

Gems Wellington Academy Al Khail

British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

Inspection Dates: 16-19 January, 2017

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Age Group: 3-15
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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 three 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. 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 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 for parents, carers and others.
7. The school's procedures for handling complaints.
8. The quality of provision for boarding.
9. Leadership and management of the school.

The purposes of the 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.

The BSO inspection was combined with an inspection carried out with inspectors from the Dubai School Inspection Bureau (DSIB). The DSIB inspection evaluated the school's performance when measured against the quality indicators for schools in Dubai. The outcomes of the DSIB inspection are contained within a separate report which is available from the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) in Dubai.

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

GEMS Wellington Academy Al Khail is a British international school, located on Al Khail Road, close to the developing residential housing area of Dubai Hills, Dubai. The school was established in 2013. It offers education to 1,144 students aged three to 15 years, making it smaller than many similar all-age schools in Dubai.

The school is building its intake year by year and the oldest pupils are currently in Year 10. The school will have capacity for 2,400 pupils. Currently, only 20% of the pupils are in the secondary department. The school has a diverse population representing over 70 different nationalities; 16% hold British passports. Fifty-nine per cent of pupils speak English an additional language. The school has identified 107 pupils as having some form of special educational need and/or disabilities. The school offers the early years foundation stage (EYFS) for its young children. Pupils over the age of five, in the primary school, follow a bespoke curriculum based around the English National Curriculum, with an emphasis on developing skills. The vast majority of teachers have been trained in the UK or in Ireland. In the secondary school, pupils will take General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) examinations. Across the school, pupils participate in international tests ensuring that high standards are set for their learning. Currently, there are no pupils who have left school at the end of their compulsory education for other destinations.

Summary of the evidence base used by the inspection team

This BSO inspection was carried out by three Education Development Trust inspectors. The school was notified of the inspection date three weeks in advance. On this combined inspection, there were also 8 DSIB inspectors. The two teams contributed to a shared evidence base. In total, inspectors visited 136 lessons. They held meetings including those with the Principal and other school leaders, staff, pupils, parents and school governors. The inspection team had access to a range of information about the school prior to the inspection. Schools in Dubai are required to submit documents online each year and inspection teams can view these. Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors examined the results of questionnaire surveys returned by parents and pupils and followed up on issues that were raised.

Evaluation of the school

Gems Wellington Academy Al Khail is a good school. It is a new school with extensive facilities and state-of-the-art accommodation. The school is highly inclusive. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and behaviour is excellent. Teachers provide exciting lessons and the curriculum is interesting and supplemented by a range of visits. The school is staffed with well-qualified teachers, supported effectively by teaching assistants. Even though there have been many changes in teachers and leaders since the school's opening, it is improving and has good capacity to improve further.

Attainment in the early years is slightly above the English average in all aspects of the early learning goals and progress is very good. In English, children in the early years make very good progress. The large majority of children arrive at school at an early stage of learning English. Some speak English as an additional language and others are from families who communicate exclusively in their home language. Children express themselves clearly, developing their own narratives and explanations. Most develop a secure phonic knowledge and use this to read simple words and to write simple sentences.

Children reach a good level of development in all aspects of numeracy. They make very good progress from their starting points. In 2016, from low starting points, the proportions reaching the early learning goals in number and in space, shape and measures were similar to the UK. During a project on dinosaurs, children used their awareness of shape and space to build a museum out of cardboard boxes. Children can count confidently and recognise and write numbers from one to 10, linking them to pictures of the numbers. They add and subtract two numbers and record these using the correct symbols. Children place numbers in order and recognise larger and smaller relationships between numbers. They can identify and describe the features of simple shapes such as squares and triangles and show a good understanding of capacity. Children begin to use mathematical vocabulary accurately.

Children's understanding of scientific concepts and their development of enquiry skills are good. They demonstrate natural curiosity about things in their environment. They are encouraged to

think carefully about what they are seeing and doing. Problem-solving is an integral feature of learning as evident when children had to select material to make a museum for a 'dinosaur skeleton'. Children of all abilities, and from all backgrounds, are making very good progress in their scientific skills, knowledge and understanding against both their starting points and curriculum learning objectives.

In **English**, pupils' attainment is average. Progress is good. Pupils build well on the good start they make in early years. They gain increasing confidence in reading unfamiliar words due to the systematic teaching of phonics. The results of the most recent phonics checks in Years 1 and 2 were close to the average of schools in England. Pupils make good progress through the primary years and reach broadly average levels in reading, writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar by Year 6. Pupils mostly read fluently but their comprehension is sometimes a weaker element. The most able pupils typically develop a flair for writing, as evident in their creative narrative and poems. Overall, pupils' writing skills are variable, reflecting their familiarity with the English language. Many are inconsistent in their spelling, punctuation and grammar.

In the secondary department, pupils make very good progress. They become increasingly articulate and eloquent, as evident during many lessons where pupils communicate well with adults and each other. They are developing confidence in interpreting texts. This was seen, for example, in Year 8 where pupils explored the plot and analysed key characters in 'Romeo and Juliet'. Pupils benefit from drama; in Year 10, for example, they developed their understanding of inference. The school's assessment information and pupils' current work indicate that pupils in each year group are reaching broadly average levels overall. Lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work support the school's view that they are making very good progress. This is commendable, given that a significant proportion of pupils are learning English as an additional language. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective support they receive.

In **mathematics**, pupils' standards are above average. Pupils are making good progress. In 2016, the average attainment for Years 2, 6 and 9 was above the international average in international tests. Work completed over time reflects the consistently good progress pupils make in lessons. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress because their needs are met well. Even so, the most able do not always extend their skills sufficiently.

Primary pupils develop many strategies to enable them to successfully calculate increasingly complex addition, subtraction, multiplication and division sums. Pupils in upper primary calculate areas and perimeters comfortably and link them to the appropriate units of measurement. They enjoy solving real-life problems where they use their skills well and produce creative solutions.

Pupils in Years 9 and 10 respond successfully to examination-style questions; they are making good progress from their starting points and evidence indicates that they are on track to achieve above UK averages when they take external examinations at the end of Year 11.

In **science**, attainment is above average across the school. Pupils are also making good progress. Year 2 pupils are beginning to develop scientific skills and they carry out experiments to understand the conditions in which plants will grow best. They are acquiring scientific

vocabulary and know what constitutes a fair test. Their skills extend through a structured curriculum and well-planned teaching. Pupils in Year 8 use the periodic table to understand what is likely to happen in chemical reactions. As yet, no pupils have taken GCSE examinations; the school's data suggests that about half of its oldest pupils will gain good grades of B and above in 2018. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress. Attainment in tests is often lower for pupils who are at earlier stages of learning English due to linguistic challenges. Progress for pupils for whom English is an additional language is more variable due to the demands of reading questions and expressing themselves in writing. They are able, in lessons, to show their learning better orally. This is especially the case in the secondary department where the language requirements to express understanding are more demanding. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress.

Pupils' attainment in other subjects is mostly in line with what would be expected in the UK. The school has pupils with a wide range of backgrounds and ability and all, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress in most subjects. Standards in Arabic as a first language are improving. Pupils perform well in the arts and recently staged an excellent performance. There are many who perform at a high level in sports.

Summary of other judgements against the BSO standards:

- The quality of the curriculum provided by the school is good (see Standard 1 below).
- The quality of teaching and assessment is good overall (see Standard 1 below). Teachers of older primary and secondary pupils are not always sufficiently aware of how they should address the needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding (see Standard 2 below). Relationships in school and pupils' respect for each other's culture are outstanding. Behaviour is excellent throughout the school.
- The welfare, health and safety of the pupils are good (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).
- 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 good (see Standard 9 below). Even so, judgements on progress against action plans and pupils' achievement are sometimes overly optimistic.

As a result of this inspection, undertaken during January 2017, the school has demonstrated that it meets the Standards for British Schools Overseas. 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 school meets the requirements of this Standard. The **curriculum** is good. It has a number of strong features and is firmly based around the school's central values. The requirements of the early years and English national curriculum are fully met. The curriculum is based on the core values of GEMS schools and a learning profile which ensures that the curriculum is focused on developing pupils' skills. The options available to older pupils are wide and relate well to pupils' different interests and abilities.

The stimulating learning environment successfully promotes positive attitudes. Imaginative curriculum planning reflects the school's ambition to promote a love of learning across a wide range of subjects.

Children in the early years thoroughly enjoy learning because the curriculum includes an excellent range of opportunities for them to learn through play and practical activities. Plans for each area of learning are highly inventive and staff are quick to respond to children's own interests. Children, for example, were fully absorbed as they looked at a cracked 'dinosaur's egg' and eagerly followed large footprints that had appeared in their classroom overnight. Skilfully designed activities promote children's personal development very well. Children, who start school with few skills in English, benefit from many planned opportunities to develop their communication skills with adults and classmates.

Across the school, there is a good balance of subjects. At the same time, full attention is given to supporting pupils' personal and social development. Attractive displays in classrooms and on corridors reflect this holistic approach. Pupils' academic, creative, sporting and personal achievements are celebrated at every turn. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities although a few parents and pupils believe that there were not enough places for all who wanted them.

The revised English national curriculum is now fully implemented and a strong focus on continuity helps pupils to develop their key skills in literacy and numeracy as they move through the school. Pupils are well prepared to re-enter the UK educational system.

The school's inclusive nature is evident in the way the curriculum is designed to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils, and those at an early stage of learning English, receive effective support during English lessons, including bespoke programmes based on their individual needs. In other subjects, the curriculum is not routinely modified to take account of pupils' varied competence in English or the capability of the most able pupils. Assemblies, National Day, International Day and other planned events are used to celebrate the rich diversity within the school. Members of the local community, including parents, contribute their specific skills as, for example, when a parent taught pupils elements of electrical circuitry.

The school promotes general knowledge and understanding of modern British life, including its institutions and attitudes towards tolerance, democracy, respect for freedom of expression and other human rights. Special events in Britain are acknowledged, for example Remembrance Day. The language of instruction in the school is English and the school is organised according

to the structures used in independent English schools. Classroom management, displays of work, the three-term year and age-related year groups contribute to the British character of the school. Most members of staff have trained and qualified in the UK. Parents are highly supportive of the British nature of the curriculum. Pupils value the British values underpinning school life and the opportunities that will open up from studying in a British school.

The quality of **teaching and assessment** is good across the school and children and pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, acquire knowledge, deepen their understanding and develop useful skills. Teachers are well-qualified and have good subject knowledge. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve above average standards in most subjects. There are highly positive relationships between pupils and teachers and teachers are excellent role models. Pupils are valued and respected by teachers and other adults.

Teachers of children in the early years plan activities that are purposeful, well focused and encourage children to play, explore and take responsibility. As a result, teaching in the early years is very effective and ensures that children develop the characteristics of effective learning and make rapid progress. Teachers make detailed records of children's learning and progress and use this information to plan activities which further extend children's learning.

Teachers in the primary and secondary phases understand well how pupils learn and the skills they need for their future education. Day-to-day conversations between teachers and their pupils, both verbally and in written feedback, contribute to pupils' engagement in their learning. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and many provide useful comments designed to help pupils make further progress in their learning, although these are not always followed up.

Behaviour is very well managed and lessons move at a brisk pace; learning time is used very well. Pupils say that lessons are 'fun and interesting' and greatly appreciate motivating lessons and enjoy their learning. Pupils work very well together in pairs and small groups and readily discuss their ideas and support each other.

Most teachers are effective in encouraging pupils to develop skills of independent learning and critical thinking. They plan activities that require pupils to apply their knowledge to solving problems. Questioning is used particularly well in many lessons to promote and develop pupils' thinking. For example, during role play in Year 5 English, pupils were asked to consider how they would think and feel from another person's point of view. The opportunity to deepen pupils' thinking is not a consistently strong feature across all subjects. When the opportunity to deepen pupils' thinking is created, pupils make connections between their learning and the real world. For example, in Year 4 mathematics, pupils were able to apply their understanding of area and perimeter to design a new theme park.

Teaching assistants are deployed effectively in most lessons and they support pupils' learning well. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and plan work to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Even so, the work they set occasionally lacks challenge, particularly for the most able. Teaching and support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is very good. At times, teachers of pupils in the upper junior stage, and of secondary pupils, are insufficiently aware of how they can modify lessons to meet the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language.

Teachers check and track pupils' attainment and progress well. Practice in the early years is outstanding. Good progress has been made in developing assessment in the primary phase. In the secondary school, assessment arrangements are in transition as the school aligns its systems to reflect the changes in the English national curriculum.

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

The school meets the requirements of this Standard. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. It is promoted explicitly through the taught curriculum and, more informally, through the wide range of opportunities for participation in artistic, social and sporting activities. Pupils are open, friendly and welcoming. They are self-confident and socially aware. Pupils enjoy coming to school.

Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults across the school are excellent. Pupils conduct themselves well and behaviour is excellent. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect. Pupils talk positively about a 'community where people from a wide range of backgrounds get along very well.'

From the moment they enter the early years, a strong focus on personal and social development helps children learn quickly how to interact with their classmates and adults. Adults provide many opportunities for children to make choices and to gain an idea of right and wrong. Children's confidence, pride and self-esteem were evident when they showed a non-fiction book they had constructed about dinosaurs. In carrying out their allocated tasks, such as tidying areas of the classroom, children gain an early understanding of social responsibility.

In many lessons, teachers plan opportunities for pupils to work in pairs or small groups to reinforce the social skills that underpin cooperative work and to help them grow into mature, considerate and reflective individuals. The school yearbook includes insightful accounts of the impact of an extensive range of enrichment activities. One pupil wrote about the recent school production of the 'Wizard of Oz': 'I had an amazing time... totally worth it.' Another described how: 'We created some really big pieces of art this year in groups; we had so much fun but really learnt how difficult it is to get perfect too.'

Pupils naturally care for one another. This is evident when they burst into spontaneous applause for a classmate. They are quick to respond should anyone be upset. Their cultural understanding and empathy are promoted routinely in lessons and from extensive opportunities to develop awareness of other cultures. They learn much about local life and increase their understanding of Dubai, its institutions and services. During drama in Year 10, pupils gained an awareness of the suffragette movement and empathy with its cause. Pupils value and respect the qualities of each other as individuals and contribute to a harmonious environment. They develop their awareness, appreciation and respect for each other, the wider world and other cultures. Pupils responded sensitively to a 'peace one day' event, promoting international harmony.

Pupils develop quickly an understanding of how their actions can have an impact on how others feel. For example, a Year 1 teacher skilfully used a bruised apple to illustrate how negative remarks could have an impact on how pupils feel about themselves. Pupils respond well to

learning and, pupils in Year 4 for example, were enthralled when they discovered that they could complete an electric circuit that lit a bulb or sounded a buzzer.

Across the school, pupils participate willingly in fundraising activities for those less fortunate than themselves. These include 'pie face', where they delight in splattering their teachers for a good cause. Community service projects, such as those included in a recent educational visit to Borneo, deepen their sense of commitment. Participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award provides numerous opportunities for pupils to contribute to the lives of others.

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

The school meets the requirements of this Standard. Arrangements for most aspects of welfare, health and safety are highly effective. Children in the early years are made very welcome and settle in quickly. Pupils feel very safe at school and say their teachers provide them with good help and support. Thoughtful and well-planned transition arrangements between the different phases of the school prepare pupils personally and academically for the next stages of learning. There is good support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Careers guidance prepares pupils very well for their future. Pupils benefit from the recent appointment of a counsellor.

The school has developed effective anti-bullying and cyber-bullying policies. In the pupils' survey, a small minority of pupils expressed concern about bullying. The school deals effectively with the few incidences that have arisen. There are very good, age-appropriate systems to promote good behaviour. Detailed records are kept of incidents and rare occasions where pupils receive sanctions. There is close co-operation between school and parents.

Admissions and attendance registers are maintained well. Procedures to monitor and promote attendance are thorough and have led to improvements. Attendance is above average and pupils attend lessons punctually.

The school has a proactive health and safety team which links effectively with staff in school and the owning body. The school undertakes many risk assessments; these are wide-ranging and of good quality. There are two lifeguards and many staff, including those who teach physical education, are trained first aiders. There is always a member of staff trained in first aid included on outside visits.

There are generous facilities for pupils who fall ill during the school day, including two well-equipped specialist medical rooms staffed by a full-time doctor and two nurses. Records are kept well with regular communication with parents.

The security guards and controlled entrances promote safe entry and exit for all. A few parents do not understand the need to wear required identification. Supervision to and from transport and on school buses is very good.

The school has a detailed policy for critical incidents, including a lockdown. There are regular practices for fire evacuation. Health and safety are addressed regularly in practical lessons. Potentially hazardous substances, including chemical reagents, are stored safely.

Safeguarding arrangements have a high priority and all staff are appropriately trained to respond to concerns. This is part of the induction of all staff. Child protection arrangements are of an equivalent standard to that expected in the UK and meet requirements in Dubai.

Pupils learn about the benefits of healthy eating and exercise. The canteen serves a good range of food, including healthy and vegetarian options.

Standard 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets the requirements of this Standard. Staff recruitment follows UK guidelines meticulously. All members of staff have undergone rigorous recruitment checks to ensure their suitability to work with children. Parental volunteers also undergo security checks. Arrangements meet fully the requirements in the UK and Dubai. Governors' suitability is established through company procedures.

Standard 5. The premises and accommodation

The school meets the requirements of this Standard. Premises are of a very high quality. The school is modern and is attractively designed on a spacious site. Classrooms are of a good size and are light and well ventilated. They are well resourced with interactive whiteboards. There are many areas outside classrooms which are used well for independent and group work. For younger pupils, there are areas for imaginative play in the classroom. Children in the early years benefit from outside learning and play areas. Plans are in place to separate the exit and entrance from areas of the early years foundation stage. Classrooms and corridors are enlivened by interesting and relevant displays often including pupils' work, evidencing the enthusiasm they have developed for their learning. An example is the large 'harbour' where many pupil-made models of the Titanic are moored.

There is plenty of outdoor space for play. Specialist facilities are extensive and 'state of the art' with exceptionally high quality sports opportunities. There are all-weather pitches and a covered outdoor pitch and a three-storey sports hall with three pools. The pool is being enclosed currently.

The central auditorium seats over 500 people and there are drama, music, audio and video studios as well as thoughtfully designed laboratories and areas for practical subjects. The ready availability of technology and keyboards in music, for example, supports high quality learning. Libraries are well stocked with books in English, Arabic and other languages. Given the growing nature of the secondary school, some specialist areas receive little use currently.

Areas for dining are pleasant. Food is prepared, served and consumed hygienically. The school is very clean and there is a regular and effective programme of maintenance. Corridors are wide, allowing safe movement between classes and the school has lifts to upper floors.

The school has full access for pupils who have disabilities and there are sufficient, well-maintained wash rooms and facilities for all pupils, regardless of needs. The medical areas provide privacy for the care of those who become ill.

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

The school meets the requirement of this Standard. Most parents are pleased with communications with the school, although a small minority feels that some senior leaders are insufficiently approachable and that their views are not listened to. The school has made a number of improvements to support dialogue with parents. There is much information on the learning platform which is an area within the school's website dedicated for parents. Depending on the age of their children, parents have access to specific information about what their children are learning as well as a range of common information, including newsletters, blogs, calendar events, extra-curricular activities and key policies. In the early years, parents can see photographs of current activities in the classroom which supports them as partners in the development of their children's learning. As pupils move through the primary stage, parents receive information about what is studied. Parents of secondary age children can access homework set and see their children's work and feedback from teachers.

There is a parent relations executive who supports parents in many practical matters and can refer matters onwards as necessary. The school's website holds limited information; access to governors is through the GEMS company and is accessed on a different website.

The school provides regular reports about pupils' progress on paper and electronically. There is one parent-teacher meeting for every year group. These run throughout the year. Parents are extremely positive about the high level of communication with their children's teachers and their ready availability; they are highly appreciative of the commitment to communication that these teachers give.

Governors have recently established an advisory board which includes parental representation. This group is in its infancy and has only met once; it is not yet influencing parental communication with the school. Parents play an active role in many school events and parents with particular skills are able to contribute to pupils' learning. For example, a parent who is a doctor helped young pupils to understand about the workings of the human body.

There is a parent teacher association in which parents play a key part in planning and delivery exciting special events such as the International Day. These bring the school community together.

Standard 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints

The school meets the requirements of this Standard. The school has a policy which addresses the key areas expected in such a document. The new principal has rightly evaluated the policy as one that needs rewriting to make procedures even clearer.

Standard 8. The quality of provision for boarding

There is no provision for pupils to board.

Standard 9. Leadership and management of the school

The school meets the requirements of this Standard. The quality of leadership and management in the school is good. There have been recent substantial changes in senior and middle leadership but the school continues to improve. The new principal, with the support of other senior leaders, has set a clear vision for the school, which is shared by the governing board, staff, pupils and parents. Although, self-evaluation is undertaken regularly and underpins planning, judgements are, at times, overly optimistic about pupils' progress and achievement and do not always take account of all sources of information. Ongoing monitoring of policies is needed to ensure change is consolidated.

There are many highly effective middle leaders and the leadership of early years is very good, leading to good outcomes for young children. Middle leaders know their departments well and work very closely with teachers who are encouraged to bring forward ideas for improvement. The school has a one-year school improvement plan which addresses the key priorities for the school. Departments have their own detailed action plans which dovetail with the overall plan. The school has good capacity to improve.

Leaders are creative and forward looking and share a vision, based on the core values of GEMS schools. They have been decisive in taking forward a number of necessary changes in a short period of time. Much of this work is ongoing and its impact will not be fully apparent for some time. Day-to-day management of the school is very good and the school functions effectively. There have been significant recent improvements in the school's curriculum and to assessment procedures in the primary department.

The majority of parents support the changes that have taken place but there is understandable concern about the number of changes to senior leaders. School leaders recognise the need to improve communications generally and are making themselves more readily available to meet with parents. Arrangements made by senior leaders to support new staff have been highly effective; new teachers are most appreciative of how they have been helped to settle into living in Dubai and working in the school. The school undertakes its arrangements for safeguarding very seriously and all incoming staff are subject to thorough checks in line with requirements in the UK and Dubai. Child protection procedures are well established.

The principal's understanding of the needs of the school is very good. Leaders are increasingly recognising that many of the planned actions need time to embed before their impact will be seen fully and must form part of longer term planning for the school. Performance management is in place with some innovative features linked closely to the school's development priorities.

The school has a welcoming, inclusive ethos. Leaders are committed to providing equal opportunities for all and address discrimination well through both their actions and the planned curriculum. The decision to expand provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language arises from accurate evaluation of need.

Through the system of school governance, senior officers from GEMS work closely with the school. They understand the school well and both support and challenge the school's leaders, providing strategic input while balancing the need for the school's professional autonomy. They are positioned well to ensure that emerging needs are identified quickly and there are clear policies relating to finance. They are overseeing the growth of the school and have provided generous staffing in preparation for anticipated future growth. They appraise the performance of the principal. Governors are also in communication with parents. An advisory board has recently

been established to supplement governance; its role is to address the development of plans, review and evaluation.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

Wellington Gems Academy Al Khail fully meets the requirements for British Schools Overseas.

What the school could do to improve further

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

1. Build on the good teaching to ensure that all pupils are suitably challenged to meet their potential, especially the most able and those who face difficulties learning through English.
2. For senior leaders to monitor the outcomes of policies and practice regularly and form judgements based on all of the available evidence.

Summary of inspection judgements

Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		√		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		√		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		√		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		√		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	√			
The behaviour of pupils	√			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		√		
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The quality of provision for boarding

	n/a			
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Leadership and management

Overall effectiveness of leadership and management		√		
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School details

Name of school	Gems Wellington Academy Al Khail
Type of school	All age
Date school opened	September 2013
Age range of pupils	3-15
Gender of pupils	Boys and girls
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	1144
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	0
Annual fees (day pupils)	52,000 (KG) to 85,000 dh
Annual fees (boarders)	n/a
Address of school	P.O Box 391922, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Telephone number	+971 (4) 512 9100
Email address	Registrar_wek@gemsedu.com
Headteacher	Colin Callaghan
Proprietor	GEMS Education

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 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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