



**British School  
Overseas**  
Inspected by Penta International

## **Inspection report**

# **Reach British School**

**Abu Dhabi  
United Arab Emirates**

Date

**12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

Inspection number

**20241112**

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## 1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

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

The inspection and this report follow the DFE schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas.

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

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

This inspection was completed by Penta International. Penta International is approved by the British government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the DfE on the extent to which schools meet the standards for BSO.

During the inspection visit, over 115 lesson observations took place, as well as a series of learning walks. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, and a range of teachers, parents and groups of students. The inspection team were in school for three days.

The lead inspector was Colin Dyson. The team members were Lee Falconer, Nina Hudd, Nicola Matthews, Mary McAloon and Joanne Rice.

## 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 relevant standards are:

- Part 1 – ‘2(2)(d)(ii)- encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation as set out in the Equality Act 2010;’ and
- Part 2 – ‘5(b)(vi)- encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 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

Reach British School (RBS) provides an environment where students thrive, due to the positive commitment of staff to develop them as responsible, respectful members of the school and wider community. The school has a strong commitment to promoting a broad British ethos and curriculum that meets the needs of all its students. All stakeholders wholeheartedly support the school's ethos and vision, fostering a strong sense of pride within the school community. It is a happy and effective school, which ensures that it is fully inclusive, students are well supported in groups and as individuals. Teachers support students to make effective progress and school data highlights improving attainment data. Students stated that they enjoy school and commented on the strong family feel.

## 3.1 What the school does well

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

- Close attention given to previous recommendations.
- The school principal is inspirational in his drive for excellence supported by highly effective leadership and management teams.
- Growth in the secondary school has been managed well, especially at KS4 and KS5 where an adapted curriculum meets both international and local needs of students.
- Teaching staff are fully committed to improving teaching and learning at RBS and enjoy working at the school.
- The open communication with parents, who have confidence in the leadership of the school.
- School leaders have made highly significant improvements since the last inspection.
- Students' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are strengths.
- Strong family ethos is evident through all the work the school does - every adult and student are important.
- The site facilities and management are excellent creating a safe and stimulating learning environment.

## 3.2 Points for improvement

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

- i. Develop further the capacity for outstanding teaching across the whole school, including by ensuring the rich range of data available has a positive impact on teachers' planning and students' feedback;
- ii. To further enhance the capacity of the inclusion team to support the needs of all children;
- iii. Embed the use of data to further support students' pastoral needs.

## 4. The context of the school

Full name of school	Reach British school				
Address	Main Reception Reach British School, Street # 38, AL Dirrasah Street, Baniyas East 2, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.				
Telephone Number/s	+971 2 582 2030 - +971 50 852 1801				
Website Address	<a href="http://www.reachbritishschool.com">www.reachbritishschool.com</a>				
Key Email Address/s	Admission: admissions@reachbritishschool.com Finance: finance@reachbritishschool.com Communication: communication@reachbritishschool.com				
Headteacher/Principal	Mr. Craig Halsall				
Chair of Board of Governors/Proprietor	Ms. Nahla Yassin				
Age Range	3 to 18 years				
Total number of students	2,069	Boys	1,144	Girls	925
Numbers by age	0-2 years	0	12-16 years	486	
	3-5 years	370	17-18 years	20	
	6-11 years	1,188	18+ years	5	
Total number of part-time children	0				

The school is an international school with a typically British style culture, values, ethos and structure. The school follows British curricula including an adapted English national curriculum (ENC) that is delivered by nearly all British teachers. The structure of the school adopts a predominantly British approach in terms of pedagogical practice training, teaching and assessment. The school's mission, vision, values and, most importantly, school 'drivers' of safe, respectful and ambitious were introduced in 2022. The latter were considered the most important as they were felt to be most contextually appropriate for the stage of the school's development and would "drive" priorities, decisions and budgets.

## 4.1 British nature of the school

- All elements of being safe are the highest priority to the school as evidenced by it being one of three RBS key drivers. As such RBS has robust policies, practices and procedures surrounding safeguarding. Staff are well trained and safeguarding signposting is evident around the school.
- RBS follows the English National Curriculum and provision has been rated as excellent. A parent transitioning from the UK reported that their child was able to enter education at RBS seamlessly.
- The school provides a holistic education, valuing the whole child. The enrichment programme (extra-curricular activities), especially in the primary, are rich and varied.
- RBS supports students' transition to life after school with appropriate career and university guidance. A number of their graduating students have entered UK universities.
- The school has recently expanded their KS4 and KS5 curriculum to include BTEC. This has further enhanced student opportunity on entering the UK.
- Pastoral care in RBS is excellent. Students feel valued and can build self-esteem both through their academic progress and participation in a wide range of enrichment activities.
- School policies and practices promote the fundamental values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty or mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This is reflected in the school's drivers of *Safe*, *Respectful* and *Ambitious*.
- The school's structure reflects that of a British school including a head and deputy head roles. This is also reflected in the student body through the appointment of a head boy and head girl and the presence of a student council across the school.
- The house system is at the heart of the school and the wearing of uniforms reflects its British nature.
- British values of respect are encouraged through the school. This is evident in the curriculum and through daily interactions between students and staff. The PSHE curriculum and assemblies further embed British values.
- Inclusivity and diversity are highly valued by the school. Development of a bespoke inclusion centre for students with specific learning needs is testament to this.
- The teaching body is made up of UK qualified or UK experienced staff who are keen to improve through the CPD offering of the school.

## 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 curriculum is excellent and fully meets the BSO standard. This is because of its exciting breadth and balance, its inclusiveness, innovation and constant renewal to meet the changing needs of all its students.

There is a detailed written curriculum policy and the school website hosts extensive information on the school's educational philosophy and programmes of study that span the content of the British curriculum and the learning requirements of the UAE Ministry of Education (MOE) by way of Arabic and Islamic and Social Studies.

The school follows the Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) and meets the needs of all learners. The curriculum includes Islamic and Arabic cultural provision taught by specialist teachers to include the requirements of the ministry. Long, medium and short term plans are in place across EYFS and teachers plan lessons using learning objectives based upon the EYFS. In the Early Years lesson plans are delivered through a timetabled curriculum. Learning environments are organised around the 7 areas of learning through the provision of a themed, play-based curriculum.

In FS2 the curriculum follows the *Talk for Writing* approach, which encourages students to engage in retelling stories and begin to understand the structure of a story. In a lesson as part of continuous provision, students were observed creating a shared pictorial version of the story, 'Handa's Surprise', by pasting pictures of the characters and fruits from the story. In another lesson, students were completing an adult led activity where they created their own story map for the text following the creation of a whole class story map. The *Read Write Inc.* (RWI) scheme is followed in FS2 and primary school to teach phonics, reading and writing. FS1 teachers introduce the sounds to students to prepare them for starting to learn phonics in FS2.

Outdoor play activities are timetabled to ensure all learners have the opportunity to progress in physical development. The curriculum includes many opportunities for the development of English language through circle time, story sessions and phonics. The school has recently introduced a small library of phonics books for



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students to use during lessons with their teachers. As the opportunity arises, the school plans to develop and enhance the EYFS library area.

The primary curriculum in Reach British School provides a balanced, comprehensive framework that aligns with the English national curriculum standards while also considering the specific cultural and educational context of the host country. The curriculum is effective in fostering academic progression, social development, and global awareness, ensuring that students receive a well-rounded education.

The curriculum includes a broad range of subjects—such as mathematical, linguistic, scientific, humanities, languages, arts, and physical education—promoting a holistic development approach. Emphasis on critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity is being embedded, encouraging students to apply their learning in real-world situations.

Opportunities to develop reading, writing and communication skills are supported through the use of programmes such as RWI and *Talk for Writing*, which is used across EYFS and Primary, supporting transition. A bilingual approach to RWI considers access to first and second language learners. Streaming of learners for Read Write Inc was not seen to be further differentiated to meet the still wide range of needs. However, the school is looking to address this through additional CPD for teaching assistants. Lesson planning details provision for students who speak English as an additional language (EAL) though this was not seen consistently in practice. Moving forward the school has appointed a head of EAL to develop this area further.

Acquisition of numeracy skills is supported through the use of *Collins Busy Ants* and *Century Learning*. These were observed being used practically and thoughtfully in lessons alongside other activities and learning opportunities.

The school recognises the need for the curriculum to include rigorous assessment practices, enabling teachers to monitor progress and address individual student's needs. A focus on assessment analysis will, over time, provide in depth tracking and target setting opportunities. The school has an inclusive approach and is further developing specific interventions for students with additional needs through staff CPD. The school has fostered excellent parental involvement through open communication, creating a cohesive, supportive educational partnership between home and school.

A wide variety of enrichment activities allows students to explore gifts and talents. The structure of these activities in the Primary, taking place during the school day, creates inclusivity allowing all students to engage and has been well received by parents. Students are enthused and engaged with the opportunities available.

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Where possible the activities lead to meaningful outcomes including national competitions, further enhancing students' experiences.

The curriculum is reviewed for effectiveness and impact at the end of each unit by teachers and at the end of each year by leadership. The use of data to inform adaptations has included adding additional English to Year 6 in preparation for Year 7 and remapping the progression of units as appropriate.

Transitions are effectively managed from EYFS to primary with visits for students to Year 1 and Year 1 students visiting to share their experiences with EYFS2. Parents are well informed through coffee mornings. Relevant assessments are shared between teachers and Year 1 teachers visit the students in their EYFS context. A similar approach is taken for transition from KS2 to secondary. This is also further enhanced by the whole school approach including assemblies and other whole school events. Transition is viewed positively by parents.

The secondary curriculum in Reach British School is broad, balanced and takes the specific cultural and educational context of the host country into account. The curriculum is effective at KS3, KS4 and KS5, ensuring students benefit from a well-rounded education, social development, and global awareness. Students are also encouraged to consider different world views and empathise with other cultures. This was evident in an outstanding Year 9 Art lesson where students were encouraged to consider 'what is culture' through the lens of stimulus photos linked to UAE and British contexts.

A particular strength of the school is the adapted KS5 curriculum, which enables students to re-sit IGCSE subjects from KS4, as well as the recently introduced BTEC Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications. This has been made possible through recent growth in the secondary school and school leaders have robust plans in place to support both continued future growth and greater breadth in student pathways. Given the large number of EAL students at RBS, particular emphasis is placed on language development and supporting literacy. In most lessons, teachers identify key terms, which are displayed on the board to help scaffold learning. Regular summative assessment windows ensure that students' progress throughout the curriculum is monitored and informs future learning. In the best examples seen, students actively engaged with teacher feedback to develop their own learning targets or improve their work further.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the whole school. A significant number of lessons were judged to be outstanding.

In Early Years, teachers collaboratively plan timetabled activities based on a theme across each year group. The majority of students enjoy and engage with these activities in all lessons. Learning behaviours of students in lessons are good; they listen attentively and are keen to learn. The best examples of this are where adults positively reinforce the school's expected learning behaviours during lessons. Teaching Assistants are active in the lessons and always ready to support students with what they need. Utilising this resource further to encourage students' critical thinking skills and creativity would support positive overall progress in learning.

Students independently select activities during continuous provision sessions. In some lessons, teachers and teaching assistants were seen asking open ended questions and encouraging students to think and respond creatively and independently. A teacher was observed asking a student during continuous provision, 'What are you making?' which enabled the student to explain their thinking and build on their ideas. In a maths lesson, the teacher asked a student why they had sorted the objects in the way that they had, this prompted the student to explain their thinking behind comparing the lengths of two objects. The school should consider strategies for making this good practice consistent throughout EYFS.

During a large majority of teacher directed inputs in Early Years, students are encouraged to develop enquiry skills. In one lesson, a whole class experimented with dropping a cookie into milk and water to help them predict their big question, 'What will happen to the Gingerbread Man if he goes in the river?' During outdoor play and continuous provision, Teaching Assistants encourage turn taking and support the students in using the materials and resources set out. Timetabling of the physical spaces ensures all students have the opportunity to develop in all seven areas of learning. Time management could be an area for the school to focus on to ensure classes are not delayed in following timetables.

In primary, teaching was good overall and there was a significant number of outstanding lessons. In most lessons students were able to demonstrate effective learning and progress.

Students had an excellent attitude towards their work and were enthused and engaged by the activities on offer. This was evident in a series of interactive science activities held in the science lab where students could engage in hands-on activities

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including technology which enhanced their learning experience. In Maths lessons observed, students were able to explain clearly what they were learning about with evident excitement. A good level of questioning in some classes, supported students to think critically and research was actively encouraged in relevant lessons.

The environment in most classrooms was very positive and behaviour was generally well managed. Praise was targeted to increase engagement and celebrate understanding. Students in most classes felt safe to make mistakes and were encouraged to challenge themselves. In one humanities lesson, the teacher allowed a mistake to remain during a whole class gap fill exercise, which students were then able to identify and correct as the activity proceeded. Where off task behaviour occurred, it was mostly displayed in low level disengagement. Management behaviour strategies such as using *Dojo* points and stickers were used effectively across the school.

The teaching and learning environment in the primary school is often vibrant, engaging, and centred on developing each student's academic and personal growth. The classroom spaces were well-used, clean and orderly. Displays were an active part of the learning process and contained key information. In some lessons, working walls were used to support vocabulary. In an English lesson, previous learning and criteria had been displayed and were referenced back to for support. In Key Stage (KS) 1, effective use was made of the exploration zone for a practical science lesson, however, the outdoor learning space would benefit from improved resourcing and planning if children are to benefit from high-quality outdoor learning opportunities.

Resources were well used in lessons including the use of manipulatives in mathematics. Technology was well integrated for example, in Year 2, *beebots* were used to develop an understanding of position and direction. In some lessons the teaching assistant was planned for and able to support learners with their needs and learning activity. This was inconsistent across classes.

Challenge, the first of the 'Teaching and Learning the RBS Way' criteria, was evidenced in planning in most lessons. In outstanding lessons, a range of options were available which students then had ownership over choosing to determine their own level of challenge. Provision for EAL and SEND students was also evident in planning. In some lessons this led to adapted support materials to allow improved access to the lesson objective. The level of differentiation was less well managed in other lessons.

There was evidence of differentiation in planning informed through EAL/SEND assessment data. However, marking and feedback in books was inconsistent. In KS1 and parts of KS2, work was marked regularly and quality comments were

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responded to. However, in some KS2 classes, books were unmarked or marked inadequately.

Feedback in lessons was evident as teachers circulated around the room or worked with small groups of students to support learning. The best teachers were able to identify misconceptions through this process and create a learning moment for all. This was evident in a maths lesson on multiplication. The teacher was able to question their reasoning, encouraging deeper critical thinking.

In secondary, the majority of lessons are good. Where learning was good or better, careful teacher planning was supported by strong teacher-student relationships and a culture of high expectations. This was evident in a Year 10 Foundation Maths lesson, where strong pedagogical approaches to questioning ensured no student was left behind in their learning. Furthermore, excellent teacher-student relationships fostered an atmosphere where expectations were clear and everybody could learn. When learning was less effective, low-level disruption was left unchallenged and expectations of students were either too low or not clear. This was particularly prevalent at KS3. In a minority of lessons, either teachers' subject knowledge or unsatisfactory pedagogical approaches meant that student learning was less than good.

In the best lessons there was active student engagement in their learning. The concept of using students who have finished their tasks, or who are more able, to aid other groups with their understanding and to complete tasks is well-developed and used to support the learning process. In one key stage 4 science lesson, the concept of the "mini teacher" was so well-embedded that the student so ably led the teaching, addressing any misconceptions of her classmates and explaining the learning effectively, that the teacher was almost superfluous.

Independence in the learning process is encouraged in the secondary school, particularly in key stages 4 and 5, where in most lessons that were observed, the students chose their own tasks, researched their own information using the tablets and presented their work to others – either orally or on paper – and this was critiqued by their classmates. Subsequently, they would react to the reflections of their colleagues and respond accordingly in an academic way. In these lessons, teachers were mainly facilitators and worked to keep students on task.

Technology including an AI platform is embedded seamlessly into lessons, simultaneously providing additional support for EAL students and students with additional needs, whilst allowing for stretch and challenge of the most able students. All teachers were adept and competent in their tech use and this was integrated into lesson planning. Student collaboration on joint pieces of work through tech was systematic and embedded.

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In the least effective lessons, low-level disruptive behaviour by a large proportion of the students meant that tasks were not completed, learning was not understood and the learning objective was not met. Teachers in these lessons were generally able to work with only one group of students at a time and during this time the students would work well and be focussed; however, when the teacher was not working directly with the group then the students were not focussed and did not complete the required tasks. Whilst a new behaviour management programme has been agreed and shared, not all teachers are effectively using this system to manage classroom behaviour. This may also help with noisy lesson transitions in the corridor.

## 5.3 Standards achieved by students

Progress is good, attainment is satisfactory and improving in KS4 and 5.

Standards achieved fully meet the standard for BSO. Students enjoy school and attendance is good throughout all sections of the school. The school is pro-actively engaged with parents and guardians by ensuring same-day contact is made if students are absent. Student behaviour is often good. However, at times off-task student behaviour impacts learning, progress and subsequently attainment.

Most students make good progress over time and the academic standards achieved by students are satisfactory when compared to UK standards and external benchmarks such as Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT4) and GL Progress Tests.

At each key stage, tracking systems are in place to monitor student progress and attainment. CAT4 and GL Progress Tests are now being deployed more widely across the school to ensure that internal data is triangulated against external benchmarks. As this embeds further, teachers and leaders will be able to make informed decisions regarding curriculum adaptations and delivering support to students who are not achieving their potential. Baseline tests indicate that most students enter the school with below age-related expectations. Most students go on to make good progress thanks to good teaching and pastoral care.

In EYFS, students join the school with low baseline attainment overall and make good progress over their time in these lower years. Over the past three academic years (2021-24), end of year data shows students make 25% accelerated progress overall in the core areas in FS1 and 12% in FS2.

There is a wide range of attainment across the primary years, with improvements noted in mathematics, English and science since the last inspection. The academic standards achieved by the majority of students in KS1 and KS2 are satisfactory. Students make good progress over time given their lower-than-UK average entry points. Attainment in mathematics and science is a strength when compared to attainment in English.

There is a wide range of attainment across the secondary school, with improvements at KS3, KS4 and KS5 since the last inspection. The academic standards achieved by the majority of students in KS3 are satisfactory. Students make progress over time in all core subjects with the majority of students meeting expectations in mathematics and science by the end of KS3 and most students working towards expectations in English. In the lessons observed and students' books seen, progress over time is good given the lower-than-UK average starting points for students.

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The standards achieved by students in KS4 have improved significantly since 2022 and are now good. Students' IGCSE results in 2024 reflect the ongoing work of the secondary leadership and teaching teams, where 34% of grades awarded were 7 or above, compared with the UK average of 21.7%. 60% of the Year 11 2024 cohort IGCSE grades were at or above CAT4 targets, compared with 42% in 2023. Similar improvements in attainment at KS5 have been noted at A-Level since 2022, are now close to UK averages and are good. 71% of the Year 13 2024 cohort A-Level grades were C or above (UK average 76%) and 24% were A or above (UK average 28%). The secondary leadership team are aware of variation in student attainment across departments at IGCSE and A-Level and are working with middle leaders and teachers to address these.

Students are well prepared for the next stage of their education and they, alongside their parents, are aware of target grades and know their career and university pathways. For the first time in the school's history, all students in the Year 13 2024 graduating class secured university placements. The introduction of career guidance lessons for the senior year groups works very effectively to help students determine suitable course and career pathways relative to their values, skills and interests.



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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is outstanding: it continues to be a significant strength of the school.

The school provides a safe space for students to develop their skills, self-esteem, self-understanding and self-confidence. The school's atmosphere is warm, friendly, welcoming and inclusive and this is greatly appreciated by students, their families and the staff. Students are both polite and confident, whilst being considerate of one another and to school visitors.

Since the last inspection, the school has introduced new value drivers across the school: Safe. Respectful. Ambitious. This is immediately apparent throughout the school in the displays and references to these in lessons. Teachers and middle leaders constantly refer to these in their meetings and discussions and interviews with students show that they understand the importance of these values as well. These are reinforced in the regular assemblies and through the pastoral team.

School policies and practices promote the fundamental values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty or mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. In recent years these have all been reinforced to further strengthen the notion of inclusion and inclusivity.

As freely articulated by the students both spontaneously and in meetings, they feel happy in school and love being part of the school community. They take pride in their work, especially in their independent learning, which they are very eager to share with visitors.

There is an active student council for both the primary and secondary sections of the school, the members of which are selected by the senior leadership team. These meet on a regular basis, under the leadership of the respective pastoral leads, although there are also occasions in the year when the whole student council body meets together as an entity. A head boy and head girl along with deputies are some of the student leadership opportunities provided in the secondary school, to mirror the school leadership team structure and to provide student agency.

The enrichment curriculum is particularly strong in the primary school, providing opportunities to both develop student interest and to engage with community-based projects. Students have been generous in their donations and initiatives to give back to local communities, such as the house Ramadan food drive, and in supporting local fundraising activities. One of the current student initiatives is the creation of a Mini zen garden, which embraces the British cultural references of the school by including part of a Mini car from Oxford, as well as using otherwise waste space to create a peaceful area within the school grounds. This is due to be finished in early 2025.

The school holds daily assemblies each morning before the start of the first lesson, where the UAE National Anthem is played and different students are responsible for elements of delivery of the assembly. The school radio station is operated by students in the morning to provide additional opportunities to develop confidence and self-esteem.

The school has recently introduced a new PSHE curriculum which ensures that there is a consistent, high-quality scheme of work throughout the school. This promotes the new core values whilst simultaneously reinforcing the expectations of a British School in Abu Dhabi. Within the curriculum there is an appropriate emphasis on social behaviour but also on laws as they apply in the local context and according to acceptable societal norms in the UK. Since the majority of the leadership team and the teaching team are British, policies and practices are compliant with UK standards.

There is a good and strong range of enrichment choices to develop students personally that are run by a mix of specialist teachers and school staff. The ISP link affords further enhanced opportunities for students through the ILOS programme such as MUN, cultural exchanges and virtual exchanges. These also include ISP Artist, ISP Filmmakers, ISP Scientists and ISP Chess Masters. The success of this partnership work is evidenced through the introduction of the ISP Sustainability initiative including a shutdown procedure which has reduced carbon footprint by 34% over the timeframe of the exercise. This shutdown procedure is still being implemented in order to maintain the sustainability of the school.

ADEK and BSME initiatives also provide opportunities for the students to follow their interest and compete alongside regional schools, particularly in sports events. In addition, students are encouraged to participate in events which align with their pursued interests outside school.

In the last two years, the school has introduced PASS surveys (Pupil Attitudes to Self and School) for all students from KS1 upwards. These indicate a high level of satisfaction with their school experience, with most domains scoring at the high or moderate satisfaction level. This data is used by class teachers and year group leads as well as pastoral leaders to pinpoint any students of concern with regard to attitude to learning or to general wellbeing. Where issues are identified, the academic and pastoral teams work together to respond quickly and take action to address any issues before they escalate. It is evident that one of the strengths of the school is how well they know each student, both behaviourally and academically, in order to support each individual to achieve their full potential.

The school has recently introduced a new behaviour policy which has four intervention levels depending upon the severity of the issue, with daily recording on iSAMS by teachers. This new system is very robust in theory although it has yet to be fully embraced by all teachers in all lessons; once this has been fully implemented, it should have a positive impact in addressing the occasions of low-level disruptive behaviour which were apparent in some lessons.

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The school is proud to join in with celebrations of UAE days, International Days, World Book Days etc, which the students and the whole school community relish as these occasions provide opportunities to celebrate together as an entity, further reinforcing the sense of community and belonging.

There are very effective arrangements to facilitate year group transitions and in particular, changes of key stage, to minimise the difficulties for the students and the parents. Parents are especially appreciative of the coffee mornings and information sessions that are offered to them to smooth these changes.

Consolidating the link to the UK and the British curriculum of the school, in a Year 12 History lesson, students were actively engaged in an analysis and debate of the 1980s Miners' Strikes in the UK. Further British Historical links were seen in Year 7 Humanities where students' work showed learning about Thomas Beckett, William the Conqueror (Battle of 1066) and the Battle of Stamford Bridge. In the primary school, these links are more explicit with many of the major historical eras of the UK being covered in a cross – curriculum approach.

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

The welfare, health and safety of the learners meet the standard for BSO and are outstanding.

The school site is secure. The school is kept clean and cleaning staff are actively employed throughout the day. Waste management procedures are suitable for the school site. Drinking water is accessible in many areas of the school and these areas are cleaned regularly. The playground areas are protected from the weather with suitable shading.

First aid kits are available at specific areas of the school and there are three well equipped nurse clinics for the community to visit for first aid. Nurses are fully qualified and their training is kept up to date; documentation of this is stored in the clinic files. Medical policies and procedures are embedded into daily practice with students' medical visits being recorded on the nurse's medical log, in the school's online central system, on the parent communication channel and on a paper record that is sent home. Medicines from home are only administered by the school nurse when the parent has completed the consent form. All medicines stored on site are kept secure in a lockable cupboard in the medical clinic. It is recommended that the school adds a window within the door of the EYFS medical clinic to support the school's safeguarding policy and practices. Designated staff are first aid trained according to their locations within the school site to ensure there is always a first aid trained member of staff in the vicinity of any accident or medical incident.

Food is prepared off site by a third-party provider and brought into school. Most students choose to bring their own food from home while some eat the school lunch.

Staff supervision during playtime is well-matched to the number of students and the areas they play in. Supervising staff wear hi-visibility vests for easy recognition and interact with the students when necessary. The school practises an evacuation drill once per half term and reports that its most recent evacuation had all members on-site out of the building in 2 minutes and 38 seconds. Attendance data is recorded and the latest figures highlight a level of attendance of typically 96%.

There are three designated senior leaders, trained to Level 3, and 5 deputy designated leaders who act as the safeguarding team for the whole school. There is a clear policy and procedures in place for members of the community to follow if a concern or allegation needs to be shared. The single central safeguarding record is securely stored and kept up to date with reports and actions on each. All staff receive child protection and safeguarding training at the start of every academic year and new staff on arrival. A central register of staff training is kept and updated each year. Posters on the walls around the school explain to students and the community who they should talk to if needed. All third-party providers receive health and safety and safeguarding training before meeting students.

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The school follows the expected safer recruitment practice and all recruiters are trained in safer recruitment. When interviewed, students shared that the school feels like a safe and happy place to learn and they know what to do or who to speak to if they ever had a concern or a difficulty. Students praised their teachers for supporting them with their emotions and challenges when needed. Daily whole school morning assemblies promote positivity and care. In an assembly observed, selected teachers were praised with 'shout outs' and awarded with a trophy, the recent success of the secondary netball team were applauded and celebrated and a secondary student leader shared news, events and a joke which was effective in getting everyone started for the day.

The changing room facilities are appropriately arranged for students. The buildings are fully air conditioned and temperatures are suitably set for learning. The facility team monitors the temperature outside and the academic team is advised not to use the outdoor spaces when the temperature reaches above the agreed safe zone.

Entry and exit points are always monitored. Thorough checks are made at the main gates as well as other points of entry and exit. Every adult on site is expected to sign in at the designated school gates and wear an ID badge with a lanyard. Access to all areas within the school requires the use of an ID badge that has been granted access. School buses are run by a third-party provider. The school has robust, safe arrival and departure procedures that are overseen daily by the school's transport manager. Supervision ratios at the start and end of the day on the buses are suitable and monitored by CLT. The school regularly reviews and evaluates the systems in place and has plans to further improve the processes to minimise the time between the end of the day and buses leaving.

The site is protected by an alarm system, maintained by an external company that carries out regular checks according to Government regulations. CCTV covers a wide range of areas and is monitored by a female as per local guidance.

The school site has two regular auditors, ISP and Abu Dhabi civil defence who visit for health and safety audits on a regular cycle. Statutory risk assessment for internal areas of the school and external day trips are completed and reviewed on a regular cycle.

## 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 highly effective and fully meets BSO standards.

RBS is part of the ISP group of schools. The school's proprietor represented by ISP ensures that all standards regarding the suitability of teaching and non-teaching staff for keeping children safe in school are fully met. All members of staff undergo appropriate checks by the ministry of education to ensure their suitability for the role when they are appointed to the school. There are robust systems in place to ensure staff at the school meet the ministry's requirements.

ISP and the senior leadership team ensure the school's HR staff are compliant with ministry requirements and those required by BSO. Staff have qualifications and teaching experience matched to their role. During the recruitment phase, particular attention is paid to the development needs of the school. Identity, medical, qualifications and police check, or DBS checks and references were in place for all staff appointed to the school, this includes teachers, administration staff and teaching assistants. These are held in individual files and on a single central record by the HR manager in the school. The single central register is also monitored and evaluated by ISP centrally. Police checks are required for teachers who are in regular contact with students. Information regarding staff who have resigned in the past three years are stored on this record. All information is stored securely and confidentially.

Staff who are recruited locally must undergo the same checks as expatriate staff regarding identification checks, police checks, medical, qualifications and references. A disclaimer letter/reference for all staff is sought from the previous place of work in line with ministry requirements. Qualifications are checked by the ministry and attested for overseas staff. Two references, one from the most recent place of work, are sought which are followed up by the school. Visa details are stored centrally on the single central record for all staff. Induction for teaching staff includes guidance around the expectations of the school for activities such as lesson planning, lesson delivery, homework, marking, health safety, welfare, and dress codes. There are effective systems and procedures to welcome and support new staff as they arrive in the country from overseas, and in their role at the school by the school's leadership and HR staff.

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

The premises and accommodation are outstanding.

RBS has excellent premises and accommodations which are regulated for compliance. It takes safety as its highest concern, being one of the key drivers of the school and is outstanding in this standard.

Regular daily communication between the ISP director of facilities and premises and the premises manager means that any building or maintenance issues are dealt with promptly. A health and safety walk is conducted daily and weekly. A monthly facility report categorises RBS to be meeting and exceeding standards set by ISP. Health and Safety is audited annually with monthly and quarterly inspections. All of these checks are verified by third party audits and ADEC inspections. To complete the 'surround sound' of safety within the school, QR cards for maintenance, health and safety and resources are in every classroom which teachers can scan. All risks are categorised as high, middle or low to create a smart workflow, giving an adequate timeline to complete actions.

Facilities and amenities are clean, safe and well considered. Hygiene is maintained across the school by regular cleaning throughout the day. The school is cleaned at the end of each day with deep cleans conducted at weekends and during holidays. Toilets are well maintained and cubicles can be locked from the inside. There is an appropriate water supply in the bathrooms as well as drinking water available throughout the school. Changing facilities for swimming are segregated with individual cubicles and toilets. In the cafeteria, staff wear protective clothing and the area is clean and hygienic. Food temperature is regulated and regular checks are undertaken. Sanitation and waste disposal are of a good standard, including disposal of chemical and medical products.

Fire safety equipment is available throughout the school, is up to date and checked regularly. Fire alarms are functional. Fire evacuation details are well organised with colour coded exit routes and maps in every room. Recent evacuations took 2 minutes and 38 seconds to complete. Regular feedback sessions after the drills are completed, including staff feedback, and improvements are made accordingly.

Movement around the school is well thought out and areas are timetabled to optimise access. Outside space is available for primary and secondary to share. EYFS has outdoor provision space appropriate to the age range which is well used. The school considers movement around the school for students with disabilities. Wheelchair ramps and lifts allow appropriate access to all areas of the school. Lifts can only be accessed using an access card. In case of fire, evac chairs are fitted and staff assigned to ensure safe evacuation.

Security at the school is excellent with a school security team ensuring appropriate safe access in and out of the building. There is safe monitoring of students with CCTV cameras fitted throughout the corridors and soon into classrooms with footage viewed by a female staff



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member. The perimeter is well secured and the bus system, combined with parent drop off and collection is well managed.

Medical facilities are well maintained and all incidents are logged on iSAMS. Medical supplies are securely locked away and temperature control is monitored. There is adequate access to washing facilities and a toilet located within or close by. Medical waste is identified and stored appropriately in the medical rooms and is disposed of safely and securely. For students with complex needs, a one-to-one nurse is provided by parents to ensure appropriate care. In case of emergency, services are called as appropriate.

Learning environments are well managed with appropriate use of furniture and spacing. Rooms are well resourced including play materials in Early Years and equipment appropriate for specialist lessons in Primary and Secondary. A variety of specialist facilities provides extended space for the curriculum, allowing for stimulating and challenging learning. Lighting is used well within the building with a recent change to LED lights as a sustainability measure. In music rooms, sound blocks ensure appropriate acoustics and noise control.

Risk assessments for the school and its facilities are completed and regularly monitored by a third party provider. Trips and special events are also risk assessed and reviewed upon completion. All risk assessments are shared with the governing body who also receive reports on building maintenance and health and safety.

The school is committed to sustainability as is the UAE as its focus this year. This is reflected in the building management and maintenance. LED lights have been fitted and have to date reduced the school's carbon footprint by 34%. The precooling system for air conditioning has also been effective, reducing this by a further 15%. The school is ambitious in this endeavour (as per their key values) looking to renewable energy systems in the future. This focus is also active within the student body. For example, the student council is currently designing new waste bins. The eco-friendly club is responsible for a sustainable garden. This project is currently being revised to become a Garden to Fork project.

The school is continually looking at how to improve their practice and consider future developments. Key card access to all specialist areas is planned to increase security and safety of these areas. The school is expanding rapidly with increased intake and student retention. The school is at 96% capacity having grown organically 40% over the last two years; it is already looking at land surrounding the school to extend into and increase its capacity.



## 10. Standard 6

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

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

The school website provides key information about the school as well as a virtual tour of the premises. School policies are accessible on the website and cover a range of different aspects of school life. The parent handbook gives further insight into life at RBS and curriculum information booklets give parents a window into learning across the year groups as well as providing guidance on how to support learning at home.

Parents feel well informed about the achievement and progress of their child through online platforms including *iSams*, *Class Dojo* and *Google Classroom*. Weekly newsletters and posts across social media keep parents updated on events happening at school.

Regular reports ensure parents are aware of the social-emotional and academic achievement of their child.

The implementation of 'Glimpse into the classroom' and 'Family Consultation days' have been particularly well received by parents. These days along with regular coffee mornings have supported parents in becoming familiar with the British curriculum as well as understanding the approach taken by the school. Parents feel they have clear lines of communication. Questions and issues are acted on in a timely manner. Coffee mornings are well attended, parents appreciate the fact that they are also able to attend online.

The parent advisory board, meet regularly with the school leadership, feeding back from families as well as working to support the community through school events such as Iftar and movie night. The Parent Advisory board highlighted that they would like the opportunity to work with the student leadership team to further develop events and initiatives as well as develop a wider range of community events including parent-led workshops.

Transition between sections of the school is smooth and parents strongly feel that their children are supported and prepared for the next steps in their learning. The transition into RBS was also noted as a strength, with one parent commenting on how smoothly her children have transitioned from a UK school to RBS, stating that the curriculum and approach was well aligned.

Overall parent partnerships are a strength of the school. Parents are proud of the school and speak extremely positively about the school, its staff, and leadership. They feel like valued members of the community and parents are appreciative of the time and individual levels of care.

## 11. Standard 7

### The school's procedure for handling complaints

The procedure for handling complaints is effective and fully meets the BSO standard.

RBS has established an accessible complaints procedure that aligns with local regulations and context and BSO expectations. The procedure is available on the school's website and is provided to parents upon request. It delineates specific timeframes for each stage of the process. The school encourages the resolution of complaints through informal channels, typically involving the class teacher/form tutor.

Concerns are taken seriously without any adverse impact on children. Parents are encouraged to initially reach out to their child's class teacher/form tutor as their primary point of contact. Upon receiving a complaint, it is acknowledged and the school aims to work towards a swift resolution, with the class teacher/form tutor providing feedback to the parent. Nearly all concerns or complaints are resolved at this initial stage. In instances where parents choose to approach the principal directly, the matter is referred to the colleague best suited to address it at the outset unless it is deemed essential for the principal's direct involvement.

In cases where initial discussions with class tutors do not yield a satisfactory outcome, parents are advised to submit their complaint in writing to the head of year/SLT line manager. If a mutually agreeable solution remains elusive, the principal will meet with the concerned parents to engage in a comprehensive discussion. Throughout this process, the school maintains confidential written records of all meetings and interviews related to the complaint.

Once the principal is satisfied that all pertinent facts have been ascertained, a decision is made. Parents are then promptly informed of this decision in writing, accompanied by an explanation for the outcome. In addition to the internal complaints procedure, parents also have the option to lodge a complaint with ISP who will investigate and report back to the parents.

If a parent is happy with the resolution, then the case is closed. If the parent is not satisfied the complaint will be further escalated with ADEK where the customer service team will use the policies for private schools in Abu Dhabi to resolve the complaint with both the parent and the school.

## 12. Standard 8

### Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding.

The school's mission, vision, values and, most importantly school 'drivers' of *safe, respectful and ambitious* were introduced in 2022. A significant programme of change, led by the principal and supported by the heads of school, has had a highly positive impact and the team are clearly committed to making further improvements. Under the inspirational leadership of the principal, the senior and middle leadership teams work in unison to develop the school, with the best interests of students at the centre of decision making. They share a clear and simple vision, that the school should be a happy place where children will thrive and develop as rounded, confident individuals and love learning.

Leaders have expressed a shared vision that prioritises high-quality British-style education while respecting the cultural context of their international environment. The principal has communicated this vision clearly, creating a unified sense of purpose among teachers, students, and parents. A leadership structure has been implemented over the last two years, which is ensuring a consistent whole school structure based around heads of school and deputy heads. Clear targets for further school improvement are established and the school self-evaluation demonstrates the rapid improvements that have taken place and an accurate awareness of the next steps in continued school improvement. The development of middle leaders has been an opportunity to further strengthen the schools' ambitions.

A highly effective and efficient administration team supports the school's leaders. The cohesion of the team ensures that communication across the school and to parents is a strength. The school's senior leadership team meets regularly, and messages are communicated across the school to all staff. The school's leaders gather information on the quality of education and standards across the school through monitoring schedules, learning walks, student progress meetings and book reviews.

Leaders support a growth-oriented school culture where teachers are encouraged to innovate. Regular professional development is emphasised, with leaders providing tailored training opportunities to support teachers' growth and confidence. They promote collaborative teamwork, fostering an environment in which teachers feel respected, motivated, and empowered to contribute to the school's success. They encourage a culture of reflective practice, where teachers feel empowered to innovate, collaborate, and contribute to school improvement.

Systems are in place for smooth day-to-day operations, ensuring that resources, schedules, and school facilities effectively support teaching and learning. Leaders and managers are responsive and adaptable, handling challenges proactively while maintaining stability and

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clear communication. They are skilled at managing both human and financial resources to optimise learning outcomes and long-term school sustainability.

In a culturally diverse setting, leaders are inclusive and sensitive, creating a welcoming environment for all students and staff. They respect the local culture, balancing British educational standards with cultural adaptability. The school's arrangements for safeguarding students are robust and meet statutory requirements. The school leaders and managers also maintain strong links with parents and the wider community. They foster open communication and actively seek feedback, seeing parents as partners in the educational journey.

RBS leadership works in close partnership with the ISP governance. There are a number of central accountability measures in place, these focus on safeguarding, health, safety and compliance matters. Monthly reports are issued to the school and the principal provides monthly reports to the ISP regional managing director.

The school has worked hard to achieve a reputation for quality amongst its community and as a result is expanding and developing.