

Horizon International School

British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

Inspection dates 16-19 November 2015

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Age group: 3-16

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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 CfBT Education Trust who spent four days at the school. CfBT 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).

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

Horizon International School is located in Umm Al Sheif, Dubai, and is a for profit school. It opened in September 2008 and provides education for boys and girls from early years to currently Year 11, aged three to 16. The school has increased in numbers to 937 with over 50 different nationalities represented. As part of its ongoing development as a 3-18 school, the first Year 12 cohort will start from this September. Few pupils speak English as an additional language.

The curriculum is based on the National Curriculum of England. The school is divided into four phases. The secondary phase includes Years 7 to 11, where pupils take both the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations at the end of Year 11. Most pupils have planned to continue their education at the school and join Year 12 as students in September.

There are 78 teachers, 23 teaching assistants and four guidance counsellors. In addition, a teacher has been appointed with responsibility for careers education. All teachers in the school have appropriate teaching qualifications.

Summary of the evidence base used by the inspection team

This BSO inspection was carried out by three CfBT Education Trust inspectors. On this combined inspection, there were also seven DSIB inspectors. The school was given three weeks' notice of the start date of the inspection. The inspection team had access to a wealth 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. The two teams contributed to a shared evidence base. In total, inspectors visited 124 lessons across all phases. They held 47 meetings, including those with the Principal and other school leaders, staff and parents and a representative from the governing body. Inspectors talked with pupils in formal interviews, in lessons, and informally as they met them during the school day. Inspectors observed the work of the school and reviewed the self-evaluation, improvement plans, pupils' reports, policies, assessment, tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors examined the results of questionnaire surveys returned by parents and followed up on issues raised.

Evaluation of the school

Horizon International School is a good school that meets the requirements of the British Schools Overseas Standards. Pupils receive a good quality education and, as a result of good teaching, pupils make at least good progress from their starting points. In secondary, there are no formal external measures of attainment as yet in IGCSE because the current Year 11 classes are the first in the school. However, a wealth of assessment data has been collected as staff track pupils' progress towards their first external examinations in summer 2016. Pupils' progress is confirmed as good, based on evidence from lesson observations, work scrutiny and results from international tests.

Children in the early years make rapid progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals. By the end of the early years (Foundation 1 and 2), many are exceeding the expected standards. For example, in 2015, 79% of children achieved a good level of development compared to a UK average of 66%. They are especially successful in improving their language and personal development and social skills. At the end of the early years, not all children transfer to Year 1. This makes comparisons with pupils' Key Stage 1 results unreliable as the pupils in Year 2 are different.

Children arrive in the early years (Foundation Stage 1, Nursery class), with a range of skills. In communication and language, their attainment levels are generally below those typical for children this age because approximately half are learning to speak English as an additional language. Children make very good progress in all aspects of English so that, by the time they are ready to join Year 1, many children are able to speak confidently, listen attentively and talk about words and sentences they can read. Writing skills have also improved. Children are able to write for a purpose, as when they make their lists of passengers checking in at their role play airport.

In **mathematics**, children's attainment is above the UK average and their progress is good. They enjoy counting and take every opportunity to apply this learning in their play. Even at this early stage in the school year, many of the older children are able to count reliably up to 15. Their understanding of shape, space and measure is less evident because some struggle with the mathematical terminology.

Children's **understanding of the world** is growing rapidly. Almost all are confident enough to talk about their immediate family and friends. They understand the different roles carried out by people who help them, recognising similarities and differences in what they do and what equipment they need to be successful.

Attainment in **English** is in line with expected UK standards in primary and secondary phases, with pupils making good progress in both phases.

As this was the first Year 11 cohort, there were no external examination data available yet. However, most pupils in Key Stage 4 are reaching attainment outcomes typical for their age in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Even so, writing continues to be the weakest area of literacy skills' development.

Attainment and progress in standardised tests over the last three years indicate an ongoing improvement in both reading and, to a lesser extent, writing.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to accurately sequence a familiar story using drama to re-enact the role of various characters. Pupils' thinking skills are used effectively when they imagine and empathise with how characters feel. Pupils demonstrate effective listening and speaking skills during paired work and group discussions. In Year 2, collaborative group work leads to most pupils being able to accurately identify and write the features of a poster.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to select appropriate vocabulary and use descriptive language to describe settings for stories. For example, Year 6 pupils use their knowledge of the five senses to develop their imaginative writing. Pupils can develop language within a given scenario using their own script to act their role. Year 3 speak confidently using persuasive language, for example, to justify their opinion in the face of a dilemma.

By the end of Key Stage 3, most pupils are able to adapt their writing according to the task and audience. For example, Year 8 pupils gather appropriate evidence from text to formulate a written letter in response to a question posed by Scrooge. Pupils make positive contributions to the work of others through focused discussion. For example, Year 7 pupils collaborate effectively in groups to 'magpie' ideas and develop their existing knowledge of Anglo-Saxon literature. During this key stage, pupils study a range of poetry and classic novels such as those by Dickens which enhance their knowledge of British history.

In Key Stage 4, pupils apply existing analytical skills to extract accurate examples of linguistic techniques from non-fiction text. For example, in Year 11 pupils provide a range of quotations to illustrate the author's use of language to create suspense when climbing Everest.

From their starting points in **mathematics** in Year 1, almost all pupils make good progress so that, by the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is above the UK average and is improving. Results for 2015 indicate that a larger proportion of pupils reach the higher Level 5 than in the UK. Scrutiny of the work in the current Year 6 class and observations of pupils' learning across the school confirm that this is still the case. Pupils are particularly competent in dealing with number and algebra. They find it more difficult when it comes to using and applying this knowledge in practical situations or when solving problems. Nevertheless, as they leave Key Stage 2, pupils are able to construct simple line graphs from data, analyse their graphs and evaluate their own and each other's work. Some can explain how to improve their graph and the practical applications of such graph work.

In Year 11, pupils can differentiate expressions with positive and negative indices and find the gradient of such curves given values of 'x'.

By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils show strong skills in algebra, expressing generalisations algebraically and model situations. They can solve a variety of problems involving equations, formulae and functions.

In primary **science and in Key Stage 3**, pupils' attainment is similar to UK standards with a small minority above. The trend in primary school lessons and work scrutiny indicates that progress is good, with significant improvement by the end of Year 6. No trend is apparent in Key Stage 4, with limited data to date. However, lessons observed, along with work seen in pupils' books, support the fact that progress is good.

In Key Stage 1, pupils acquire subject specific language and develop methods of investigation, predicting, observing and drawing simple conclusions. Investigating the role of plant stems, Year 3 make a range of predictions about celery left in coloured water. Later, with much excitement, they discover the reaction and are able to relate this to a control sample. Year 5 develop research skills, investigating life cycles of animals and insects, presenting their observations imaginatively through the medium of their own films. Placing their learning in these real-life experiences means that, by the end of the key stage, pupils can select and apply scientific enquiry methods.

From the beginning of Key Stage 3, pupils extend those enquiry skills to apply critical thinking and analysis. Year 7 pupils understand the concept of viscosity and can illustrate it by modelling a simple experiment comparing a fizzy drink with chocolate sauce. Year 9 gain a good grasp of advanced concepts of exothermic and endothermic reactions illustrated by glow sticks, and the genetic basis of inheritance in humans and animals.

By Key Stage 4, pupils grasp the idea that science is all around them and imaginatively analyse the chemical composition of proteins, lipids and carbohydrates as found in stomach contents. By Year 11, pupils consolidate and focus their skills' acquisition. They can isolate chemical structures in substances like tobacco and explore the ethics of consumption, advertising and society's response to smoking.

Pupils achieve similar levels of success in many other areas of the curriculum and in the growing number of extra-curricular opportunities on offer.

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). Even so, the systems used to analyse assessment information in the school to identify gaps in learning, plan interventions and review pupils' progress lack consistency. The delivery of in-class support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is not monitored closely to ensure they all make a faster rate of progress.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good (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 this Standard. They are of good quality (see Standard 5 below).

The provision of Information for parents meets the requirements of the Standard. Information is of good quality (see Standard 6 below).

The school's procedures for handling complaints meet the requirements of this Standard. They are effective (see Standard 7 below).

The leadership and management of the school are good (see Standard 9 below). Nevertheless, action plans do not include success criteria that are measurable or sharply focused on pupils' outcomes.

As a result of this inspection, undertaken during November 2015, 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 requirements of the standard are met. The school provides a **good curriculum** for pupils of all ages. It promotes well pupils' academic and personal development. Planning takes full account of recent developments in schools in the UK, including the raised expectations set by the new National Curriculum. Pupils are well prepared for the range of examinations that are commonly used in schools in the UK. Consequently, pupils can easily enter or re-enter the UK education system at an appropriate level.

The curriculum opportunities for pupils are extensive and take full account of their particular needs and strengths. For example, a functional skills' course is available for secondary pupils who will benefit from such an approach. Across the school, strong links are made between subjects so that pupils have greater opportunities to use and apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired in the core subjects. Similarly, links with the local community and charitable foundations enable pupils to gain a greater understanding of Dubai. For example, the school's environmental club was active in the wider community, supporting a range of conservation projects. This work included calculating the school's energy consumption to monitor the effect on the environment. These strengths help to explain why pupils in all parts of the school make such good progress.

The curriculum in the early years offers children numerous opportunities to take part in a good, balanced mix of activities. Children make rapid progress because the activities are enjoyable, provide just the right level of challenge and children are encouraged to become independent.

As the school grows, it is able to offer a wider range of subjects, particularly at secondary level. Most pupils speak in positive terms of the way in which the school consults them and their parents before a final decision is made about option choices. Increasing numbers of specialist subject teachers are joining the secondary school.

This has resulted in improved subject knowledge, small group sizes for some of the Year 11 classes and individual support for pupils who need it.

Information and communications technology (ICT) is used successfully as a tool for learning, such as interactive whiteboards; the school is well equipped with computer suites.

The identification and progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well by staff from the inclusion unit. They work alongside pupils in class or withdraw pupils into small groups, depending on the individual needs. As a result, most of these pupils make good progress from their starting points. However, current monitoring of the impact of in-class support does not ensure full parity of provision across the curriculum. Most able pupils undertake extension work within most classes, so that they are challenged to do their very best. In addition, the Horizon International Performance Institute (HIPI system) which runs alongside the extensive extra-curricular programme, identifies and supports pupils who have particular skills, talents or aptitudes. For a range of sports as well as Dance, Drama and Music, this provides pupils with opportunities to gain scholarships or start on a pathway to elite performance. The school is proud to offer all pupils access to an impressive selection of activities from Mandarin in early years to scuba diving.

The curriculum is checked regularly for its relevance and appropriateness, and ensuring British traditions and other links are made within the provision. For example, history topics are generally British based and Key Stage 4 pupils are able to undertake the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. This helps to ensure that the pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. From entering the school, children in Year 1 find out about the history of Britain. In their class, they produced videos about the Roman invasion and found out why the invaders built Hadrian's Wall. This continues throughout primary, with pupils finding out about the influence Victorians had on the development of science. The recently introduced Skills Enhancement Time (SET) provides pupils with additional support in English and mathematics on a daily basis. Early signs are that this additional emphasis on basic skills is paying dividends with attainment levels continuing to rise.

The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) continues to improve. It now provides a structured programme that covers themes such as 'friendships' and 'bullying' in an age-appropriate way. This development positively reinforces the vision of being a nurturing community, thereby promoting pupils' personal development exceptionally well. From an early age, pupils have a growing awareness of other world cultures. Older pupils are able to compare customs, such as 'roast lunch', when discussing traditional meals eaten in Britain and Dubai.

The quality of **teaching and assessment is good**. Most teaching, from the early years upwards, provides pupils with opportunities for independent investigations and problem solving. In Year 10 science, pupils analyse stomach contents to determine whether they contain proteins, lipids, or carbohydrates. In mathematics, excellent subject knowledge ensures engaging lessons, notably in Year 9. A Year 8 ICT lesson led pupils to analyse websites to investigate indicators of reliability and to identify those likely to be spoof or fake sites. In English, pupils analyse extracts from published fiction, making connections to enhance their own mystery writing. In most lessons, teachers engage pupils in meaningful discussion, promoting higher order thinking. Year 4, for instance, were challenged to consider a big question, 'Do bigger ears mean better hearing?'

Lesson planning identifies the needs of all pupils but this is not consistently applied to the classroom experience in all subjects. Where learning is most successful, teachers use data effectively to identify areas requiring support and develop learning targets to measure progress. Occasionally, pupils' individual targets are not sufficiently sharp or measurable to enable more effective monitoring and evaluation of provision. Science lesson planning in primary and secondary classes consistently includes differentiated activities, with varying worksheets in most cases. In primary mathematics, there is good use of talking partners and purposeful lesson planning takes account of prior learning.

Teachers use time and resources efficiently in the majority of classes with simple, understated classroom management techniques when necessary. In Year 1 design technology, the teaching assistant was deployed well to support individual pupils with designing medieval castles.

Most teachers have secure subject knowledge. This was particularly noticeable in primary science where they were not afraid to take educational risks and to experiment.

In the primary school, electronic tablets are used effectively to aid learning and good use is made of ICT in the majority of lessons. Excellent use is made of simple equipment in science, for instance to explore experientially the concept of viscosity in liquids and the functioning of the digestive system.

Excellent relationships between pupils and teachers ensure many lessons are orderly, engaging and productive. Year 7 science is exciting and fast paced, using songs and videos made by the pupils as aide-memoires. In the occasional lessons where pupils do not learn as effectively, questioning is not sufficiently challenging and dialogue does not engage pupils effectively.

Data are used effectively, particularly in science, to inform teachers' planning or, in some cases, make changes to the curriculum. The school's marking scheme across subjects is evaluative and developmental, leading to dialogue with pupils, either verbally or in annotations, about next steps. A standardised rubric based on the new English curriculum is applied across all phases, forming the basis of self, peer and teachers' reviews of learning.

The school's use of an extensive range of UK and international standardised tests ensures accurate benchmarking of pupils' performance. As part of the quality assurance process, internal assessments are moderated across the school and within a cluster of six other schools.

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

All the requirements of this Standard are met.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are consistently courteous and polite. Behaviour is excellent, both in lessons and when pupils are moving round the school. Pupils take a great pride in how they and

their classmates conduct themselves. They say, for example: 'Everyone gets on well here because our school started small and children who join us copy how we behave.' This contributes to the positive attitudes to learning found in most classes where pupils turn up fully equipped and are ready to work hard.

Almost all pupils are confident and self-assured. The school encourages them to express themselves and to share their views and opinions even if it means disagreeing with someone else's point of view. A Year 9 pupil confirmed, 'when we get jobs, we have to be able to make decisions...it helps with our employability.' Such assuredness is typical of the self-confidence of many pupils. They recognise the need to be competitive and to do their very best but also show great compassion and care for others who do not share their good fortune. Indeed, a real strength of the pupils' personal development is their heightened understanding of the responsibilities they have towards others. Within school, there are numerous opportunities for them to channel these qualities. Playground buddies and pupils acting as school counsellors are good examples of pupils demonstrating these qualities in action.

With so many nationalities represented in the school population, pupils learn about each other and their cultural heritage socially as well as from well-organised curricular events. Pupils enjoy the planned elements of the curriculum that improve their awareness of the world around them. School wide events such as International Days assist them in their understanding and contribute to the respect and tolerance that is a strong feature of school life. British values and traditions are prominent. The curriculum is UK based and so topics covered throughout the school are often viewed from a British perspective. For example, in Year 4, pupils study famous engineers such as Robert Stephenson and philanthropists such as Dr Barnardo. Recently, a visit from a Second World War veteran provided pupils with a first-hand account of what life was like in the armed forces. His visit coincided with Remembrance Day and a group of pupils attended a ceremony at the war memorial in Sharjah. They were very moved by the experience and their subsequent feedback was linked to the study of war poetry within the English curriculum. Consequently, pupils have a well-developed and improving understanding of a wide range of cultures, including those of the UAE and Britain.

Pupils have a very good understanding of their responsibilities as members of the school community as well as of the wider world. There is a wealth of opportunity for pupils to enjoy leadership responsibility, for example, as school or house captains and deputy captains. The recent elections of secondary house captains captured the imagination of secondary pupils. Announcements were made at a secondary assembly and those elected were cheered and celebrated. The importance of this democratic process was made clear by the election coordinator who explained that if you do not vote you cannot really complain if you do not agree with what is decided on your behalf. Similarly, members of the school council and the eco-teams had strong views and opinions that they were very happy to share. Their roles extend into wider community initiatives, where fundraising for local charities, conserving energy and recycling materials are strong features.

The attendance register is accurate and up to date. Attendance is a strength of the school at 96% for the year 2014/2015. Staff follow up all absences on the first day to confirm that these pupils are safe.

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

All the requirements of this Standard are met.

Measures to promote the welfare, health and safety of pupils are outstanding. They reflect the inclusive nature of the school in which pupils feel part of a secure community. The dedicated special needs co-ordinator and his team ensure disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have access to high quality pastoral care. The school has an anti-bullying policy which ensures a swift response to any incident. Newly arrived pupils settle quickly into the school.

Child safeguarding procedures are robust. They match current requirements in the United Kingdom and the requirements of Dubai. The designated staff support pupils and the nurses play a key role. Highly positive pupil and teacher relationships ensure that all pupils have someone to turn to with any concerns. Teachers and designated safeguarding leaders undertake training. Much work is done to help pupils to keep themselves safe in their use of the internet, which is evidenced in very well presented wall displays. The nurses provide first aid and oversee the administering of any regular medication by pupils. Several other staff, including physical education teachers, are first aid trained.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and is promoted through the curriculum and by a variety of rewards and assembly celebrations. Pupils' positive behaviour is reinforced by adult supervision both inside and outdoors during breaks, and at the start and end of the day. The behaviour policy is comprehensive, including a clear pathway of escalation and indication of possible sanctions. Records are maintained of sanctions imposed for serious offences. Any pupil displaying challenging behaviour is not only sanctioned, but also teachers ensure pupils understand the importance of positive behaviour.

All health and safety policies are in place. Regular checks, such as those of chemical levels in the swimming pool, electrical and fire equipment are undertaken by maintenance contractors. Regular fire drills take place. These are recorded and identify any required actions in response. Comprehensive risk assessments for excursions are in place. School transport is well maintained and drivers are subject to regular checks. The juice bar provided by outside contractors has appropriate hygiene certificates relating to the preparation, serving and consumption of food.

The admission register is robust and gathers academic and personal information from parents. This is shared with appropriate staff to ensure the health and welfare of the pupils.

Standard 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets the requirements of this Standard. There is a clear set of safeguarding procedures which are rigorously followed to ensure the accurate checking of any new staff, including volunteers and supply teachers. This includes the requirement for staff to hold an up-to-date, cleared police check and the right to work in Dubai. Detailed records of staff and governors are maintained and updated when necessary, according with policy requirements.

Standard 5. The premises and accommodation

The school meets the requirements of this Standard and also the local requirements for the Dubai authority.

There are meticulous records kept by the premises' manager who is also a member of the school's senior team. This ensures any concerns are swiftly communicated and resolved to maintain a safe and attractive learning environment.

Over the last few years, there has been a positive growth in pupil numbers with representation now in all year groups up to the end of Key Stage 4. Nevertheless, the school continues to achieve its aim of being a caring community school. At the front entrance to the school, the large artificial grass pitch is a popular facility, both during and after the school day. Currently, it has shaded seating areas at one side but lacks this in other spectator areas

The school does not provide a restaurant service but there are designated areas in the school for pupils to eat packed lunches, including some outside shaded areas. Pupils and parents appreciate the opportunity to purchase additional items of healthy food and drinks from the juice bar in school.

There is a well-equipped medical facility managed by specialist nursing staff and a school doctor. Access to medical care is available at all times during the school day. The early years area is located in a stimulating, safe environment with access to a plentiful range of learning resources. Classrooms are bright and well resourced with curriculum provision further enhanced by access to a well-stocked library, community theatre and sports' halls. In preparation for post-16 academic and vocational provision, there has been ongoing development in the improvement of specialist areas. However, access to ICT by older pupils could be increased to support further their independent learning.

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

The school meets the requirements of this Standard.

The school provides an extensive range of information, which ensures an open relationship between parents and the school and provides access to all relevant policies, as required to meet this BSO standard. The school's website is clear and informative, with readily available links to policies, the curriculum and to the contact details of key personnel. It contains a clear statement of the school's vision. The school communicator 'app' enables all parents to quickly download helpful information at the touch of a button. Home-school diaries used from the early years upwards keeps parents fully briefed on their child's life at school.

Academic reports are provided twice a year and a new interim grading report has just been drafted to assist parents to monitor their child's progress, alongside the staff. Individual education plans share information with all relevant parties for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Detailed reports indicate academic attainment, other achievements and next steps. These are supported by regular meetings between parents and teachers to discuss pupils' progress. Parents have secure access to the school's online learning platform, where they can access

their child's work. They feel able to contact their child's class or form teacher whenever necessary.

The Principal and other members of the senior leadership team are readily available to meet with parents if they have any concerns. The Principal holds regular coffee mornings for parents to drop in, enabling immediate and direct contact. However, if there is a desire to escalate an issue, the complaints' policy is available via the school's website. This outlines processes and the contact details of relevant personnel.

Parents were informed of this BSO inspection and arrangements are in place to share the full report. Parents are supportive of the school and very happy with its inclusive nature.

Standard 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints

The school meets the requirements of the Standard.

There is a clear policy available on the school's website which outlines the stepped approach to handling any concerns or complaints. Records held by the school confirm that any complaints received are dealt with swiftly by the Principal and his team. On a day-to-day basis, the school successfully responds to most concerns without the need for formal procedures.

Standard 8. The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable.

Standard 9. Leadership and management of the school

The school meets the requirements of this Standard. The leadership and management of the school are good. They continually strive to maintain high standards of provision. The robust links between the senior leadership and governors ensure that all policies that promote safeguarding, equality and the prevention of discrimination are carefully followed. The school is led well by the Principal and the senior leadership team who have the capacity to improve the school further. The leader of the early years is a member of the senior team; this enables strong strategic links to be formed between early years and other parts of the school. A significant proportion of the senior team has been in role since the school was opened in 2008. This has been a positive factor over recent years as it has reinforced a sense of stability during several changes in the school's organisational structure. The strong relationship which has developed between the senior team and parents, along with the sense of security this has provided, was noted as a significant reason for parents continuing to keep their children in the school.

The recent appointments of two assistant headteachers, with specific responsibility for teaching and learning, confirm the leadership's commitment to improving provision in the school. An integral part of their role includes the appraisal of staff through the monitoring system and subsequent, focused professional development. All teaching staff have been observed teaching this term and have received

constructive feedback on how to improve aspects of their teaching. This has already started to make an impact on pupils' learning. However, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are not always supported fully which slows their progress. Leaders are recognising positive features in lessons and sharing best practice with others. As a result, the appraisal system supports both the professional development of individual staff as well as improvement to the whole school provision. The devolvement of specific responsibilities to the middle management of the school, further reinforces the strategic vision to accelerate school improvement. Subject leaders' use of data to analyse pupils' performance and identify gaps in learning, has led to a successful curriculum modification. For example, in English, the introduction of a 'skills' enhanced time' lesson for all primary pupils targets the development of specific literacy skills within the class.

The commitment of the school's leadership, including governors, to ensure all pupils are well cared for, is a strong feature reflected in all areas of provision. All teachers and staff endeavour to fulfil the school's vision of 'developing a sense of pride and belonging to nurture all members of our community'. Leaders, including governors, provide strong role models for pupils, staff and parents. Governance in the school is good and has made a significant impact on the quality of strategic planning and targeted investment in the school. Governors play an important role in the monitoring of the school's financial systems which are well organised. There have been recent improvements to the structure of the board, to include wider representation of all stakeholders. As a result, governance is more effective at holding the senior team to account and school provision is improving further.

The recruitment process is robust and meets the requirements to ensure suitability of staff to work with children. Governors fully support the need to appoint well qualified, specialist staff with particular attention directed towards the staffing of the forthcoming post-16 provision in the school in September 2016.

The school's systems for self-evaluation are mostly accurate and beginning to support improvements in the quality of provision and learning outcomes for pupils. This can be seen, for example, in rising attainment in mathematics and science. The school uses a range of assessment tests to compare pupils' performance against UK and international standards. This is still at an early stage of development and teaching staff are in the process of learning to use this more effectively. There is now greater focus on supporting individual learning needs, including for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. However, despite comprehensive school improvement planning, the absence of measurable success criteria, linked to pupils' learning outcomes, impedes the school's rate of progress towards the achievement of higher standards.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

Horizon International School 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. Ensure consistency in the systems used to analyse assessment information in the school to identify gaps in learning, plan interventions and review pupils' progress.
2. Develop action plans to include success criteria that are measurable and more sharply focused on pupils' outcomes.
3. Monitor closely the delivery of in-class support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to ensure they all make at least good progress.

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

Not applicable	NA			
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Leadership and management

Overall effectiveness of leadership and management		√		
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School details

Name of school	Horizon International School
Type of school	Private
Date school opened	4 September 2008
Age range of pupils	3–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	937
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	0
Annual fees (day pupils)	31,780dhs to 81,400dhs
Annual fees (boarders)	0
Address of school	9A off Al Wasl Road Umm Suqeim 3 Jumeira Dubai
Telephone number	+97143483314
Email address	raniaa@horizonintlschool-com
Headteacher	Mr David Wilson
Proprietor	Al Najah 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 CfBT.

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.

CfBT Education Trust – CfBT is 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 CfBT 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 CfBT Education 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 CfBT Education 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. CfBT 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.

CfBT 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.

CfBT 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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