

Kings' School Al Barsha

British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

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Age Group: 3 to 18 years
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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection report follows the English Department for Education (DfE) Schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas. The inspection was carried out by four inspectors from Education Development Trust who spent four days at the school. Education Development Trust is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas and quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

Education Development Trust is one of the world's leading not-for-profit education companies, providing a range of education services in the UK and internationally. Education Development Trust employs over 2,500 staff worldwide, all working on projects relating to educational quality.

To be recognised by the Department for Education, a British School Overseas must have an inspection report which shows that their performance against all the standards is at least satisfactory. This reflects the standards required for continuing registration as a school in England. Schools meeting the standards will have their inspection reports published on the Department's website and will be registered on Edubase.

Inspectors report on the extent to which schools meet the relevant Standards for British Schools Overseas. These were updated with effect from September 2017. The inspection follows closely the framework for the inspection of independent schools in England but, where appropriate, also takes account of compliance with local regulations.

The DfE issued a policy update in October 2018. The Department confirmed that 'our policy is now to accredit schools in countries where to meet certain standards would be in breach of the host country laws, as long as there is evidence to substantiate this, and all other standards are met'.

The Standards are as follows:

1. The quality of education provided by the school (Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment).
2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils.
4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff.
5. The premises and accommodation.
6. The provision of information.
7. The manner in which complaints are handled.
8. The leadership and management of the school
9. The quality of provision for boarding

The purposes of BSO inspections are to:

- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education and of the care for their welfare
- provide rigorous and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and celebrate their strengths and to identify and remedy any weaknesses
- inform parents and the wider public of the quality of British schools overseas by placing reports in the public domain.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Proportions used in the report

90–100%	Vast/overwhelming majority or almost all
75–90%	Very large majority, most
65–74%	Large majority
51–64%	Majority
35–49%	Minority
20–34%	Small minority
4–19%	Very small minority, few
0–3%	Almost none/very few

Information about the school

Kings' School Al Barsha (KSAB) is a private international school located in Al Barsha, Dubai. The school was opened in 2014 and is part of the Kings' Education group in Dubai. At the time of the inspection there were 2,478 pupils on roll from age three to 18. KSAB is larger than other all-through international schools of a similar type. There are 89 nationalities represented in the school, with those from the UK being the largest group. Approximately 60% of pupils are registered with a language other than English as their principal language and are supported in accordance with their need. KSAB is an inclusive school that caters for the full range of abilities and needs. There are 241 pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including 26 pupils with profound autism who receive alternative-pathway provision.

The school believes in 'Results the Right Way', where academic excellence is vital, but more important are the values that go with it. Its value 'The Best by Every Child' highlights the way it works both during and beyond the school day. Children in the early years follow the new English early years framework (EYFS). Pupils in the primary school and key stage 3 follow the English national curriculum with an international perspective. In Year 11 pupils take GCSE or BTEC level 2 examinations. In the sixth form, students study for A levels or BTEC level 3 examinations. They leave at the end of the sixth form to attend universities around the world.

During the COVID-19 pandemic a fully functioning online school was set up extremely quickly. All teachers worked online throughout the lockdown and provided live lessons on a full-time basis with the backup of pre-recorded lessons and resources. In-school learning resumed in August 2020 with the option to remain online and all returned to school in October 2021. Internal assessments went ahead as usual but formal examinations were suspended. All exam-board criteria were rigorously followed and moderation continued. Additional support was given to staff to ensure their well-being. Well-being checks for pupils, parents and carers were also very important. Attendance dipped a little during this time but has now returned to pre-COVID levels. Safeguarding protocols were re-written to ensure staff vigilance. Online safety was regularly promoted. The school engaged regularly with parents. Weekly surveys sought parental views and the school responded to parental concerns as appropriate. Reports were sent as normal and online parent meetings were held.

Summary of the evidence base used by the inspection team

This BSO inspection was carried out by four Education Development Trust inspectors. The inspection dates were agreed upon with the school with 10 weeks' notice of the start date of the inspection. Inspectors had access to information about the school before the inspection.

Inspectors visited 74 lessons. Six were jointly observed by an inspector and a senior member of staff. Inspectors also visited nine extra-curricular activities and two assemblies. There were 23 meetings with leaders, managers, teachers, pupils, parents and human resources (HR) personnel. A virtual meeting was held with members of the school's governing board.

Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work both in books and online. They analysed a wide range of documents relating to data, assessment, policies and strategic plans. The school's safeguarding arrangements were inspected. The views of parents, pupils and staff were also considered, through surveys, face-to-face interviews and informal conversations.

Evaluation of the school

Kings' School Al Barsha is an outstanding school and provides an outstanding quality of education for pupils from three to 18 years.

The school meets all of the Standards for British Schools Overseas except those which it is precluded from meeting because of the host country's legislation. These are explained later in the report. The requirements of the host country take precedence and no action points are, therefore, specified in relation to these unmet standards and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

Attainment and progress in **English** are outstanding across all phases of the school.

Early years children are immersed in language from the moment they enter school. The intensive phonics programme enables them to confidently recognise sounds, blend letters and develop writing skills. The results of assessments in phonics are well above UK 2019 averages at the end of Year 1.

Primary pupils continue to make rapid progress over time and most exceed English national curriculum expectations for their age. Key stage 1 pupils can create connecting sentences using adjectives and conjunctions. They can distinguish between haiku, limerick and sonnets in poetry. Key stage 2 pupils understand possessive apostrophes and key characteristics of newspaper articles. They can structure stories using complex and compound sentences.

All pupils are provided with opportunities to develop linguistic skills in enriching, vibrant surroundings. Secondary pupils develop critical thinking skills through independent research, analysis, comparing and contrasting different authors and using purposeful, structured peer assessment. They can share opinion backed by evidence. Preparation for examinations is thorough and effective. External examination results are consistently higher than UK averages. Pupils are well prepared for both GCSEs and A levels. The number achieving higher grades in external examinations has risen over the last three years. At GCSE, English language was the highest-performing subject in the school in 2021 with pupils achieving two grades higher than predicted, on average. Boys and girls both perform at a high level. Pupils with SEND make better-than-expected progress. The additional support they and those with English as an additional language (EAL) receive has a positive impact on outcomes.

Half of all sixth-form students achieve A* to A grades in English, well above UK averages. Students can effectively research, critically analyse, demonstrate their findings and prepare essays using relevant criteria. Almost all pupils make excellent progress in lessons and over time.

Pupils' attainment in **mathematics** is outstanding across all phases of the school. Progress is outstanding in all phases from starting points.

Pupils with SEND and EAL make progress in line with that of other pupils. Boys and girls perform similarly and over the last three years attainment and progress have been improving despite the pandemic. The school's standards compare favourably with schools both internationally and in the UK.

In the early years children make rapid progress from starting points with a very large majority attaining well in all mathematical areas. In a Reception class, children used symmetry to build a visual understanding of doubling numbers in the repeated spots on butterfly wings.

In the primary phase, pupils make a good start to Year 1 and continue to make strong progress, developing further their skills in mathematical reasoning and problem solving. In a Year 3 class observed, pupils tackled word problems on length. By the end of primary, almost all pupils attain at outstanding levels and have made better-than-expected progress.

In the secondary and post-16 phases, students continue to make outstanding progress. Most pupils gained at least grade six in GCSE mathematics and almost half of all pupils gained an eight or above. A-level grades were also strong with over half of all students attaining an A* to A grade, well above UK averages. The grades have improved year on year. In a Year 12 class observed, students completed challenging calculations to find the tangent of a curve, demonstrating strong understanding of subject matter and used equations to solve complex problems.

In **science**, over the last three years, pupils across the school have made outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and reach very high standards. This progress is matched by pupils who have SEND. Attainment is well above the average for pupils in England and internationally.

In the EYFS, a very high proportion of children exceed the early learning goals for understanding the world. Their learning-journey books show the emergence of scientific principles and concepts such as prediction and investigative method. The children can deduce from their observations of the world around them. The very youngest children produce chemical reactions, for instance by mixing mild acids and alkalis following a simple method.

Pupils in the primary phase continue to make strong progress. The large majority exceed the English national curriculum expectations for their age in science. Pupils' ability to form hypotheses and analyse results is evident across the whole curriculum. Their exceptionally fluent use of scientific vocabulary and confident communication skills enable them to articulate their understanding accurately. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils tested their hypotheses concerning the relationship between mass, air resistance and gravity by applying fair testing.

In secondary classes, pupils make outstanding progress and achieve excellent GCSE results compared to UK averages in biology, chemistry and physics. Application of knowledge is particularly evident.

Attainment and progress in the sixth form are very strong, with students' examination results above England and international averages. Deep thinking, critical analysis and self-reflection habitually enhance learning. Students thoughtfully debate issues such as ethical dilemmas in medicine and confidently devise complex scientific enquiry.

Across the school, pupils' attainment and progress in a range of **other subjects** are outstanding. In the early years, across every area of learning, children make at least the progress expected of them. In primary, pupils enjoy their learning, for example in art, music and drama, which is taught by specialist teachers, and make outstanding progress.

Most pupils made better-than-expected progress in their GCSE examinations, on average around one and half grades higher than predicted. Overall, in Spanish, art, history, psychology and music, pupils gained two grades higher. Their attainment at GCSE has been consistently above UK averages. Similarly, A-level results were, on average, one grade higher, an improving trend as pupil numbers have grown. All groups of pupils achieve well and make excellent progress from their starting points.

During the COVID-19 pandemic teachers taught live lessons on a full-time basis in addition to providing pre-recorded lessons and resources. Pupils reported that they continued to receive high-quality challenge and feedback from their teachers. The impact of restrictions took its toll on some aspects of learning such as collaboration, but this is fully back to pre-COVID-19 levels now.

Summary of other judgements against the BSO standards:

- The quality of the curriculum provided by the school is outstanding (see Standard 1 below).
- The quality of teaching and assessment are outstanding overall (see Standard 1 below).
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding (see Standard 2 below).
- The welfare, health and safety of the pupils are outstanding (see Standard 3 below).
- The standard for the suitability of the proprietor and staff is met (see Standard 4 below).
- The premises and accommodation meet the requirements of the standard (see Standard 5 below).
- The provision of information for parents meets the requirements of this standard (see Standard 6 below). Parents reported that information from the school was not always easy to access because it was in different places.
- The school's procedures for handling complaints meet the requirements of the standard (see Standard 7 below).
- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding (see Standard 8 below).

As a result of this inspection, undertaken during March 2022, the school has demonstrated that it meets the Standards for British Schools Overseas (2017 updated) except for those standards that cannot be achieved legally in the host country. The school's provision prepares pupils well to enter or re-enter the UK independent-school system. This judgement is endorsed by the British Government, quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and is valid for a period of three years.

Standard 1. The quality of education provided by the school

The standards relating to the quality of education are met except for the standard in paragraph 2 (2) (d) (ii). This is not met because of the requirements of the host country relating to the UK Equality Act 2010.

The **curriculum** at Kings' School Al Barsha is outstanding. Across the whole school it provides exceptional breadth, depth and choice. It matches the school's ambition to develop the whole child. While promoting academic excellence, it also celebrates and embeds creativity and sporting performance. The school broadly follows the English EYFS curriculum in the early years. The English national curriculum is used in the primary phase and key stage 3 and is organised so that concepts are continually embedded and emphasised. The entire curriculum is also adapted to meet the needs and requirements of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

People and places in the local community such as a sailing club are used as resources to expand learning. An exceptionally wide range of subjects is available at GCSE and pupils are guided well in their choices. In the post-16 phase, wide-ranging and flexible pathways, such as BTEC courses, enable students to follow their interests and aptitudes. Pupils with very complex learning needs can join alternative pathways which are expertly adapted to promote the acquisition of lifeskills and useable academic knowledge. Pupils with SEND and EAL are given equal opportunities to succeed through appropriate curriculum adaptations. The lifeskills classes for those with very complex needs give interested older pupils volunteering opportunities, such as through the buddy programme. As a result of the values that are embedded into the curriculum, pupils develop a deep understanding of discrimination and inclusion.

Across all phases, the curriculum is coherent, well planned and continually reviewed so it can engage and motivate pupils. Pupils are enabled to contribute to curriculum design and choice, particularly in the numerous extra-curricular activities. Take up of these activities is very high. Pupils are encouraged and enabled to apply their skills right across the curriculum. For instance, they understand the importance of independence and self-reflection and apply those skills habitually.

Almost every part of the school day is used to promote learning and enshrine British values. Across all phases, the curriculum successfully promotes an understanding of British culture, heritage and significant events. In the secondary phase, institutions such as the National Health Service and parliamentary democracy are studied. The curriculum provides effective preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society. The broad curriculum meets the requirements of UK equalities legislation other than those it is unable to meet due to the laws of the UAE. The curriculum celebrates the richness of diversity in the school and in the UAE, encouraging tolerance. Pupils are taught about discrimination, using examples such as age and disability in a way that is commensurate with their age. Within the curriculum there are many opportunities to explore topics such as race, religion and belief and a wide range of cultural events are celebrated.

Pupils are very well prepared for transitions through the phases. A comprehensive careers programme guides and excites older pupils in finding opportunities in the wider world of education and business. It prepares them well to enter or re-enter the British educational system and gain access to British universities.

The school's response to the COVID-19 pandemic was evaluated by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) in 2020 and given the top grade of 'developed'. The embedded and skilled use of technology by teachers and pupils facilitated the transition to online and blended learning.

The quality of **teaching, learning and assessment** is outstanding.

Teaching is outstanding in all phases of the school and pupils make outstanding progress across the curriculum.

Pupils with SEND are supported by link teachers and teaching assistants who carefully provide for their needs including personal support, modified lessons and targeted interventions. Those with EAL also receive link help, such as English intervention work, phonics and personal assistance. These pupils make progress in line with that of their peers.

Robust planning for teaching is carefully aligned to English national curriculum standards. Planning details captivating activities and use of resources that are challenging and well-tailored to different pupil needs, including those of the most able. Problem solving and real-life experiences also deepen learning.

Teachers across the school have outstanding knowledge of their subjects, enabling them to fully support pupils' learning and understanding. For example, in a Year 13 history lesson, the teacher used her strong knowledge of the subject to extend students' answers through highly effective questioning. Teachers' questioning is highly developed across the school. It is used to challenge pupils' understanding of new ideas and carefully assess their progress.

Teachers know how pupils learn best. They keep up to date with current UK teaching practice and share strategies for effective learning. Lessons are always orderly and productive because independence in learning is highly developed alongside collaborative learning skills. Encouragement from one another leads to improved learning outcomes.

Pupils' digital learning skills are strongly developed from an early age. Digital platforms are effectively used by pupils to undertake tasks and store their work. The school's expectations for pupils' work is well balanced, with written work in exercise books alongside digital learning. High levels of digital literacy were very beneficial to pupils during the pandemic.

The outstanding leadership team has developed a culture where high expectation and breadth of learning experience allow pupils to grow, fulfil their aspirations and make strong progress. This is also reflected in pupils' highly positive behaviour for learning.

Teachers' written and verbal feedback both online and in books is detailed, constructive and personalised. It provides pupils with appropriate and often challenging actions for development. Pupils use assessment of their own work and that of their peers to deepen their learning. The school has robust assessment frameworks in place to assess progress accurately over time. Teachers use this information carefully to modify planning for learning and curriculum content.

The quality of remote learning during the pandemic was excellent. Pupils' levels of participation and engagement were high and they reported high levels of challenge and support from teachers. Internal assessments continued with effective moderation. However, external assessments ceased or were delayed. All exam-board requirements were followed closely.

Standard 2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils is outstanding across all phases of the school.

The standards relating to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils are met except for the standard in paragraph 5 (b) (vi). This is not met because of the requirements of the host country relating to the UK Equality Act 2010. The school is openly inclusive. Those with disabilities are given the same opportunities as their peers. Diversity of culture, faith, gender and age is welcomed and pupils are encouraged to engage in topical discussion through literature analysis, debating forums and comparative, contemporary studies. Due regard is paid to the protected characteristics of race, religion, belief, disability, pregnancy and maternity and age (as laid out in the UK Equality Act 2010). This is reflected in the school's policies, curriculum and values. The school is unable to promote all of the protected characteristics due to the laws of the UAE. Those precluded are marriage and civil partnership; gender reassignment; sex and sexual orientation. The diverse nature of the school is celebrated and no form of discrimination is tolerated. Pupils have an appreciation of the world around them. They value their opportunities and know they are fortunate.

This school has a strong and dedicated pastoral team with tutors, counsellors, heads and assistant heads all promoting a safe and happy environment. The caring ethos permeates the whole school. Pupils are well behaved. They are thoughtful, with a positive attitude to learning and mutually respectful relationships. They are responsible, self-disciplined and courteous. During the inspection, on numerous occasions older students were seen helping younger pupils. This was witnessed around the building and also in extra-

curricular activities such as the chess club where an older girl helped a young pupil play speed chess. There is a comprehensive behaviour policy. Incidents regarding both academic and pastoral concerns are logged on an effective new system. Sanctions, which are rarely needed, include reflection, restorative conversations and community service.

Since COVID-19, leadership roles across the school have been re-launched. There is now a more purposeful student council with strong committees and greater focus. For the first time, Year 12 will host a Model United Nations (MUN) programme event in KSAB. This new MUN initiative has been organised and driven by students themselves. The primary school has also re-launched leadership roles with job descriptions for the positions of head boy and girl as well as other positions. Year 1 are also expected to prepare applications. These roles are now well embedded to develop individual skills, encourage confidence, enhance self-esteem and encourage mutual support.

Pupils appreciate the importance of democracy through voting procedures, listening to others, exploring the British system and recognising different viewpoints. Pupil voice is sought through tutor groups, committees, surveys and opportunities in circle time. British values and culture are threaded throughout the curriculum in an age-appropriate way. Britishness and the values of tolerance, respect and inclusion are demonstrated through English tea parties, flag days, Queen's Jubilee preparations, Remembrance and Mothers' Day as well as international celebrations. Pupils' commitment to charitable causes and health issues includes Pink Day, plastic-bottle events and support for those in need. The importance of 'Kindness, Skills, Ambition and Bravery' is the essence of the school. Analysing commonalities and differences using mathematical Venn diagrams in moral, social and cultural lessons allows pupils to appreciate both British and UAE values. Post-16 students produce a range of presentations to inform their peers. These include first aid, preparing for university life, eating disorders and learning to cook as a student.

Good behaviour is an expectation with mutually respectful relationships between teachers and pupils. The written behaviour policy sets out sanctions for misbehaviour and incidents are always addressed. Transparency is valued. Records are kept of the sanctions imposed for serious misbehaviour.

Pupils from all phases say they feel safe, supported and welcomed. They speak highly of the school's pastoral care and appreciate the many extra-curricular activities available. 'Teachers are devoted to us', stated one pupil. A Year 10 pupil said, 'We are the values. We choose what we want to be. We are KSAB!' A few said they would like improved regular communication between the school and themselves.

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

Welfare, health and safety are outstanding across the whole school.

This is an inclusive environment. Pupils are valued and supported from the point of admission until they leave school. Pupils and parents are prepared prior to enrolment in the early years and those who arrive later are welcomed and teamed with buddies. Recently joined pupils said they felt like a part of the community. One Year 13 boy said, 'Even though I have only been here a year I feel like I am a member of this close-knit family. I just belong.'

All health and safety procedures are in place and checked regularly. Risk assessments, fire drills, lockdown and evacuation procedures are of a high standard and in line with UK and UAE requirements. Transport arrivals and departures are carefully supervised and monitored with one-way systems and designated drop-off points.

There is a strong safeguarding culture. Staff understand their responsibilities and are familiar with the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance and host-country requirements. Leaders undertake level 3 training and all staff at least level 1. Face-to-face and on-line training is frequent and responsive to needs. Posters relating to safeguarding are displayed throughout the school. Pupils know who they can turn to and are encouraged to share concerns. Both pupils and parents are satisfied with the school's safeguarding procedures. They feel the school ensures their safety at all times. The full-time school doctor, four nurses, counsellors and dedicated pastoral team ensure that support is readily available. Medical aids and fire extinguishers are in place. Medicines, confidential records and dangerous chemicals are locked away. An isolation room is fitted with CCTV.

Attendance is higher than UK school averages and after a small dip is now returning to pre-pandemic levels. Parents were happy with arrangements during COVID-19 and impressed that on-line learning and safety were rapidly put in place. During this time safeguarding practice was also updated. Returning to school has been challenging for some and the school works closely with parents to allay fears. Regular meetings, videos and communication platforms all assist in reassurance. The school is mindful of possible pandemic impacts on pupils' well-being and provides a comprehensive range of internal and external support services. Ongoing training and supplementary sixth-form presentations are in place. Older students provide mentoring support for younger pupils. There are regular pastoral team meetings.

Standards of welfare, health and safety are exceptionally high in this school and all pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe both in school and online.

Standard 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets the requirements of the standard. All staff are KHDA licenced. The school follows safer-recruitment practices. Before a contract is issued to new staff they provide attested qualifications, three references, identification, proof of right to work and relevant police-check clearances to confirm they are not barred from regulated activity relating to children. This is in line with UAE and UK requirements. The Kings' Central Office HR department diligently maintains a comprehensive single central record of all staff and governors. HR profile forms record safeguarding training, medical fitness and employment history. Outsourced companies provide a copy of the visa, Emirates identification and police clearance for all employees.

The school has a highly qualified staff team, most of whom are UK trained. The school works with the University of Birmingham in Dubai to support post-graduate certificate in education students in school. The school has recently appointed a science teacher who trained with it. Due to school growth and staff replacement, 79 new staff joined KSAB this year, including new heads of primary and secondary. All new staff receive a high-quality induction or 'Kingsification' which facilitates their transition to Kings' schools and to Dubai culture.

Standard 5. The premises and accommodation

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

The purpose-built facilities and premises are very safe, stimulating and spacious. The wide use of glass for interior walls provides a bright internal environment, promoting effective learning. The school building is constructed to a high specification and is accessible to all.

The car-parking facilities and entrances to the school are clearly marked and well organised. A clear, badge system is used to identify all staff and visitors to the school. The school has sufficient washroom and sanitary provision. It is kept very clean with frequently used areas being regularly sanitised as part of the school's COVID-19 measures.

The high-quality buildings have plentiful classrooms, some of which have been developed from other spaces. The school has been successful in adapting and utilising available space on its premises to enhance further learning provision. As an example, a canteen area was converted into specialised classrooms for pupils with SEND following alternative learning pathways. All classrooms are bright, air-conditioned and appropriately resourced to cater for the learning needs of all pupils.

The school has a broad range of resources and specialist facilities to enhance the curriculum. These include swimming pools, science laboratories, extensive sports grounds and two well-resourced libraries. It is proactive in protecting pupils from over exposure to the sun and has invested in a portable canopy to shade the sports areas in hotter months. High-quality internet is available across the school. Pupils use digital technology with proficiency to enhance their learning.

The school has well-resourced clinics and a COVID-19 isolation room. These are managed by a team of three nurses and a doctor, who look after all medical needs and pandemic protocols.

The school made many adjustments to its provision as a result of COVID-19. Pupils and adults continue to wear face coverings and follow all the COVID-19 protocols required. These are regularly checked by KHDA.

Standard 6. The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school meets the requirement of this BSO standard.

The school's website has information about how to contact the school leaders and governors. It includes all the required policies and information about procedures, including those relating to safeguarding, complaints and behaviour.

Parents are supportive of the values and performance of the school. In surveys and discussions with inspectors, the parents showed a trust in and respect for the school. For many, the school has become a vital part of their family life. Parents particularly chose the school because of its promotion of British values, safety, high expectations and exceptional academic outcomes.

The large majority of the parents say they are well informed about the progress of their children. They value the informative reports they receive and are confident that they can use them to judge progress. During the COVID-19 pandemic, they felt that the flow of information to and from the school enabled them to help their children learn.

At every level, including governance, parents can influence the school and they know that their views will be listened to and respected. For example, a parent was able to change an assessment practice by making a suggestion to staff. Teachers and leaders are accessible through a range of methods including email and are very responsive to parental concerns. The SEND staff have a particularly close bond with parents ensuring that vulnerable pupils are looked after well. The school gathers parents' views both formally and informally. Some parents are governors and also members of the forums which gather parents' views and ideas, so that the board can be fully informed.

Almost all parents who responded to the BSO survey were positive about all aspects of the school. They said that the school is very well led and responsive at all levels. One parent summarised the inclusive nature of the school as 'life-changing'. The evidence from the inspection endorses this view completely.

Parents appreciate the access to online records of their children's work and up-to-date information about things to be done. The wealth of information provided to parents about school life and the curriculum is exceptionally high. During the inspection, parents expressed a view that the school's practices in sharing more everyday information should be rationalised.

Standard 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

The complaints policy is available to all on the website and is updated annually. It is common across all three Kings' schools and clearly outlines the staged procedure. The school has a parent-relations executive in post. Her role is to be visible to parents and answer their queries and complaints, or to direct them to the appropriate staff member. All concerns, even at an informal level, are logged in order to track any trends. Pupils are aware how to complain and leaders regularly gather their views and agree to their requests where possible. Parents say all leaders are readily available to discuss any issues and their concerns are dealt with quickly, face to face.

Standard 8. Quality of Leadership in and management of schools

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The leadership fulfils its responsibilities in ensuring that the BSO standards are fully met.

The principal and senior leaders are excellent role models and communicate a clear strategic vision for the school. This is based on the 'Big 4' priorities for Kings' schools: relationships, community, inclusivity and professional responsibility. Leaders at all levels use these four priorities in their action plans to ensure that they link to the whole-school strategic plan and have an impact on all aspects of pupils' development. Underpinning this vision is the school's value, 'The Best by Every Child', which reinforces how all staff work. While staff agree that their workload is high, they understand the expectations of them. During the pandemic, leaders reduced teachers' workload by dealing with parental comments.

Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school and strategic planning is rigorous. The actions required to innovate and bring about further improvement are identified and monitored. Leaders have an excellent capacity for further improvement. Leaders at all levels, including the effective early years leader, communicate ambition and high expectations. All leaders have a thorough knowledge of the curriculum and the best practices in teaching and learning. Skills and talent are tracked within the appraisal programme so that all teachers can share good practice and draw on each other's strengths. Many teachers lead staff meetings as the school believes 'everyone's a leader'. There is a strong culture of continuous improvement and risk taking, with professional-development opportunities to underpin this. Leaders recognise talent and promote within the Kings' group where appropriate. Staff agree they are encouraged, well trained and have opportunities to grow. They understand the ethos of collective responsibility and accountability. Responses to the BSO survey show that almost all are proud to work at the school.

The school makes the safeguarding of children a high priority. Governors and leaders ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust and meet UK and UAE expectations. The policy and protocols were re-written during the COVID-19 pandemic and staff remained vigilant.

Staff are fully accessible to parents and there is a parent-relations executive in post. The counsellors are available to pupils and their families. Pupils across the school report that they have a voice. Leaders listen to feedback at every level and act quickly where possible. The pupils who inspectors spoke to said that they are incredibly happy and enjoy learning. Overall, most parents reported positive views of the school in the BSO survey.

The Kings' governing body includes a core group which is common to every Kings' school. Parents are part of the board, but are different for each Kings' school. Pupils regularly make presentations to the board and their voice is highly valued. Governors ensure that the school operates legally and has clear financial policies. They provide strategic guidance and regularly monitor the work of the school through visits. As a result, they play a significant part in ensuring that the school achieves its educational goals. They act as critical friends while also holding leaders to account. Senior leaders work in cooperation with the board and their separate responsibilities are understood and respected. The performance of the principal is appraised by the chair. Governors are highly effective in supporting leaders in promoting equality and tackling discrimination and are totally committed to ensuring equitable provision.

The school adapted extremely quickly to distance learning and parents report that they were kept fully informed throughout. Investment in digital infrastructure ensured equality of access for all. Leaders gave additional encouragement to staff, pupils and parents to support their well-being.

The school is inclusive both in ethos and in practice. It meets a very wide range of needs through leaders' commitment to celebrating diversity and acceptance. The values of the school are evident throughout the whole community.

EYFS provision

Early years provision is outstanding.

English is spoken by the majority of children on entry to early years, providing a strong platform for communication skills, which rapidly develop throughout the early years. Children new to the school are assessed before they formally start. Teachers begin their dialogue with parents with 'top tips to support your child'. Once children have settled in school, focused observations lead to teachers having an accurate assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of every child. This allows teachers to plan lessons that encourage the children's interests, choices and different needs.

Teachers diligently monitor and track each child's development. From their different starting points, children make rapid progress across the early years, securing a good level of development above UK expectations. This provides a very secure start for the primary phase.

Teachers plan opportunities to develop children's skills in collaboration and independence. The reflection-time practice, which starts in Nursery, develops children's learning confidence and self-awareness. Children are encouraged to display their best work on their wall, justifying why it deserves a space over previous work. The outside and indoor classrooms are highly resourced, enabling rapid growth in personal and academic development.

High expectations of behaviour and learning are firmly established as soon as children start school. Teachers build robust collaborative relationships with parents and provide a range of workshops on, for example, early literacy. Strong communication with parents has helped enforce the school's high expectations.

Leadership of the early years is strong and effective. Leaders, teachers and learning assistants have a robust understanding of the needs of early years children and how they learn.

During the pandemic online learning was difficult for younger children. The early years team was highly effective throughout in helping and encouraging parents to adapt to online learning. It also provided well-being sessions for parents and monitored safeguarding through conversations.

Post 16 provision

Sixth-form provision is outstanding.

This is the fourth cohort of A-level students. Each year numbers have significantly increased. The range of subject options and alternative pathways has also grown. Vocational courses are offered at levels 2 and 3 to meet the needs of some groups of students. The school offers 25 subject options and also English and maths re-sit classes. Extended Project Qualification numbers are increasing each year with excellent results. Initially, as the school is new, entry requirements were not as stringent but now provision is better suited to students' capabilities. Consequently, retention has improved and is over 90%. Results are excellent and exceed UK and international averages at both A level and BTEC. On examination-results day most students received multiple offers from universities and none received no offers at all.

Attendance is in line with the rest of the school. The philosophy of 'every day matters' is embedded into the whole ethos of self-discipline.

Leadership opportunities in Year 12 are plentiful with a head boy and girl, house captains, ambassadors and various committees. The Kings' Diploma encourages students to be involved in something in addition to academic pursuits to enhance their personal development. These are not as apparent in Year 13 when students prioritise the demands of external examinations.

Students are grateful for the high-quality careers, academic, pastoral and university guidance and advice. Half of all students go on to UK universities. Equal numbers go elsewhere in Europe or to the USA and Canada, although more stayed in the UAE during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Leadership of the sixth form is strong, with excellent support and guidance for students' journey within and beyond school.

Students speak very positively about the teaching, support and opportunities that the school's sixth form provides for them. One student's comment was endorsed by others when he said, 'Memories are the best part of this school. There is a shared bond with teachers and peers. This is the culmination of my childhood.'

Compliance with regulatory requirements

Kings' School Al Barsha meets all of the required standards except those that would be in breach of the host country laws.

It cannot fully meet the standards set out below that relate to the UK Equality Act 2010.

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; 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

What the school could do to improve further

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

Parents and pupils report that the wealth of information that the school provides for them is not always easily accessible. Leaders should review the school's communication systems so that parents can find the information they need more easily and quickly.

Summary of inspection judgements

Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education	<input type="checkbox"/>			
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>			
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs	<input type="checkbox"/>			
How well pupils make progress in their learning	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	<input type="checkbox"/>			
The behaviour of pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>			
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Leadership and management

Overall effectiveness of leadership and management	<input type="checkbox"/>			
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School details

Name of school	Kings' School Al Barsha
Type of school	Private
Date school opened	2014
Age range of pupils	3-18 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	2472
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	n/a
Annual fees (day pupils)	AED 53,622 to 97,798
Annual fees (boarders)	n/a
Address of school	Umm Suqeim road, Hadaeq Sk Mohammad Bin Rashid, Dubai UAE
Telephone number	971 04 356 6900
Email address	director@kings-edu.com
Headteacher	Rebecca Gray
Proprietor	Kings' Education Hamad Tayeb Abdul Rahim Ahmed Al Baker

GLOSSARY

Achievement – Progress made by a pupil taking his/her individual circumstances and starting point into account.

Accreditation – The system whereby a school or similar organisation is assessed against agreed standards and if deemed as having achieved the standards required is provided with some form of official certification or recognition.

Accreditation Board – The body responsible for the strategic direction, operation and conduct of the accreditation service provided by Education Development Trust

Assessment – The process of finding out how well pupils have learnt what they have been taught. It is a continuous process that occurs throughout the school year, using a variety of forms for different purposes.

Attainment – The level pupils reach, usually measured by reference to benchmarks, such as test and examination results.

British Schools Overseas Inspection (BSO) – Inspection framework and standards defined by the DfE for British schools overseas to opt to be inspected against.

Education Development Trust – Formerly CfBT Education Trust, we are one of the world's leading not-for-profit education companies providing a range of education services in the UK and internationally.

Central Support Team – Personnel based in Education Development Trust Head Office who are responsible for the administration of the various educational services provided to international schools.

Combined or Joint Visit – a BSO Inspection visit combined with an ISQM accreditation or re-accreditation visit conducted (or DSIB inspection in Dubai) at the request of the school. This will be carried out concurrently with reference to both frameworks and sets of standards. Some of the standards against which the school will be inspected are common, but some of the BSO standards relate to the British nature of the school.

Cycle of Inspection – The period of three years between BSO inspection visits.

Curriculum – The educational programmes or courses of study taught by a school including subjects and activities inside and outside the classroom, as well as extra-curricular enrichment programmes.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) – All private schools in Dubai are required by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority to be inspected by the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB). A joint DSIB/BSO inspection may be requested through the KHDA's strategic partner Education Development Trust.

Leadership – Leadership at any level (for example principals/headteachers, governors, board members, team/subject leaders) involves setting direction, empowering staff to work effectively, creating a suitable environment for learning, and setting an example to others. It entails different skills from management.

Learning – Pupils' gains in knowledge, skills and understanding.

Management – The practical business of running a school, department or aspect of a school's work in an efficient and useful way.

Ofsted – The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills is the non-ministerial government department of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in England and is responsible for school inspections in England.

Progress – The gains in learning made between two points in time. A pupil can be described as having made insufficient progress, satisfactory, good, or outstanding progress in relation to his/her starting point.

School self-evaluation – The identification by the staff of a school of its strengths and weaknesses across the key aspects of its performance. Effective self-evaluation focuses specifically on the impact of the school's work on the outcomes for pupils.

Standards –

(1) The levels of knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils and a school demonstrates at a particular point in time.

(2) The evaluation requirements to be used in the inspection of British Schools Overseas.

Teaching – All activities undertaken by the teacher aimed at enhancing pupils' learning.

With 40 years' experience of delivering education services worldwide Education Development Trust exists solely to provide education for public benefit.

Teaching and learning are the essence of what we do and we have more than 2,500 staff around the world designing and delivering services. Education Development Trust staff support educational reform, teach, advise, research and train. As one of the top 30 charities in the UK, we work for and with individuals and communities in order to help them reach their potential.

Education Development Trust has built a reputation for providing high quality educational support and inspection services to national organisations such as Ofsted, the Teacher Training Agency and to schools in the north of England. Our main aim is to improve schools through high quality school inspections. We have strong values and a clear vision to deliver a world class inspection service that will directly contribute to improving the quality of teaching, learning and care of all children and young people in settings, schools and colleges.

Education Development Trust first delivered inspections on behalf of Ofsted in 1993. Since then we have developed our experience and expertise in the field of school evaluation and improvement to become one of the UK's first major providers of inspection services.

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