

Capital School, Dubai

British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

Inspection Dates: 20-22 February 2017

Lead Inspector: David Twist

Team: Andrew Clark
Sharona Semlali

Age Group: 3-13 years

Report Published: March 2017

Report Reference Number: 1042



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 three 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

Capital is a small but growing multinational, mixed, non-denominational school for first- and additional language English-speaking pupils from four to 13 years of age. The school opened in 2014 and this is its first inspection. A large majority of pupils speak little or no English when they start in the early years (Foundation Stage classes 1 and 2). Pupils who join in other years have wide a range of English skills. The school offers a UK curriculum modified to reflect the school's international dimension and delivered in English. This begins with early years, followed by the English national curriculum in key stages 1 to 3. There are plans to extend the curriculum to include the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and A level courses, but currently the school has grown to cater for pupils up to Year 8. The school is inclusive and approximately 8% of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are 858 pupils on roll, representative of 88 different nationalities. Indian, Arab and Pakistani pupils form the largest groups. Most pupils are in the foundation and primary phases. The school aims to build the confidence of its pupils, their independence and their respect for each other in order for them to become global citizens. The school currently has full membership of the British Schools of the Middle East (BSME).

Summary of the evidence base used by the inspection team

This BSO inspection was carried out by three Education Development Trust inspectors in conjunction with a team from DSIB. The school was given approximately six months notice of

the inspection. The inspection team was given access to extensive information about the school in advance of the inspection. In total, inspectors visited 28 lessons or parts of lessons and held 23 meetings, including those with staff, parents and carers, and the school's owners. Inspectors also talked with representative groups of pupils. Evidence from the DSIB inspection was also considered. Inspectors observed the daily running of the school and, as well as looking at pupils' work, they examined improvement planning, self evaluation, assessment and tracking systems, and safeguarding procedures.

Inspectors also analysed the responses to parent questionnaires returned to the school, and followed up any issues raised.

Evaluation of the school

Capital is a satisfactory school. It provides a British-style education, using a UK curriculum, while embracing and celebrating its UAE context and culture.

Most pupils arrive with little or no skills in English and few have experienced the school's UK-based approach to learning when they arrive, either in early years or elsewhere. While this can limit pupils' initial levels of attainment, the school, through its stimulating curriculum, is successful in helping pupils to make satisfactory progress and close the gap on their UK counterparts. Outcomes in English and science are average at the end of primary and in Year 8 whereas, in mathematics, attainment is above average. The most able pupils make varied progress and sometimes tackle work that offers them insufficient challenge. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make more modest progress than their peers, particularly in English, when not taught in specialist classes.

Children in the **early years** (Foundation Stage 1 and 2 classes) make good progress overall. From their low starting points, the majority are on track to at least meet, and in a few cases exceed, the expected levels of attainment set out in the early learning goals. Rates of progress vary and are fastest in communication and language, personal and social development and in the mathematical areas of learning.

Children make good progress in developing their early language and communication skills. They learn new vocabulary through songs and their speaking, in particular, develops well as they engage in conversations during their planned play. Children learn to draw letters in the sand and develop their listening skills as they follow storylines or respond to instructions. Lively classroom environments support early language skills with pictures, letters, prompts and interesting materials to encourage children in their early reading and writing experiences.

Children make good progress in mathematics through the early years. They start Foundation Stage 1 with a wide range of skills and experience in shape and number. Children are interested in numbers and curious to find out more as, for instance, when they count dinosaur footprints. Their valuable role play experiences enable them to match objects by their shape and colour in their pretend café, count heartbeats in the hospital and dial numbers on the telephone when they call the police station. Older children count the dinosaurs in their pre-historic small world play and match them accurately to written numbers to 20. They are starting to solve simple mathematical problems and to recognise patterns.

In their science carousel activities, young children develop an awareness of the world around them, as they learn to use their senses when handling different materials. For example, they learn to describe the sight and sounds of an erupting 'volcano' made from simple household

substances. 'It sounds like a rocket taking off' said one girl. Children are beginning to share resources and to consider each other's needs as they work side by side, or share a play space.

Pupils make good progress in **English** in primary and secondary phases of the school, and the majority are currently performing at a level in line with the national curriculum expectations in England. When pupils join the school, a large majority speak English as an additional language and their English skills are well below those typical for their age. As children settle quickly into their routines, they learn to speak more confidently and develop good listening skills. As these pupils move through the school, their additional language needs are not consistently planned for and so some lessons enable them to access their learning better than others. Those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities that affect their language acquisition make the best progress in English when they receive specialist support in the withdrawal groups. Here, their progress is good and is in line with most other groups.

Reading is the next strongest language skill and is promoted well in lessons. For example, in Year 3, pupils find reading extracts from 'Mr. Willy Wonka' great fun, as they search for similes in the text. Younger pupils enjoy going to the school's attractive library to listen to stories and to read the new books. Pupils have a good understanding of phonics and most are acquiring the right strategies to tackle new words. Consequently they are developing good early reading skills.

The school has had a strong focus on developing pupils' writing skills. Pupils have plenty of opportunity to write at length on a regular basis, which helps to build their stamina for writing. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are proud of their written work on display along the corridors. Work samples from the secondary phase show pupils' writing is becoming much more organised. Their use of grammar and syntax is more appropriate to their purpose for writing and their use of punctuation is more accurate. This was seen in pupils' writing in Year 8 about myths and legends. Most pupils take pride in presenting their work well. However, at times pupils' pace of writing is too slow which can prevent their completing useful written tasks in lessons.

Pupils achieve well in **mathematics**. They make good progress through school to reach standards increasingly above expected levels by the end of Year 8. By the end of Years 2 and 6, the majority of pupils are working at the expected level in line with UK curriculum expectations. Standards in mathematics are rising in response to good teaching and a well-planned curriculum in the subject.

Pupils' knowledge and understanding of number are developed well. Pupils acquire a firm understanding of place value and knowledge of relationships between numbers at an early stage of their learning. They are able to build future mathematical knowledge and skills on this secure foundation. For example, by Year 2, pupils can count accurately and rapidly in twos and fours to produce their pictograms. They develop effective strategies to undertake increasingly complex calculations in the four rules of number. Most able pupils in Year 4, for example, have a good knowledge of negative numbers, which they use well in their work on coordinates. Pupils in Year 8 competently apply their computation skills in algebraic equations. Although good overall, pupils' progress is not always consistent. In particular, the most able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by the tasks they are set. Pupils have a good knowledge of shape, space and measure. For example, in Year 3, pupils are able to compare periods of time using digital and analogue clocks and, in Year 8, they calculate accurately the volume of complex shapes using their knowledge of geometry.

Pupils are developing well their reasoning and problem-solving skills. Pupils increasingly apply their skills to real-life problems and through links with other subjects. For example, in Year 8, pupils are able to work to a budget and calculate costs, profit and loss in their enterprise schemes. Work is presented well, which contributes to the accuracy of their calculations.

Attainment in **science** is average in both the primary and secondary phases. Pupils' progress develops from satisfactory in primary to good in secondary, as they begin to focus on specific knowledge and skills from the key stage 3 curriculum.

During the inspection, primary year groups were very engaged by the annual 'science week' as classes and groups rotated frequently through a series of age-related, science-based activities, taught in turns by their teachers. Pupils in Year 2 know how to sort materials for recycling and how this activity relates to preserving the environment. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 combine to successfully explore the features of fair testing and variables in experimentation. They are able to explain the concept of the placebo and share the results of their experiment. Work samples such as Year 4 'floor books' show that pupils are able to work collaboratively as they assemble group project work on classification such as through 'decision trees'.

As pupils enter the secondary phase, they focus more rigorously on specific scientific knowledge and concepts and their rate of progress increases as a result. Year 7 pupils, for example, combine their mathematical skills with science knowledge. They are able to graph the results of investigations such as how many newtons of force are needed to pull a zip. They consider their findings carefully and often assess their own work. 'I got a secure green because I labelled the independent and dependent variables and drew an appropriate scale' explained one pupil. Year 8 pupils pair up to explain the carbon cycle through a chart. They show secure understanding of terms such as 'respiration' and 'combustion', and can explain the relevance of these to global warming and the world today.

In other subjects, pupils make good overall progress. Year 4 pupils develop their bowling skills well in physical education, through giving attention to the key techniques that are demonstrated by teachers during a series of lessons. Pupils in Year 1 gain an early insight into rhythm and timing, and confidently use sticks to tap out the syllable patterns of their names. By Year 8, older pupils are refining their French pronunciation and they confidently present their projects and question their classmates. Pupils develop useful computer skills as they learn to use applications in the information and communication technology (ICT) suite and undertake research and reference work in support of their other subjects. Varied extra-curricular activities include sports and arts clubs and these enrich the pupils' experiences and develop further their talents and interests.

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 satisfactory overall. Strategies to cater for pupils at the early stages of learning English are underdeveloped and are used inconsistently in non-specialist lessons. There is insufficient summative testing to complement the teachers' own assessments of pupils' attainment and progress. Assessment information is not used consistently to guide the range of challenges offered to pupils (see Standard 1 below).
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good (see Standard 2 below).
- 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 the 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 satisfactory. School improvement planning is not tightly focused on the current key priorities. Systems for ensuring that agreed policies are kept up to date and are applied are insufficiently rigorous (see Standard 9 below)

As a result of this inspection, undertaken during February 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 school's curriculum is good. The school follows the early years foundation stage (EYFS) curriculum and then the revised national curriculum for England. All pupils in the primary and lower secondary classes follow a range of core subjects including English, mathematics, science, Arabic and Islamic Studies. The school's values and ethos underpin the curriculum, which has a clear rationale based on the agreed vision to develop pupils as global citizens. The curriculum is designed to recognise and reflect the British nature of the school, the value of learning about Emirati culture and also the school's multicultural context. Pupils are prepared well to enter or re-enter the British education system and their appreciation of British values and heritage permeates the pupils' experience. For example, pupils in key stage 2 study the history of the Tudor kings and queens and compare life in Dubai with that in Britain in their geography work. Pupils learn about the contribution of Florence Nightingale to military nursing and Shakespeare features in the secondary literature programme. The curriculum is broad, balanced, interesting and motivational to pupils. Children in the early years investigate and explore in all required areas of learning. They learn to be curious and motivated through their play and learning activities, both indoors and out.

The curriculum helps pupils to develop respect for the values of others. This is reflected in the displays of their work celebrating the diverse nationalities in the school's community and recognising the importance of mutual tolerance, fairness and empathy. Pupils benefit from personal, social and health education (PSHE) and social studies, in which they explore relationships, healthy living, democracy and social issues. Pupils' understanding of both Britain and their host country is enhanced through consideration of local and national events. For example, they study the development of architecture in Dubai in their work in art and design technology, and the development of British democracy in history and social studies.

The curriculum supports pupils' development of enduring skills and attitudes to prepare them for their future education. For example, they learn to work collaboratively and with persistence towards individual targets in key subjects. However, despite leaders wishing to develop pupils' skills of critical thinking, this is not a consistent feature of pupils' learning. The school's curriculum has an emphasis on technology and enterprise. Older primary pupils and those in the secondary school, for example, participate in projects such as the innovators' club. This enables them to take initiatives and develop an understanding of business and management skills, as for example, when they redesign the entrance foyer to make it more appealing to parents and visitors.

The curriculum is adapted well to pupils' needs in the sunshine room, where withdrawal groups for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are sometimes taught. As with those at the early stages of developing their skills in English, support for these pupils in ordinary classrooms is more varied, in line with teachers' skills and experience of supporting such pupils. Specialist support for pupils who speak English as an additional language is of good quality. Most able pupils are given harder tasks in some lessons but, again, this is not a consistent feature. The work they are set is sometimes too easy, lacks sufficient challenge to fully stretch them, and is not in line with the ability pupils have already demonstrated in assessments.

An increasingly wide range of well-attended extra-curricular activities, such as ballet, yoga, the Roald Dahl club, and basketball, serve to enrich pupils' experiences. The curriculum also extends pupils' learning and personal development through local and residential visits. For example, they have the opportunity to develop their self-reliance and independence by participating in adventures in a desert camp or traveling further afield on skiing trips to Switzerland.

The overall quality of teaching and assessment is satisfactory across the school.

Teachers plan their lessons well for the majority of pupils, in most subjects, and particularly so in English and mathematics. These plans do not consistently cater well enough for those pupils who speak English as an additional language and this sometimes slows their progress. Pupils are not set consistently high levels of challenge. This is especially the case with the most able pupils. These missed opportunities hinder the more rapid development of pupils' critical thinking at times.

In most subjects, teachers have a secure grasp of the concepts and skills that they teach across the school. This helps to deepen pupils' understanding and knowledge in these subjects. Learning objectives are not always focused sharply enough on the specific skills or concepts that teachers want their pupils to achieve. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Teachers demonstrate very good class management skills and lessons are orderly. They hold pupils' attention well and ensure that pupils work well together in pairs or small groups where they learn to share ideas.

Teachers have created bright and supportive learning environments which encourage and celebrate well pupils' achievements. Resources such as wall displays help to support pupils' learning and develop their independence such as in spelling in Year 1 where pupils use the displays to help them spell correctly.

Teachers assess regularly pupils' work and the feedback they give to pupils in their English work, including through their marking, is consistent throughout the different phases. In other subjects, feedback is more sporadic. Teachers implement the feedback and marking policy well in English, which helps pupils to have a clear idea of what they did well and what steps they need to take to improve. In some cases, however, pupils do not respond to the written feedback they have been given and this slows the improvement of pupils' skills. Appropriate benchmarking is in place, allowing the school to compare its pupils' performance with that of their international counterparts. The school uses a cognitive abilities test to accurately establish pupils' ability to manipulate different types of material, so aiding their learning. Some teachers are skilled at using this analysis to guide their lesson planning, but others are not. Similarly, some teachers are skilled at deploying teaching assistants to support pupils' learning, while a few do not maximise the impact of teaching assistants on learning.

The analysis of data is comprehensive and provides information used to monitor the progress of individual pupils through the school's computerised 'mark books' system. The system is new this academic year and is therefore still developing as an effective approach to monitoring progress for all groups of pupils. However, senior managers now have an overview of pupils' progress, and are able to identify where particular problems or gaps appear. They also moderate judgements to help ensure their reliability. The school recognises the need to develop a consistent summative assessment system to support academic judgements.

Most teachers know well the strengths and weaknesses of their pupils. However, they vary in the degree to which they can employ assessment information to fine tune their lessons to meet the needs of all groups of pupils. Verbal feedback during lessons helps pupils to understand their next steps. In addition, pupils are improving their ability to assess their own efforts and those of their peers.

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 good. The school enables pupils to develop personal and social skills and to gain self-confidence from an early age. The youngest children in the early years, for example, learn to get on well together and to help each other. They settle quickly into established routines and tidy after themselves. Pupils throughout school are enthusiastic learners. They are considerate and respectful of others, including their teachers and visitors.

Pupils' behaviour is very good throughout all phases in lessons, when moving around the school and at break times. Pupils develop a very secure understanding of right and wrong and respond well to the positive themes and messages from assemblies and PSHE lessons which often reflect British values and morals. Pupils help to develop the rules for their own behaviour within school and contribute to developing systems of reward, such as the typically British house points system or 'dojo' points. Older pupils consider moral issues in their studies of law and order in historical civilisations such as Ancient Greece. Younger pupils compare the moral or immoral actions of characters in classic myths and fairy stories. Pupils grow in confidence and are supported well in expressing their ideas, questioning others, or responding to others' questions.

They learn to reflect on their own behaviour. Incidents of bullying are rare and pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe and avoid conflict.

The school helps pupils to develop confidence and increasing self-reliance through a culture of warmth and high personal expectations. Pupils settle in quickly and form good relationships with their peers and the adults who care for them. They learn about social values through the PSHE programme and, in the case of secondary pupils, through the social studies' curriculum. Pupils have good opportunities to contribute to the school and the wider community through roles on the school council, the eco council and a number of charitable activities and recycling events. They take care of their environment, classrooms are tidy and orderly, and most take pride in presenting their work well.

Pupils take on a range of responsibilities and several leadership roles during their school career. These include, for example, head boy and girl, roles on the school council and responsibilities in and around school such as buddies and monitors. Older pupils are proud to be chosen to care for younger ones and often work with them. For example, secondary pupils lead science lessons for early years children during science week. Pupils increasingly show initiative, taking responsibility for organising charitable events and contributing to assemblies and anti-bullying campaigns.

The school promotes successfully the appreciation of the rich cultural heritage of the school community. As a result, pupils appreciate the common British and UAE values they share and show respect for each other's cultural heritage. Their understanding engenders a strong sense of belonging, which helps pupils new to the school settle in quickly.

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

The school meets the requirements of this Standard.

The school's provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good. It cares deeply for the wellbeing of all its pupils. The school's policies covering health, safety, behaviour and safeguarding set out clearly the responsibilities of staff to protect pupils. These reflect the expectations of UK schools, and conform to Dubai's regulatory requirements.

Staff develop strong relationships with parents; this helps new pupils to settle in quickly when they first join the school. They continue to enjoy support in a nurturing atmosphere from staff as they move through the school. Pupils say that they 'love the school' and 'will be sorry to leave' when the time comes. They have a school council that helps to make decisions and gives them a voice in the school. Some of these include having a 'buddy bench' where they can sit if they want someone to play with them.

The school's arrangements to promote good behaviour work well. The behaviour policy is clear and effective. Many pupils are motivated by the school's rewards, while others are developing their own self-disciplined approach to school life. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that they have a trusted adult in the school to whom they can turn when they need advice. From the school's recent survey, almost all parents feel that pupils behave well and respect each other. Levels of attendance are above average and most pupils arrive on time and are prepared well to start the working day.

Parents rightly feel that their children are safe in school. Pupils are supervised well both in school and on trips. Adequate systems are in place to check any visitors when they enter the school. Fire drills are undertaken regularly and the site is secure. Security staff are stationed at the entrance gate into the school. There is a full-time, trained nurse in a well-equipped first aid room and a doctor visits four days each month to carry out medical checks and to provide additional advice. Records are kept of any injuries or illness and parents are informed should any occur. The swimming pool has a lifeguard on duty all the time and water quality is checked regularly.

Standard 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets the requirements of this Standard.

The school's owner, through the principal and administrative staff, ensures that all required checks are undertaken to verify that all staff and any volunteers are suitable to work with children and have the right to work in Dubai. Staff recruitment procedures are robust and leaders have established a performance management system which both supports and challenges teachers and identifies good practice.

Standard 5. The premises and accommodation

The school meets the requirements of this Standard.

Accommodation and resources are of good quality and meet all local requirements. The site is adequately maintained and litter free, as pupils take a pride in helping to keep the school tidy. The school is the second to be housed in the current building, which has significant growth capacity and is on a generally spacious site. Classrooms and corridors are spacious, light, well ventilated and well resourced, including interactive whiteboards and other technology. Several areas available outside classrooms and in the open air are used well for imaginative play and to extend pupils' learning opportunities. Interesting and relevant displays of pupils' work along corridors and in classrooms, celebrate achievement and remind pupils of the school's core values. This helps to support and promote pupils' personal, social and cultural development as well as their academic achievement.

There is plenty of outdoor space for the current number of pupils for both informal play and sporting opportunities. There are all-weather pitches, covered play areas and a large indoor swimming pool. The pool is safely maintained and supervised by a qualified lifeguard.

There are good facilities and dedicated rooms and halls throughout for Arabic, French, music, physical education and well-designed areas for practical subjects including science laboratories. The library is spacious and adequately stocked. Dining areas, including the recently opened canteen, are pleasant and used well by pupils. Food is prepared and served hygienically and the school promotes effectively healthy lifestyles, as evidenced by the contents of pupils' lunch boxes. The school is clean and there is a regular programme of maintenance.

The school provides access for pupils who have disabilities and there are sufficient well-maintained washrooms and facilities for all pupils. Fire evacuation practices are recorded

accurately and security at the start and end of the school day is good. There is a full perimeter wall and railings surrounding the school campus. Visitors are welcomed warmly; their arrival is monitored carefully.

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

The school meets the requirements of this Standard.

Parents are pleased with the quality and nature of the information they receive from a number of sources. They find the website useful with its links to curriculum information and contacts. They also find the class dojo informative and regularly use email to contact school for information or to resolve an issue. Most parents find the school approachable and cooperative and report that appointments to see teachers or senior staff are made without delay. In tune with standard UK practice, the class teacher is the first point of reference for parents with queries or concerns. Parents appreciate this, as they feel that the class teacher is the one who knows their child best.

Parents are satisfied that the school keeps them well informed about their children's work. The weekly updates to inform them of current curriculum topics and areas of study are particularly appreciated. Twice yearly reports and termly parent-teacher meetings tell parents what they want to know about their children's progress, their attitudes to work, and the targets towards which they are currently working. Homework web links are found to be useful as parents support their children with home research or project work.

The parents' association is becoming very popular, and representatives of classes across the school make their contribution to mainly social and charity events, including the summer fair, which is run in the style of a traditional British fair and the British-style sports day.

Parents whose children are new to a UK-style curriculum report that they were reassured by the school's welcoming stance. The parents of families who relocate and find the school commute to be a long journey, resign themselves to the problem, as their children refuse to leave Capital. The school's efforts to acclimatise pupils to a UK school context helps ensure that they can successfully enter or re-enter the UK educational system.

Almost all parents who responded to the survey indicate that they are very satisfied with the way the school communicates and responds to their needs.

Standard 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints

The school meets the requirements of this Standard.

Procedures for complaints are clear and are available to parents and others on the school's website. Records indicate that the full formal complaints' procedures have never been used and parents confirm that the ready accessibility of school leaders means that most issues can usually be addressed informally.

Standard 8. The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable.

Standard 9. Leadership and management of the school

The school meets the requirement of this Standard.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.

Over its first three years, the school has grown rapidly. Through the common vision of the owner, principal and senior staff, it offers a safe, happy, effective and inclusive place for pupils to learn. The school rises to the significant challenges of delivering a full English-style curriculum to many pupils who, on entry, have limited skills in English and who have not previously had to show such a level of independence and autonomy in their learning.

Leadership roles are relatively recently established, with only a few members of the senior and middle leadership tiers in post for more than a year. They are afforded the scope to lead initiatives that are beneficial to the pupils, such as the integration of UAE social studies into the curriculum, which makes it more relevant. The principal has established a good balance between trust and oversight and, as a result, these leaders, along with their teaching colleagues, have high morale. Leaders are ambitious for the school, enthusiastic, hardworking and show good capacity for further school improvement. Even so, their contributions lack sufficient detail in the areas of clear prioritisation and the setting out of rigorous development processes. Currently, it is unclear what are the commonly agreed whole-school goals or what staff hope to see when these are achieved. The school is coming to the end of its initial four-year plan, which has served it well, but does not precisely reflect the school's current development needs. The newly promoted deputy justifies fully the confidence shown in her by the principal but, currently, has too many responsibilities to discharge. Subject leaders plan for the improvement of their areas, but while some elements are clear and well focused, others are too broad and so it is harder to see what strategy will be used to achieve them. In some cases, once policies and procedures have been drawn up, it is assumed that they will be self sustaining. However, currently there is not a regular oversight of their continuing implementation to ensure that systems are sufficiently robust.

Leaders at all levels, including governors, are vigilant to ensure that any discrimination or intolerance is tackled immediately and that equality is promoted effectively. The slogan on the main stairwell 'Diversity is the only thing we have in common' demonstrates the school's commitment to these British values. Safeguarding procedures are in place. Pupils know whom to approach if they have concerns and staff have been trained to be aware of potential safeguarding issues as part of their induction programme.

The early years is managed well by the phase leader. She is making headway in developing a teaching team. Many of these staff have had limited early years experience prior to their current appointment, and under the phase leader's guidance, are adjusting well to the expectations of a typical UK curriculum for this age group. For example, the early years leader has ensured that children undertake a wider range of mathematical experiences than was previously the case.

The school uses both internal teacher assessments and external benchmarks to help in its self evaluation. All key staff contribute to the picture. Moderation activities help teachers to be more confident in the accuracy of their assessments. The leadership has recently developed a school-wide system to track pupils' progress which is in tune with the latest UK curriculum requirements. Overall, evaluations of the school's practice have been optimistic, and are not yet realistically linked to the Standards for British Schools Overseas accreditation.

The board of governors, chaired by the owner, is representative of most of the school's stakeholders and there is a clear separation of roles from that of the principal who is charged with all academic decisions. The board receives regular reports of the school's performance. Currently, the principal is only held to account through an informal approach to appraisal, unlike the more rigorous performance management system through which teachers are supported and challenged. Oversight of the school's performance is developing with the help of an external educationalist but the board does not have many experiences of observing the school at work. Funding for justified school priorities is approved regularly.

Recruitment and induction of staff are strengths of the school. Many are UK trained and qualified, enabling them to teach a British-style curriculum with confidence. Although some are currently working in different phases from those they have experienced previously, their teaching skills are enabling them to adjust quickly to their pupils' age-related expectations. Parents confirm their satisfaction with the school's leadership and management and their appreciation of the way their children have been assimilated into what, for many, is a new curriculum experience. One father, whose child had joined the school directly from the UK, said 'My child just fitted straight in.'

Compliance with regulatory requirements

Capital School 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. Raise attainment in English, mathematics and science by:
 - a) making more consistent and regular use of performance data, including summative testing, to develop further the match between pupils' demonstrated ability and the challenges they are offered in lessons
 - b) developing further teachers' strategies for promoting English language skills for those pupils who speak English as an additional language
 - c) increasing the proportion of high quality teaching.

2. Introduce a more rigorous and focused structure both to school improvement planning and to the implementation and updating of agreed policies and procedures.

Summary of inspection judgements

Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
-------------	------	--------------	------------

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		✓		
---	--	---	--	--

The quality of provision for boarding

N/A				
------------	--	--	--	--

Leadership and management

Overall effectiveness of leadership and management			✓	
---	--	--	---	--

School details

Name of school	Capital School
Type of school	Private
Date school opened	2014
Age range of pupils	3 to 13 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time)	858
Number on roll (part-time)	0
Annual fees (day pupils)	29,200 AED-48,600 AED
Annual fees (boarders)	N/A
Address of school	PO BOX 236498 Baghdad Street Al Qusais Dubai
Telephone number	00971 4 2988776
Email address	info@capitalschooluae.com
Headteacher	William Johnston
Proprietor	Adel Al Safar

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.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Education Development Trust
16-18 Duke Street
Reading
RG1 4RU
UK

Report reference no: 1042