

# Repton School Dubai

## British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

**2-5 March 2015**

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**Age Group: 3-18  
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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 in England and 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 DSIB (Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau). 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 KHDA (Knowledge and Human Development Authority) in Dubai.

### **Key for inspection grades**

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>

### **Proportions used in the report**

97–100% Vast/overwhelming majority or almost all

80–96% Very large majority, most

65–79% 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**

Repton is a large, international, academically selective, fee-paying school, situated in the Nad Al Sheba district of Dubai and owned by Evolvence Knowledge Investments. Opened in 2007, it has an affiliation to Repton School in the UK. There are 2202 students on roll, from ages three to 18, and 69 students are boarders. The school serves a multi-national community of which just under half are British nationals with UAE students the next largest group. Forty per cent of students are from countries where English is spoken as an additional language. The majority of pupils are from advantaged socio-economic backgrounds with supportive parents, but most classes contain a range of abilities. Approximately 5% of pupils are provided with additional learning support.

The school aims to prepare pupils for adulthood both personally and academically through pursuit of 'The Ten Values'. It has a commitment to British-based learning,

enabling families to leave and return to the UK without disruption to their children's education. The school follows the English National Curriculum and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) programme, while taking account of its UAE context. Post-16 students may take International Baccalaureate (IB) examinations.

Annual pupil turnover is in line with schools in similar contexts, and most students move on to further education. The school is a member of the Council of International Schools (CIS) and undergoes quality assurance visits from Repton International.

### **Summary of the evidence base used by the inspection team**

The inspection was undertaken by three inspectors from CfBT Education Trust alongside eight colleagues from DSIB who contributed to a single evidence base. Inspectors visited 129 lessons, observed approximately 100 teachers, and held 42 meetings with governors, staff and parents and carers. They talked with groups of pupils and observed their work. Inspectors also examined the school's self-evaluation, improvement planning, assessment and tracking systems and its boarding and safeguarding provision. They also studied outcomes of school surveys and questionnaires returned by parents, teachers and pupils and followed up on any substantial issues they raised.

### **Evaluation of the school**

Repton provides an outstanding quality of education for its pupils, marrying high quality British-style education with an awareness of its UAE context and a celebration of the international nature of the school community.

Pupils' overall attainment in key subjects is very high, and almost all make excellent progress from their entry to school. Staffing to support pupils with additional learning needs is limited. These pupils make good progress in their withdrawal sessions, but there is little support provided for mainstream teachers to fully cater for their needs.

A steadily increasing number of post-16 students are taking IB courses, including diploma programmes at the higher level. Results have improved significantly and standards compare very favourably with those reached in British independent or maintained schools.

From broadly typical starting points, children in early years make rapid progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals. By the time they complete their Reception Year, most have made great strides and are exceeding expected standards in the majority of learning areas. Almost all children settle quickly into the Nursery environment, which is both welcoming and stimulating.

Children arrive at school with a range of personal and social skills. The established routines and frequent opportunities to play together in constructive and well-focused activities help build their self-confidence and independence. Children sitting in groups in the Tuesday 'garden play' session, talk enthusiastically with friends about their achievements as they learn to share, take turns and be aware of others' needs. 'I've put 10 pairs of socks together!' was a typically proud statement as children learned to match up pattern, shape and colour.

Physical skills improve at a steady rate as children enjoy using the large play equipment. Best progress however, is made when adults encourage the children to challenge themselves, such as when they walk, or when they balance on a circular beam on one leg. Manipulative skills are rapidly developed as they engage in practical tasks such as using tweezers to pick up 'jewels' from a tray of soil in their mini-treasure hunt.

By Reception, most children are articulate and talk excitedly about stories they enjoy. They recognise characters and understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Because phonic skills have been carefully built in the Nursery, children tackle new words confidently in their early reading. They use their phonic awareness in their writing as they begin to put together simple sentences. In work on spiders for example, they were delighted to record that 'sum can spit'. Children in both Nursery and Reception develop excellent understanding of basic scientific aspects of their world. They learn at first hand about healthy eating and different parts of the body and, in Reception, learning begins to introduce particular study skills, such as the importance of careful observation as they plant seeds, observe their growth and measure the resulting plants.

In mathematics work, Nursery children make excellent progress in ordering numbers, and most count backwards and forwards with confidence. Reception children show excellent mental agility, as they double simple numbers and count in steps. Activities, such as using real money to buy bread and working out their change in pairs, are very effective in developing skills of mental calculation.

Attainment is above average and progress is good in English for the older students and outstanding in all other areas of the school. In the earliest primary years, pupils speak freely, and systematic teaching of phonics leads to a love of reading. By Year 1, they sound out short words and make excellent progress in listening and speaking. Year 3 pupils expand their sentences using connectives and adjectives and, by Year 5, can write clear sets of instructions in chronological order. By the end of the phase, pupils have all the necessary skills to make rapid further progress.

In the lower years of secondary school, pupils learn to express their thoughts confidently in groups and individually. They recognise and understand the effects of figurative language and can explain articulately the meaning of poetry. They read a wide variety of culturally diverse and often demanding texts and demonstrate understanding both orally and in writing. They work successfully at improving the structure, content and accuracy of their essays.

By Year 11, many pupils write sustained vivid narrative and well-structured, convincing arguments. They assess each other's work against set criteria and justify their decisions when challenged. They read sophisticated works such as Shakespeare's plays and Hughes' poetry and write perceptive literature essays discussing the development of character and stagecraft. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make particularly good progress, approaching the same work as other pupils but with individualised help from specialised teachers.

IB students tackle difficult texts, which require deep thought. They can understand the poetry of Pablo Neruda, for example, and can discuss the philosophy of war in relation to different times and cultures. Students are prepared to take risks in expressing their views and demonstrate skilled reflection, analysis and critical thinking. Most students can write coherent and thoughtful language and literature essays with varying degrees of accuracy.

In mathematics, almost all pupils make excellent progress from Year 1 through to post-16 level. Attainment is above average for the oldest students and very high elsewhere. In lower primary classes, pupils establish strong numeracy skills, learning to subtract or multiply in a variety of ways in order to establish a full understanding of the process. As Year 2 pupils set out marshmallows in 'arrays' of rows and columns, they learn a speedy way to find the totals by multiplying one by the other, even though a few were eaten in the process!

In the 'prep' department of Years 5 and 6, pupils are taught in their sets by specialists. Expectations are high, albeit not quite high enough on occasions for the few exceptional mathematicians in the upper classes. Most pupils work competently on reflections and translations in their geometry lessons, checking their accuracy with mirrors. They can also find missing dimensions from cuboids when given their volume, showing an understanding of basic formulae. Half-year testing shows that over three quarters of the Year 6 cohort have already achieved a standard that is the equivalent of exceeding UK national expectations and projections for the end of year indicate that most pupils will be significantly beyond this.

Secondary pupils have a very good grounding in key mathematical skills, and the trend of presenting challenging work continues. Pupils in Year 7 explore probability and the concept of mutual exclusion and Year 8 pupils demonstrate a thorough grounding in geometry as they revisit properties of angles and parallel lines. By Year 11, pupils are tackling complex mathematical themes such as circle theorem as they work on their revision in preparation for their IGCSE examinations. Results here have steadily risen to the point where they significantly outperform the UK and world averages, as they do for post-16 students on the IB programme. Here, the school is aiming to increase the proportion taking the higher-level course, to raise attainment levels even further.

Attainment in science is very high and progress is outstanding in primary and above average in both secondary and post-16 phases. Primary pupils rapidly develop subject-specific language, for instance, about fossils and rock types. By Year 6, they understand the range of methods of separation, including decanting. Seventy-eight per cent of pupils exceed the expected standard by the end of Year 6, confirming the outstanding progress and very high attainment observed in lessons.

By the end of the secondary phase, pupils have well-developed skills in designing experiments and drawing conclusions from their observations and data. In Year 11 they make good progress in understanding cations and anions and in applying the concept that opposites attract in electrolysis. They can identify the contents of an

ionic compound using appropriate scientific terms. Over the past three years, attainment in the sciences at IGCSE has shown an upward trend. In 2014 IGCSE results indicate that, for the separate sciences, 83% of Biology, 57% of Chemistry and 61% of Physics students attained A\*-B grades. For the dual science award 55% of the students achieved grades A\*-B. These outcomes confirm pupils' above average attainment compared to UK national averages.

In the post-16 phase, students are able to dissect owl pellets, with most identifying many of the bones, through effective research and referencing skills. They explain, at a sophisticated level, how to classify vertebrates and how classification techniques are useful to scientists. Year 13 chemistry students develop further competence in designing investigations into increasingly challenging concepts. The most able students raise relevant questions in physics, though some are not always as forthcoming. Most have good knowledge and understanding of renewable energy. In 2014, students in the IB Diploma Programme achieved an above average 56% pass-rate at level 5 and above in the sciences.

Pupils' strengths in science include their ability to understand the relationship between scientific concepts and the real world. A striking example was their wonder at the film clip, from a NASA moon landing, of a feather and a hammer being dropped from the same height. This confirmed to pupils the concept of variable gravity. Pupils are notably adept at designing and carrying out experiments, often correctly predicting results, and using the results to confirm their hypotheses. They have a real interest in science, as reflected by their industry in lessons.

Inspectors observed a number of other subjects, including modern foreign languages, physical education, psychology, drama, history and geography. Standards and progress here reflected those seen in the key subjects above.

The quality of education provided by the school is outstanding. The curriculum and the standards of teaching are outstanding and assessment is outstanding in early years and good elsewhere (see Standard 1 below).

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding (see Standard 2 below).

The welfare, health and safety of the pupils are outstanding (see Standard 3 below).

The standard for the suitability of the proprietor and staff is met (see Standard 4 below).

The premises and accommodation are outstanding in quality although one element remains unfinished (see Standard 5 below).

There is good information for parents on academic progress and pastoral welfare, although parents are given limited insight into major strategic developments. They are unable to contribute fully to pupils' learning experiences in school (see Standard 6 below).



The school's procedures for handling complaints are effective and fully meet the standards (see Standard 7 below).

The quality of provision for boarding is good. However, girls do not enjoy the same quality of boarding experience as that of boys.

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding overall. The school demonstrates an excellent capacity to improve. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate. Senior staff communicate a common aspirational vision and have overseen significant improvement. They have made good appointments in newly structured middle management positions, and these are paying dividends (see Standard 9 below).

**As a result of this inspection, undertaken during March 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 quality of the curriculum is outstanding. The new English National Curriculum is in place in the primary school and recently appointed coordinators plan for a highly effective programme of learning for pupils of that age. The curriculum throughout the school is broad and balanced and enables pupils to benefit from a wide range of experiences. Pupils study sciences and mathematics throughout their time in school and all subjects are taught in English. High-quality facilities enable pupils to benefit from artistic, technological and physical education; pupils follow courses in humanities and all can study foreign languages, including Arabic. There is specialist teaching in some subjects in Years 5 and 6 and throughout the secondary school.

Pupils follow examination courses that enable them to gain access to British and international schools. For example, pupils can sit the Common Entrance examination thus preparing them for acceptance at a range of day and boarding schools in the UK. The ICGSE examinations taken in Year 11, followed by the International Baccalaureate examinations in Year 13, facilitate pupils' entrance to schools and universities in the UK and internationally.

The courses that pupils follow are well tailored to their needs. Lessons are prepared so that work meets the requirements of all pupils, stretching the able and supporting those who need additional help. Pupils learning English as an additional language have personalised teaching and support of a very high quality. Provision is also good for pupils with special educational needs, although the limited staffing, being parent funded, is focused upon individual support. There is little time to offer guidance to class teachers on how they too may offer help. With the support available, all pupils are enabled to make at least good progress in acquiring the skills of literacy and numeracy.



Personal, social, health and citizenship education is embedded in the curriculum. All pupils follow a planned programme that gives them an understanding of relevant issues. For example, younger pupils learn about themselves and how to make and keep friends while older ones consider such issues as addiction, budgeting and global poverty. High-quality careers' counselling enables students to make wise choices when choosing subjects and, later, when considering options for university study. In addition, visits from university speakers widen students' appreciation of what is available and best for them.

An extensive range of extra-curricular activities, including field trips, camping expeditions, dramatic and musical productions and many competitions, supplements the curriculum. Students attend conferences abroad and there are many opportunities for travel related to the curriculum and for pleasure such as skiing trips. The facilities and opportunities for sport are outstanding, offering chances for competition, comradeship and enjoyment. The school fields many teams and sports tours, often involving residential stays, which significantly enrich the provision.

The IB courses available in the sixth form challenge students to develop their research skills, understand the theory of knowledge, and to write extended essays. Students also show initiative by, for example, volunteering in the community. The skills acquired by IB students and the opportunities afforded for leadership in roles such as prefect, house captain and sports leader, enable students to leave the school excellently prepared for adult life and its responsibilities.

The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and demonstrate a very clear understanding of effective ways in which to help pupils and children learn. This is especially valuable in helping to explain difficult concepts in mathematics and science and generates lively debates in English. Strong teaching makes a significant contribution to the outstanding progress made by pupils and children.

Lessons are very well planned with a wide variety of interesting tasks that engage pupils' interest and contribute to the stimulating and inspiring learning environment. Teachers are highly skilled in their use of questions and are very successful in enabling students to think deeply with a desire to find out more. This was observed in a Year 9 class studying the poetry of Ted Hughes. Relationships between teachers and pupils and among pupils themselves add to the positive learning ethos in classes. Pupils share their views and listen carefully to each other and are able to assess each other's work confidently and sympathetically in a mature and constructive manner.

Classrooms are very well organised and in almost all lessons learning activities are well matched to the needs of individual pupils. Teachers' expectations are high with

tasks and activities supporting and challenging students. This was seen in a Year 12 class where students gave high level individual oral commentaries on King Lear. A notable feature of the teaching is the way teachers prompt pupils to make links to the real world. Examples of this are seen in most lessons and exemplified in a Year 10 biology lesson on hydroponics. Pupils had to think through the design of the experiment to assess the best of a number of soil types found in the UAE, where hydroponics is a major way of growing vegetables. Teachers engender strong interest in their subjects, so much so that pupils readily ask questions and engage in lively discussions on the topic.

The large majority of pupils enjoy their learning. They have excellent attitudes and are highly enthusiastic participants in activities, such as reading out loud Charlie and the Chocolate Factory in Year 3. Pupils are able to focus on tasks and follow instructions when appropriate. They enthusiastically take responsibility for their learning and are able to work independently from an early age. Across the school, pupils cooperate and collaborate well, completing tasks both within groups or when working individually on a task, as seen in the work on integration using Chain Rule mathematics in Year 12. Pupils are responsible and discuss ideas sensibly, ask questions and listen to the views of others. Pupils confidently apply their skills, knowledge and understanding in different contexts. They enjoy solving problems and develop their critical thinking skills from an early age so that, by Year 13, they can research topics such as 'Is there such a concept as absolute truth?' While there is evidence in essays and workbooks of such research, inspectors saw little evidence of pupils using computers or tablets for research in lessons.

Overall, assessment is good; it is outstanding in the early years. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses and use this information in many ways. They are adept at pitching questions at the right level for individual pupils and have the confidence to wait for a particular pupil's answer rather than defer to someone with their hand up. Teachers work with leaders to identify any potential underachievement early and provide the necessary interventions to keep pupils on track. In almost all respects, assessment is used well to target work at just the right level. Occasionally, this high-quality assessment is not used well enough, particularly in the secondary phase, to identify trends in the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Allied to this is the fact, notably in the primary phase, that the special educational needs coordinator does not have sufficient time to work with class teachers on the appropriate support for pupils with these needs. Assessment in class is strong. Peer and self-assessment are regularly used so that pupils can understand how to improve their work. Assessment in books is not so strong, mainly because, while teachers mark work regularly, they do not regularly give sufficient guidance on how a piece of work may be improved. Assessment is successfully used across the school to adapt the curriculum and refine teaching strategies.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding. From their earliest years, pupils and teachers interact in a mutually respectful manner. The trust and confidence that this engenders enables pupils to gain self-assurance. Musical concerts, dramatic productions and the many opportunities for self-expression, in and out of the classroom, enable pupils to conduct themselves with poise and confidence. The atmosphere in the cafeteria and the playground is cordial and relaxed and pupils' behaviour is friendly and sociable.

Pupils of all ages understand the reasons for the school rules and abide by them. Sanctions are used but, more often, pupils demonstrate pride in the school by striving for house points. The school's behaviour policy is underpinned by the 10 Repton values to which the school community, as a whole, subscribes. There are many examples of the way in which pupils identify with this community ethos, not least in their readiness to support charities. Funds are raised for Syrian refugees, young pupils make and sell ribbons for cancer care and support the Dubai charity, Big Heart.

The cohesive nature of the school results, in a large part, from the way in which pupils are given a voice in the life of the school. From their earliest years, pupils' views are canvassed and their responses are valued. Pupils vote for class representatives, sports captains, house captains and prefects. All these roles offer opportunities for leadership. The house system, in addition, fosters community spirit and healthy competition. The election processes give pupils the opportunity to put themselves forward for office and to experience democracy in action.

Although the school benefits greatly from its links with Repton School, UK, it nevertheless is characterised by a strong international identity. There are over 60 nationalities in the school who mix together in a spirit of friendship and harmony. Celebrations such as International Day, organised by the IB students, are vibrant occasions when pupils can showcase their national dress and cultural traditions and demonstrate pride in their heritage. Pupils also learn about the local culture and show their appreciation of UAE traditions and values with lively National Day celebrations.

Many pupils take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and enjoy the expeditions that take place both locally and, for example, in Thailand. Younger pupils, also, enjoy camping trips that are both fun and packed with opportunities to develop attributes such as resilience and self-reliance. The service elements of the Award give pupils the chance to help others, as does the 'Helping Hands' initiative, where, for example, pupils raise funds to provide boxes of gifts for local people. The Community Action and Service programme encourages pupils to take the initiative in serving others. Accordingly, some older students help school workers to improve their English while some volunteer to help younger pupils: a Russian student helps younger ones with English and science activities.

In spite of its strong international element, the school is characteristically British. Sport plays a major role in school life and there are many sports in which pupils may participate, as well as competitive teams to join. Lessons are delivered in English and pupils absorb British values when learning of Britain's history; younger pupils learn about medieval castles, monasteries and chivalry while older ones study the Tudor period and the First World War. The library is well stocked with English fiction and pupils read a wide variety of English texts from Michael Morpugo to Hardy and Shakespeare. The topic of Human Rights is explored in the Prep School as part of a UNICEF project and for older pupils as part of the personal, social, health and citizenship education programme. British celebrations like Pancake Day provide light entertainment while Remembrance Day is always taken seriously and marked by a special assembly.

Attendance is acceptable. Most pupils attend well and are punctual, but despite the school's best efforts, a very small minority of families bring the average down.

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

The quality of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding. The high quality of academic support and pastoral care enjoyed by each pupil is a major contributor to their personal development. Systems of care have been carefully developed and are appropriate to each age group. In early years to Year 6, form teachers are the lynchpin, carefully monitoring the progress of their form members and liaising with the year head, as necessary. The monitoring of care by the year heads, the phase leaders and the head of pastoral is very effective. It ensures issues are addressed and support given, both to form teachers and parents as appropriate. Most pupils settle into school extremely well. In Years 7 to 13, a pupil's tutor assumes the role of form tutor. Pupils are in one of eight houses and the tutors in each house regularly meet with the housemistress or housemaster to ensure pupils' needs are met. The deputy head, of pastoral, leads the housemaster-housemistress team and has a strong overview of the care of each pupil. Complementing these systems of care is the awareness by all staff of the abilities, skills and needs of each pupil and the teachers' high level of concern for all pupils.

The recording of all pupil information is comprehensive. It is used to track pupils' development in all aspects of their education and by staff in any discussions with parents. Teacher support of pupils is evident throughout the school, often in informal meetings or conversations in the many social areas where pupils relax. This high level of care is a major contributor to the success and progress of the pupils and is reflected in the high quality of pupils' behaviour throughout the school. The team of a doctor and four nurses offers excellent medical care in two surgeries. As well as dealing with accidents and injuries, pupils' medical details and the issuing of medication are fully recorded. Pupils have regular medical assessments, enabling their health to be tracked and intervention offered as necessary. This regime

supports the school's healthy living programme, as does the medical team's involvement in the personal, social, health and citizenship programme.

The school makes pupils' safety a high priority. Risk assessments for all activities, including local and international expeditions, are thorough and implemented effectively. Opportunities for pupils to have educational experiences beyond the boundaries of the school are many, and records confirm that they are planned in detail. All potential risks are identified and the required communications with parents are made and fully logged. Procedures for evacuation are regularly practised and recorded, including fire practices for boarders. Pupil transport is very well managed with high levels of staff supervision.

Child protection is a high priority for the school and conforms to the best of British practice as well as that in Dubai. Training is given as part of staff induction, and regularly updated. The pastoral team of four trained child protection staff works closely together in this area. Staff know they can approach members of this team with any concerns and all those asked demonstrated an awareness of correct disclosure procedures. Pupils report that there is a strong anti-bullying culture in the school, and the serious-sanctions record confirmed that bullying is rare with only one entry this year. The school has fully appropriate provision for disabled pupils.

#### **Standard 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff**

The Board, working through the headteacher and administrative staff ensures that all necessary checks are undertaken to confirm that staff are both suitable to work with children, and have the right to work in Dubai. The school fully meets the Standard.

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

The excellent premises and accommodation fully meet the requirements of the Standard and make a strong contribution to pupils' learning and progress. The relatively new buildings are well maintained and litter free and pupils clearly take a pride in their school. Classrooms are spacious and well proportioned and provide a very high overall standard of learning environment. High-quality displays of pupils' work in classes celebrate their achievements and offer prompts and guidance on aspects such as writing skills and mathematical processes. Corridor displays feature pupils' accounts of sports' matches or activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh camping experience. Younger pupils' classes, in particular, are consistently stimulating in their provision of exciting play-based learning environments, such as 'Down on the Farm'. The excellent use of outdoor areas enables early years children to fully explore more lively or messy learning activities.

The school is well equipped with specialist sports facilities, which have been recently improved with the opening of a junior swimming pool and the renewal of the artificial games pitch. Science laboratories and design technology workshops have excellent resources and there are well-equipped information and communication technology rooms for two different operating platforms. However, the provision of mobile

technology, such as tablets, for use in lessons, has been delayed by the lack of adequate broadband provision and ancillary equipment to support their use. Library facilities have been recently expanded and areas such as the new IB common room offer pupils excellent space for study and socialising. The completion of the recently built performing arts centre has been significantly delayed. While this does not prevent the school offering good learning experiences in drama and music, accommodation for these is adequate rather than excellent.

The school buildings offer safe access to all levels for all pupils and there are very effective systems in place to ensure the security of the school site.

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

There is good provision of information for parents and carers on both academic and pastoral matters through a variety of channels. Details of day-to-day procedures and expectations are set out clearly in the parent handbooks. The recently introduced 'communicator app' has been downloaded by almost all parents and makes the communication of information such as diary events, parent meetings, or pupils' achievements regular and efficient. Parents report that they appreciate the ability to filter the content from such a busy school to their own children's year groups, thus avoiding 'information overload'. The 'Did you know that ...' section offers a chance for parents to discover what pupils have achieved such as a Go Karting national championship for a senior boy. Events such as the commemoration of Remembrance Day are extended to all. The parents' portal offers an opportunity to access what their children are currently studying and to keep abreast of their performance. Individual work diaries are also used regularly for two-way communication between home and school.

Parents are kept well informed of pupils' academic progress through twice-yearly comprehensive reports. Most can be clearly understood, but the junior version lacks a key to explain the numerical grading, which puzzles some parents. While parent-teacher interviews are necessarily brief, parents feel that they have ample opportunity to consult with teachers on any aspect of their children's progress or welfare and they view the staff as very approachable. Most feel that the school is responsive to any reasonable approaches.

Parents feel that while they have effective channels through which they can raise individual issues or requests with the school, there is little opportunity to offer their views on its strategic direction or on major development initiatives. There has been frustration at the lack of information from the board on the long overdue opening date of the partially completed performing arts centre, for example. There are parent year-group representatives in place but they are not seen as a conduit for views on major decisions. A few parents have contributed to pupils' learning in school, or to events such as musicals, but this has typically been through their own initiative rather than by school invitation.



### **Standard 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints**

The school meets all requirements of the Standard. Complaints' procedures are comprehensive and made available to parents through both the departmental handbooks and the parents' portal. Responses to queries are promised within 24 hours. In practice, the formal procedures are rarely used and parents confirm that most issues are usually resolved informally.

### **Standard 8. The quality of provision for boarding**

The school meets all requirements of the BSO Standard. Provision for boarders is good and makes a significant contribution to their personal development. It at least meets the national minimum standards for boarding that apply in the UK.

Boy boarders live in a purpose-built boarding house in the grounds of the school, while girl boarders live in two villas approximately 20 minutes' drive from the school. The boarding accommodation is of good quality with a higher level of personalisation by the girls as opposed to the boys. The girls, however, do not enjoy the same standard of accommodation as the boys. They share bedrooms in Year 11 and upwards while boys have single en suite study bedrooms. Girls are not located in one building and, when back at the villas, do not have immediate access to the school's facilities unlike the boys.

The standard of care is excellent. Boarders are very well known by the boarding staff who support their individual needs and offer them encouragement and challenge in all areas of their lives. This level of care ensures boarders' physical safety, including a high level of safeguarding. The location of the girls' villas, in a gated community, gives girl boarders an appropriately safe environment. Boarders confirm that they enjoy harmonious relationships with each other and that there is no bullying. Boys naturally refer to their community as 'like brothers' and the girls clearly enjoy their community life together.

All boarders say how much they enjoy their activities. These include the school's extra-curricular programme, which boarders follow three times a week, the house activities of sports, cookery and in house table-tennis tournaments. There are also regular trips to the Dubai Malls for recreation and skiing and to other centres in Dubai for water sports and cultural experiences. Boarding staff ensure that girls' interests are met by arranging, for instance, access to tennis coaching in the villa community. In all boarder activities, health and safety procedures are closely monitored.

Boarders enjoy good communications with their families and friends by telephone and computer access. Boarding staff keep in contact with parents and guardians by similar conduits and ensure they are informed about their children's lives as boarders. The House Handbooks give parents and boarders clear and detailed information about boarding life at the school.

The management of boarding is good. Boarding staff are well trained; three have gained the Boarding Schools' Association (UK) Certificate of Professional Practice in Boarding Education. The Boarding Staff Handbook reflects and supports the good management. Staff and boarders enjoy good relationships with each other, reflected, for instance, in the discussions at mealtimes.

### **Standard 9. Leadership and management of the school**

The headteacher and senior staff promote a clear and focused vision for the future development of the school. Central to this has been the determination to maintain continued improvement in pupils' performance, while retaining the strong sense of pastoral care that permeates the school. This has been pivotal to the school's success. It is the major reason why pupils enjoy their education and why most parents are pleased with what the school offers. The headteacher has driven this development with determination through a period which has seen the challenges associated with a broadened intake. Between them, the headteacher and board make sure that all safeguarding and equality of opportunity regulations are met and that any discrimination is tackled. Senior leaders have ensured that Repton has retained a balance of the school's British character on the one hand and its international flavour in a UAE context on the other. The school's 'ten values' have underpinned the unity of vision that staff both display and describe. The long-standing issue of high staff turnover appears to have been halted as leaders have aimed to recruit teachers with potential to develop their careers at Repton. Parents are pleased by this development but understandably reserve judgement until a more permanent pattern has been established.

Middle managers are very effective. The Board and senior staff have made some strong appointments with very specific roles. Four new curriculum coordinators, for example, are bringing additional continuity and oversight to pupils' curriculum experience as they move through the school. Subject phase leaders have a good understanding of their areas and their analysis of performance enables them to direct improvements effectively. Overall, the leadership at all levels shows an excellent capacity for improvement.

Repton is a reflective school and self-evaluation is accurate and leads to action through well-constructed improvement plans. Systems for appraising staff are robust and while not every request for professional development can be accommodated, there has been an effective drive to link staff training with their individual needs. Staff have shown themselves to be responsive to support from their peers and this maximises the value of the exemplary teaching skills which many possess.

Governance is good in most respects. The Board has a strong range of expertise. The education sub-committee is led by a representative of Repton UK and it separates its role from the day-to-day business of running the school. Regular evaluations under the auspices of the partnership school ensure that sufficient quality is maintained. Governors hold the school to account through careful analysis of its standards and the headteacher is set clear key performance indicators to meet. Long-term strategic planning has enabled the school to provide excellent accommodation and very high quality resources in many areas. However, there is a

need for better broadband provision to fully support study skills, and the internal completion of the performing arts centre is long overdue. There is more to be done to improve communication between governance and parents on matters of strategic importance to the school.

Leadership of the early years department is outstanding. It ensures an extremely rich and varied curriculum, centred around activities that both engage and interest children and lead to highly effective learning. The consistency of the high quality learning environment seen across both Nursery and Reception classes is testament to the high expectations so clearly communicated by the leadership.

### **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

Repton School, Dubai 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 the level of parental involvement in the development of the school by:
  - ensuring that parental views are effectively canvassed by the school's strategic leadership and governance
  - encouraging parents to contribute to the pupils' learning experiences in school.
2. Provide adequate staffing to further support the progress of pupils with additional learning needs.
3. In its long-term strategic plan, the school should aim to offer girls the same quality of boarding experience as that enjoyed by the boys.

## 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

The quality of provision for boarding		√		
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### Leadership and management

Overall effectiveness of leadership and management	√			
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**School details**

<b>Name of school</b>	Repton School
<b>Type of school</b>	Independent Boarding School
<b>Date school opened</b>	May 2007
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 - 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	2202
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	47,599 AED (Nursery) to 95,199 AED (Year 13)
<b>Annual fees (boarders)</b>	(weekly boarders) 120,979 AED (Year 7) to 155,699 DHS (Year 13)
	(full boarders) 126,479 DHS (Year 7) to 161,199 DHS (Year 13)
<b>Address of school</b>	Nad Al Sheba 3 PO Box 300331 Dubai United Arab Emirates
<b>Telephone number</b>	00971 4 426 9393
<b>Email address</b>	headmasterspa@reptondubai.org
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Jonathan Hughes – D'Aeth
<b>Proprietor</b>	Evolve Knowledge Investments (EKI)

## **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. CfBT Education Trust has been successful in bidding for the recent tender to manage inspection services on behalf of the office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted). CfBT is currently responsible for delivering inspection services in schools (both maintained and independent), the learning and skills sector and initial training education.

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