stage 1. The students in EYFS are consistently achieving above UK national average shown by 93% at or above expected attainment in Literacy and 98% in Communication and Language at the end of the 2021-22 academic year.

Internal and external data demonstrates excellent progress in all subjects and in all parts of the school. Through the tracking of students using *Sonar* (newly introduced following a transition from *Classroom Monitor*) the school have identified that 99% of students in Years 1 to 6 made expected progress in English with 65% making above expected progress. In mathematics, 100% of students made expected progress in Years 1-6 with 71% making above expected progress. In the rare circumstances that the progress is not in line with the school's expectations, the middle and senior leaders work together to identify improvements and rapid intervention is put in place.

Standards throughout Phase 3 (Years 7-11) are equally high with 82% of students achieving grades above curriculum standards in Mathematics over the past 4 years and 93% in English. High standards are expected of all students and although many have a relatively high starting point at the beginning of Secondary School (according to CAT4 data), the school have systems and strategies in place to ensure all students make good or better progress.

GCSE, AS and A-Level results are above and sometimes well-above national standards in the UK in most subjects. Senior leaders are aware of subjects where this is not the case and rigorous measures have quickly been implemented to address this. GCSE results for the 2021-2022 academic year were excellent with 74% of students achieve a grade of 6 or above in English, mathematics and science which is well above the UK average of 41%. The students also performed very well with the highest grades of 8

or 9, especially in mathematics where 53% of students achieved the top two grades compared to the UK average of 12%. A Level results in English Literature and mathematics are also consistently above the UK National average for grades A*-C but the science results are below: 63% A*-C compared to 77% UK National average and 31% A*-A compared to 38% UK National average.

The attainment and progress of students is in line with the students exemplary behaviour and attitudes to learning. Students clearly love learning and expect high standards of themselves.

The school recognises where there are still areas for development and the senior leadership team are ambitious in their approach to ensuring standards continue to rise. In primary, for example, a significant amount of staff training time has been invested into making accurate judgements with formative assessment to improve the reliability of internal data and the evidence shows this is beginning to more accurately reflect the external assessment data.

The welcoming feel around school is enhanced by outstanding student artwork which is prominently displayed and celebrated. Display boards in classrooms and other key areas also celebrate the high standard of student work and expectations.

The transition process is strong both from year group to year group and also from primary to secondary school. Excellent links are made between subject leaders in the primary school and heads of faculty in the secondary school which include shared lesson observations and considerable monitoring of the standards as the students progress towards the secondary school.

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

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

Students have positive attitudes to school life and the variety of learning opportunities that are on offer within lessons and in the extra-curricular sense are well attended. The students show care, respect and a community spirit in all areas of the school. This is further developed by a committed parent council. The parent council offers support throughout the year by planning events on and off-site that encourage community links and enhance engagement in wider school life. Cultural and social diversity is celebrated through events such as International Day, UAE National Day and Dubai 30x30 Fitness challenge that encourage a wide community spirit of engagement. Charitable events happen throughout the year to raise funds so that children understand how they can contribute positively to the community.

Assemblies happen for all year groups and rewards are given throughout the school to celebrate individual and team success. The student council take part in assemblies and provide feedback through a student voice mechanism: they reference changes the school has made following these consultations.

Students enjoy school, are confident and have strong self-regulation, as demonstrated by their considerate behaviour, positive attitudes and regular attendance. There is a student bulletin that is shared every morning for students to find out what is happening in the school and activities they can take part in. They feel like they have a sense of involvement in school life, through regular student voice surveys and competitions within the House system. Behaviour in lessons and during break times reflects the school's effort in promoting high standards.

The school promotes the fundamental British Values of democracy and the rule of law. An active student council has representation from Year 1 to Year 13 and feeds information to the Head Boy and Head Girl. Each member of the council goes through a selection process including a letter and video to support their application. The students across the school then vote for the candidates. Leaders across the school represent core subjects as well as support well-being for students. There is a strong emphasis on Well-being at E.C. and there are a range of positive initiatives that support both student and staff well-being, including external talks from local medical staff to support mental and physical well-being. Students repeatedly confirm they know who to talk to if they have a concern and feel their concerns would be heard and supported.

Students are confident and have good self-esteem. They take pride in their written work and have a strong desire to do well in their lessons. They behave well in lessons and at break times reflecting the school's efforts to promote high standards.

The school has developed a comprehensive PSHE curriculum that is based on the PERMA model. It has been aligned with the NCFE PSHE framework and supports the important role well-being plays on the ethos of the school. Students show tolerance to other cultures and learn about key festivals around the world. The school prides itself on their 5 core values of 'Aspiration, Gratitude, Integrity, Resilience and Respect' and these are visible throughout the school.

Students throughout the school take part in the Duke of Edinburgh programme that promotes students' independence, confidence and resilience. This sits alongside a comprehensive list of extra-curricular activities that happen before, during and at the end of the school day.

Students are prepared to make choices about the next stage of their education, training or employment and have attained or are on course to attain relevant qualifications to help them to progress towards their goal.

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

The provision for welfare, health and safety of the students is excellent and meets the requirements of the BSO standards.

The school has a rigorous health and safety system and policies are in place which are reviewed annually. Information about the designated safeguarding team is displayed throughout the school on posters. Staff and students know the process to follow should they have a concern about keeping students safe. All teaching and non-teaching staff receive thorough training annually.

Security staff monitor the entry and exit to the school site through documented paper work and all visitors sign to agree they will follow the schools code of conduct. An electronic registration system logs visitors and late students arriving on-site and this is referenced in case of a fire. Security and operational staff wear high visibility jackets during arrival and dispersal times. There is a coloured lanyard system in place for different adults on site. Visitors must provide identification before entering the site. The school site is monitored by CCTV. Some students come to school on bike or scooter and wear protective headgear. There is a bike and scooter parking bay within the school site.

Throughout the school there are fire extinguishers that are maintained with a clear record on each unit to check every 3 months. There are posters next to each unit that explain safe use. The exit and evacuation points are labelled throughout the school and a fire safety process is in place to ensure students are accounted for in the event of a fire or drill.

The school keeps the chemicals used in science locked securely. The Science Teachers and cleaners keep a room key so that these rooms are locked when not in use. There are clear signs of safe practice within classrooms and teachers set clear guidelines for safe working in the science labs.

The clinic is operated by a third party, overseen by the manager of school operations. There is one doctor and 2 nurses who have relevant qualifications. There are 2 private rooms and a waiting area with two day beds. Medication is kept securely.

The school has a walled perimeter with one entry and one exit point that is kept closed and security monitor this access. This helps to keep students safe when on the premises. The school intranet has forms that staff complete if they are concerned about any health or safety measures. The facilities manager has a health and safety working party who meet half termly to review processes and procedures and make amendments based on feedback.

The behaviour of the students is excellent. Supervision at the beginning, end of during lesson change overs is supported by the academic staff. PASS data is used to support the in-house

student surveys on how they are feeling while at school and this information is shared with form tutors to monitor. Relationships are excellent throughout the school and students feel safe. Students know who they can talk to if they have a concern and feel secure that they will be supported, whether it be an academic or social need. All students said they would go to their form tutor for support in the first instance.

In the primary school, students are encouraged to bring healthy snacks and can talk about the sequence of food that they eat at snack or lunch times. They wait patiently to wash their hands prior to eating food and celebrate healthy food choices. In secondary there is a canteen, that students can use, serving healthy food. There are plenty of options for common areas that students can choose to meet to socialise during break times.

Risk assessments for the school site and trips are in place. The risk assessment is based on the trip location and age group of students are ratios are adjusted based on the level of risk involved. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are robust and regularly reviewed. Any students at risk are identified and arrangements are put in place to keep them engaged. The attendance and punctuality expectations are clear and a system is in place to monitor and follow up any instances of repeated absence or persistent lateness.

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

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

The school is owned and operated with a board of governors who play an active role in supporting the school move forward. The board are in full support of the school's strategic direction and committed to supporting the vision. A parent sits on the board and it meets regularly to discuss the school's developments and strategic plans, holding the principal to account.

Recruitment is thorough and subject specific. All staff go through an interview with two middle or senior leaders with questions tailored to the needs of the department. Offers are subject to at least two reference checks, one of whom must be from a current principal or head teacher and the principal follows up to confirm these verbally. All staff joining ECD are on a 6 months probationary period and receive lesson observations and learning walks to ensure they at least meet the expectations of teaching and learning. All leaders receive safer recruitment training.

All staff are required to provide police clearance certificate from their home country or most recent country of residence. The school understand the importance of additional international police clearance certificates and DSB or other appropriate checks to ensure all staff are suitable.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are excellent: the school meets the requirements for this standard.

The school buildings and sport facilities provide an environment which enhances the learning experiences of students and teaching staff appreciate the standards. In 2020, there was a significant development with the new build of the Secondary side of school which provides excellent facilities to deliver a successful broad and balanced British Curriculum. Since the extension, the school have been working to ensure the Primary building is brought up to the same standard and the consistency in décor is clearly visible. Furthermore, the school are regularly reviewing their facility needs and frequent discussion with the Board is commonplace.

Entry and exit to and from the building is effective and there is adequate facility access for anyone with limited mobility. Upon entry to the carpark, a team of security officers request visitors to sign in and wear a visitors lanyard and there is a further sign in process on entry to the main school building.

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.

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.

Wash facilities are located next to the medical centre which is operated by a third party but jointly overseen by the school to ensure procedures and processes meet the needs of the students. The medical centre is staffed by a doctor and two nurses and is well-stocked. The school have worked extensively on their procedures for tracking pupils who need medical attention and clear systems are in place to ensure that communication is made with parents in a timely manner when it is an incident or illness that they need to be quickly aware of. Equally, students are monitored to ensure they return to the classroom promptly if it is a minor accident which is dealt with by the nurse and the student is able to continue with their learning.

In circumstances where a member of the maintenance team or cleaning team is required, all staff have access to the school Intranet and can quickly log a request which is managed by the facilities officer and the appropriate team member is sent to assess and then rectify the

situation. This process is efficient and ensures that any health and safety concerns are quickly addressed.

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.

Teaching and support staff make good use of corridor space and shared areas near to classrooms, such as the central area near the 'pods' in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 for break-out and intervention groups. However, some other facilities such as the gym are used less frequently.

Students clearly value the standard of facility that they have access to as they are very respectful and look after their surroundings.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information provided by the school to parents, carers and others is excellent. The school meets all requirements of this standard.

ECD conducts annual parent surveys and the feedback is positive. This was confirmed at a meeting with parents and a member of the inspection team. Parents spoke of their happiness with the links between parents and staff of the school. The school is proactive with involving parents in the school community with regular meetings with the parents council, frequent newsletters across different subject areas, regular coffee morning with the Principal and regular parent workshops. Parents regularly volunteer at school events and trips, along with attending school sports fixtures. During the inspection, parents spoke about a strong community feeling within the school where their children feel safe and love attending school. They feel proud to be a part of the school's community.

Information about the school, its staff, the school's vision, curriculum and school policies are easily accessible via the school website or by request to the school reception. School complaints are handled swiftly, with a 24-hour response rate. There are clear lines of enquiry as to who deals with specific complaints and a clear process should any complaint be escalated.

Strict security checks await parent visitors to the school, all must sign in at security and are given guest passes which must be worn at all times on the school site. The school café is open near the school entrance and is available to parents. The principal meets with parents on a regular basis to discuss school issues and direction. Parents feel involved in the school community and feel that the school management listens and acts on their concerns when they are able to.

Parents are sent student attainment information every half term by means of a comprehensive school report. This is consistently implemented throughout the whole school. The report has a clear grading structure along with helpful targets for students to improve on their attainment for parents to assist at home where possible.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school's procedure for handling complaints meets the standard for BSO.

There is a detailed, written policy in place which clearly outlines the procedures a parent should follow to raise a complaint. The steps reflect good practice from the UK. This policy is available to all parents through the school's website.

All parents are encouraged to first of all speak to the relevant form teacher or class teacher by letter, email, telephone or a meeting request. The school acknowledges that this is the most appropriate method of resolving the majority of concerns that parents have. All complaints will receive a response within 24 hours to acknowledge receipt of the communication and to explain how the school plan to proceed. Staff act in a courteous manner when dealing with parents.

At all stages of a complaint, the school inform the parents of the expected timescales to get to a resolution or outcome.

Following a complaint which is referred to the board, the chair will collate the evidence and provide the parent with a full response which may satisfactorily conclude the matter. However, if the parent is not satisfied with the outcome, the chair will offer a meeting where one panel member will be independent of the management and running of the school.

The school keeps a written record of complaints which are of a serious nature and all matters remain confidential on a need-to-know basis, often just with the Head of School.

12. Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are excellent.

A recent survey shows that 97% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the school is well led and managed. A key element of this very positive aspect is the importance placed by the principal and the whole school senior leadership team (WSLT) on the school as a community.

Engaging sensitively with that community, the principal and WSLT have led the development of a new vision, core purpose and set of values, supported by strategic pillars. These explain how the school will meet its mission. The school improvement plans (SIPs) in both primary and secondary centre around achieving these strategic pillars. The plans also focus on addressing the UAE National Agenda priorities, underpinned by a strong philosophy of inclusion and support which ensures successful learning outcomes for all groups of students.

Self evaluation is a core strength, which leads to the development plans being accurately targeted. The content of all improvement plans is based on the specific individual needs of the faculty/key stage, driven by both internal and external data, and research findings.

The senior team is highly reflective and takes decisive action to ensure that there is sustainable improvement over time. As a direct result of a previous local inspection, the school invested heavily in developing middle leadership, the foundation stage and Arabic language teaching. This investment has been effective.

The governing body support and challenge as appropriate. Through regular review meetings, the board holds the principal to account for delivering on agreed targets and responding to developmental feedback from previous inspections. They have agreed the direction of the school for the next three years, with ambitious but appropriate priorities. Each faculty has its own improvement plan, which follow the same structure as the SIPs. Together, they secure collective accountability for achieving the school vision.

The governing body is also fully committed to and actively responsible for ensuring the school is effectively resourced. The board considers all stakeholder perspectives, including the recommendations from the previous inspection report and feedback from surveys of parents, students and staff. One governor specifically monitors and advises on appropriate inclusion provision for students across the whole school.

Leaders throughout the school demonstrate an excellent understanding of curriculum and pedagogy, using a strategy they refer to as 'finger on the pulse': this is highly effective. They also use research based practice to inform decision making and optimise students' achievements. Leaders at all levels in the school are fully accountable for the quality of teaching, learning and achievement outcomes within their areas.

There is an excellent programme of professional development for all, through bespoke leadership training. Staff morale is a strength through the school's focus on social capital, staff wellbeing and personalised development programmes. These are built on strong communication channels, which maintain a strong ethos of collective responsibility.

The school is very well organised on a day to day basis. All involved – teachers, assistants, administrators, operational staff – work together to the benefit of the students.