



Inspection report

Al Basma British School

Abu Dhabi

United Arab Emirates

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Inspection number	20251020

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1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education (DfE) has put in place a voluntary scheme for the inspection of British schools overseas (BSO), whereby schools are inspected against a common set of standards that BSO can choose to adopt.

The inspection and this report follow the DfE schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas.

The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's management on the overall effectiveness of the school, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent schools in the United Kingdom. The inspection and report will cover the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation; the school's complaints procedures; and leadership and management. If appropriate, there is a separate section on the quality of boarding provision. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for pupils and pupils' achievements.

This inspection was completed by Penta International. Penta International is approved by the British government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the DfE on the extent to which schools meet the standards for BSO.

During the inspection visit, 53 lesson observations took place. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were seen in lessons, and discussions were held with the staff, parents and informally with students. The inspection took place over three days.

The lead inspector was Ciprian Ghişa. The team members were Sarah Anneke Bennett, Albertha Huyser, Umber Janjua, Misbah Mohiuddin, and Philippe Poulain.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection, the school has shown that it meets the standards for British Schools Overseas, except for those that cannot be achieved legally in the host country. These pertain to aspects of the UK Equality Act 2010. The relevant standards are:

Part 1 – ‘2(2)(d)(ii)- encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation as set out in the Equality Act 2010;’

and

Part 2 – ‘5(b)(vi)- encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

The school actively promotes tolerance and a respect for all human differences, within the confines of the law. This is embedded in the culture and ethos of the school. This judgement is endorsed by the British government and is valid for three years. The inspection process is quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

Al Basma British School offers a very good quality learning experience to its pupils, effectively supporting their progress. The educational provision offers the possibility of progression from Early Years to the end of high-school, thus ensuring continuity in the educational paths of the students.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including the:

- safeguarding, health and safety systems, which are very rigorous across all areas of the school;
- passionate and effective inclusion department;
- positive pupils' attitudes to learning;
- sustainability practices and the focus on programmes to support new digital literacy and artificial intelligence (AI), offering specificity and individuality to the school's ethos;
- evident British character of the school;
- strong pastoral care and the focus on the well-being of pupils;
- excellent support given to the pupils for the university application process;
- trips and extracurricular activities to support learning, which are very popular amongst pupils;
- family atmosphere, which contributes to all stakeholders feeling valued;
- respectful relationships, which are evident throughout the school community;
- effective communication with parents, ensuring strong parental satisfaction.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

- i. Continue to raise the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, including:
 - embedding adaptation of the curriculum and teaching as a regular feature of the learning experience, to support all pupils' learning needs;
 - embedding target-setting, high-quality questioning, developmental feedback and challenge to support pupil progress.
- ii. Effectively monitor pupil progress by analysing the data from both externally standardised assessment strategies and internal assessments, and using this to inform planning and guide pupil progress.
- iii. Build capacity at the middle leader level, capitalising on evident strengths and capabilities to further support the strategic improvement of the whole school.

4. The context of the school

Full name of school	Al Basma British School				
Address	Behind Deerfields Mall - Al Hour St - Al Bahia - Old Al Bahya - Abu Dhabi				
Telephone number/s	+971 02 562 3454				
Website address	https://www.albasmaschool.ae/				
Key email address	admissions@albasmaschool.ae , muna.m@albasmaschool.ae				
Headteacher/ principal	Ms Sharon Davis				
Chair of board/proprietor	Mr Kalapurakkal Kadir Ashraf (KK Ashraf)				
Age range	3-18 years				
Total number of pupils	2057	Boys	1048	Girls	1009
Numbers by age	<i>0-2 years</i>	0	<i>12-16 years</i>	451	
	<i>3-5 years</i>	408	<i>17-18 years</i>	26	
	<i>6-11 years</i>	1163	<i>18+ years</i>	9	
Total number of part-time children		0			

Al Basma British School is a co-educational independent school, providing a British-style education for students aged 3 to 18 years old. Approximately 50% of the student population is Emirati and 50% is international. The school has a long history and tradition, being opened in 1980 as Giggles English School; relaunched in 2014 as Al Basma British School, it has continued to grow up to the current level, fostering a number of 2099 students. In the last three years, the school has passed through the Irtiqaa inspection and was inspected under the UAE National Identity framework - May 2024.

4.1 British nature of the school

The school delivers the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and National Curriculum for England, ensuring pupils benefit from a broad and balanced education that reflects British educational principles, whilst still complying with the values and heritage of the UAE.

A range of British schemes such as *White Rose Maths* and *Read Write Inc* are embedded across the school as well as many online platforms to support the learning at home. Pupils take part in excursions that reflect British traditions of experiential learning. These include theatre visits, history field trips, and cultural excursions that reinforce classroom learning.

The curriculum is also enriched with music, drama, and art. English is the language of instruction throughout the school, apart from in modern foreign languages (MFL), Arabic language and Islamic studies lessons, unless to non-Arab speakers.

The school's approach to assessment aligns closely with practices in the UK offering GCSE, BTECs and A-levels. Parents are highly supportive of and enthusiastic about the British nature of the curriculum. Children continue their education in universities, either in the UK, UAE or internationally.

Policies and procedures, including classroom management, are in line with those expected in the UK. The majority of the teaching staff are UK-trained and qualified, and they engage regularly in continuing professional development (CPD) that mirrors standards and updates in UK education.

A house system is well established similar to those in UK schools and core values, aligned to British values, are used as topics for assemblies. A head boy and girl as well as the student council are elected in a democratic forum.

The school environment itself reflects a British style. Classrooms are bright and stimulating, with displays of pupil's work. British traditions such as anti-bullying week, mental health week and World book day are celebrated every year which reinforce their cultural connection.

5. Standard 1

The quality of education provided by the school

The school has met the standard and the quality of education at the school is good.

5.1 Curriculum

The curriculum meets the standards for BSO and is considered to be good with outstanding features.

The curriculum at Al Basma British School is broad and balanced, being strongly aligned with the National Curriculum for England, adapted to meet local requirements. It is designed to ensure continuity, progression, and cultural relevance. The curriculum's design with tiered intervention and individual education plans (IEPs) ensures a high level of inclusivity, thus meeting a large variety of pupils' learning needs.

The short, medium and long term planning structures are consistent, and weekly and collaboratively reviewed by the academic departments. The teachers effectively use online platforms, for example *Bug Club*, *Ed Shed* and *Google Classroom*, to allow pupils to access the curriculum at home. A broad enrichment programme is in place, promoting global citizenship and wellbeing.

The EYFS curriculum is play-based, aligned with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, and provides a balanced approach between structured learning and exploratory play. Learning areas support all seven areas of development, with discrete science lessons within knowledge and understanding of the World (KUW) meeting local requirements. *Read Write Inc* phonics is delivered systematically, and tracking systems record formative judgements, moderated half-termly. Provision is language-rich, with outdoor learning and story-based wellbeing lessons encouraging independence. Continuous provision is developing well; however, more open spaces between classrooms would further enhance collaborative learning.

The Key Stage (KS) 1 curriculum follows the national curriculum, underpinned by *Read Write Inc (RWI)*, *Talk For Writing (TFW)*, and *White Rose Maths (WRM)*. Lessons integrate core academics with moral and social studies, wellbeing and sustainability. Teachers use visual aids, manipulatives and talk partners to build critical thinking and fluency. Assessment data, including phonics progression, evidence steady progress. Cross-curricular topic work links English, science, and art effectively. Inclusion support through IEPs and tiered interventions ensures all pupils make progress. Feedback practices such as 'green for growth' and 'pink to think' are in use, though greater consistency is needed to ensure next steps are acted upon.

KS2 continues to deliver a broad, well-structured curriculum emphasising mastery and independence. Teachers use *RWI*, *TFW*, Bug Club, and *Ed Shed* to deepen understanding and consolidate prior knowledge. Science remains a flagship subject with practical investigations, a science fair, and home projects stimulating curiosity and problem-solving. Medium-term plans identify cross-curricular links and global learning themes. Pupils participate in the *Junior Duke* programme, linking sustainability and life skills with British values. Data tracking through Excel documents shows positive trends, though analysis could more clearly demonstrate longitudinal progress. An important next step is to cross-phase moderation to align KS2 and KS3.

The lower secondary curriculum aligns with the national curriculum and adapts effectively for Arabic and English as an additional language (EAL) learners. Project-based and collaborative learning encourages higher-order thinking and independence. Teachers employ the 'I do, we do, you do' model to scaffold challenge. The breadth of provision extends through enrichment days, wellbeing week and at least two educational visits annually. Personal, social and cultural development are reinforced through *Oxford Owl Wellbeing* and zones of regulation. Careers education is developing, with early guidance sessions integrated into personal social and health education (PSHE). Attendance and attainment tracking are in place, though further evidence is needed to show the direct correlation between attendance and outcomes.

The school provides a strong and well-balanced curriculum at KS4, where students follow GCSE courses aligned with recognized UK specifications. The curriculum remains broad and adaptable, and students achieve examination results that regularly exceed their CAT score predictions. At KS5, students can opt to follow A Levels; one BTEC course is also offered, with plans to offer a second one soon. These prepare students well for higher education and future employment.

Sustainability practices are visible across the school, which is working with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Projects like: the School Garden; the International Junk Couture Competition; the Emirates Environment Art Competition; external visits to learn more about the climate change; or directed activities such as the meeting of a group of Year 7 pupils with Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) specialists to discuss water and energy conservation are clear evidence for the special attention given by the school to this field. These projects make pupils more aware of what sustainability is and support them in making informed choices that can have an impact on the country and world. Links to UAE pride are evident.

In addition, pupils in KS4 and KS5 are involved in programmes supporting the new digital literacy and AI, which can become one of the most important areas of development for the school. The school is connected with the local university, supporting projects where pupils learn how to use the new technologies and AI, boosting their creativity and these specific skills. The school is involved in the Electric Vehicle Grand Prix (EVGP), where teams of pupils build a highly performant electric vehicle, a truly multi-disciplinary and innovative project.

STEM education is supported through the school's involvement in the F1 in Schools competition, where pupils become a miniature grand prix team, taking a car from a digital model to a physical, high-speed prototype.

Careers education is firmly integrated within the PSHE programme, with students receiving practical guidance on subject choices, future study options and university applications. Guest speakers, including local professionals and parents, enrich the careers programme by sharing real-world insights and experiences. The use of *Unifrog* is being developed at various levels to enhance the current system in place. The school should consider broadening access to career pathways at KS3 as part of the curriculum planning and exploring opportunities for pupils to take part in work experience as allowed by recent regulation changes. A whole school careers orientation strategy can thus be further developed

Sixth Form students who maintain exemplary academic and behavioural standards are recognised through opportunities to attend local events and exhibitions, further reinforcing motivation and pride in achievement. The school's focus on cultivating independent, reflective learners at this stage remains a key strength and a clear contributor to the success of its graduates.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment meets the standards for BSO and are considered to be good.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of the subject matter being taught. Lessons are well-structured, and effective teaching methods are employed in most lessons. The environment in lessons is conducive to learning, and it is evident that most pupils enjoy their learning. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very positive and respectful.

In EYFS, most pupils are assessed in the moment and misconceptions are addressed and discussed. Assessment opportunities are varied and it is evident that teachers have a good knowledge of their children's levels and next steps. In most lessons observed, progress was being made with strengths and next steps identified and acted upon. Feedback was effectively given and personalised goal setting was recognised and accepted by the children. Teaching assistants are well deployed to ensure support is given where it is needed, either by small group or individual intervention, or with whole class support. The Inclusion team supports, assesses and has impactful systems in place for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or EAL.

In KS1, lessons promote a positive attitude towards learning. Lessons are often delivered in an engaging manner with support provided to pupils of all attainment levels. Because learning intentions are shared with pupils they are aware of how to achieve the lesson objective using success criteria. Lessons would, however, benefit from improved pace, and more opportunities for pupils to respond to personalised questioning to develop independent thought. In the best lessons, learning was built on previous skills and there was some degree of interactive learning through the use of key questioning and mini whiteboards. In other lessons, there was a greater degree of teacher-led learning which limited pupils' ability to think independently and embed learning. Marking and feedback practices are inconsistent. More opportunities are needed for pupils to respond to marking and self-assess their own work. This will support progress across KS1.

In KS2, teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons with activities adapted to meet the needs of individual learners. Evidence in books shows progress made by pupils over time. In the best lessons, pupils collaborate effectively in groups or pairs to support learning. Learning time is optimised with identified pupils accessing one-to-one intervention sessions with teaching assistants or the inclusion team at various points of the day. Teachers are accountable for the levels of attainment and progress of their pupils, and new monitoring systems and pupil progress meetings are in place. Arabic language teaching is of a good standard. Instilling a culture of sharing good practice in year group teams where they plan collaboratively will help ensure consistency across year groups. Emphasis on pace, enthusiastic and dynamic teaching where a range of teaching strategies are used, together with open ended and challenging questioning will enhance teaching and learning. Greater

emphasis is also required in the consistent use of the marking and feedback policy, where misconceptions are addressed and pupils' targets and next steps are identified.

In the lower secondary, teachers generally have high expectations of pupils and their ability to achieve well, and pupils are interested in the subject and completing the task in hand. In the best lessons, planning is strong, with activities that all students are able to engage in. In most KS3 lessons, students would benefit from more explicit, adapted tasks that provide appropriate levels of challenge, especially for higher-ability students. Further alignment and sharing of best practices across KS3 can be achieved through more collaboration between teachers and departments for curriculum planning, as well as for behaviour management.

In KS4, teachers provide a degree of personalised learning, however, the level of active engagement and collaboration varies across lessons. In the best lessons, pupils respond positively when learning is interactive, the lesson structure is sound, with clear learning objectives and reference to prior knowledge. Some lessons rely heavily on teacher direction, limiting opportunities for shared discussion and independent thinking. In others, the pace and challenge occasionally differ between groups. Marking and feedback practices are inconsistent. Increasing consistency in assessment and extending opportunities for student collaboration would help raise levels of engagement and progress across KS4.

In KS5, small class sizes enable a highly personalised approach to teaching and learning. Pupils benefit from strong individual support and lessons are well structured and purposeful. In the best lessons, teachers promote active engagement and positive learning attitudes. In mathematics and humanities in particular, teachers encourage pupils to think critically. They make clear links between pupils' prior knowledge and current objectives, while next steps are frequently outlined to help learners understand their progress. Success criteria are often shared, enabling pupils to reflect on and evaluate their own learning effectively. Questioning is used skilfully to assess understanding and extend critical thinking.

In KS4 and KS5, the school has made steps to integrate AI in lessons, to act as a creative co-pilot for the pupils. This approach has proved to be effective especially for the EAL pupils, improving their self-confidence and their ability to communicate. Following the practice from the high-school, the use of technology in lessons can be further developed to enhance the learning experience of the pupils across all divisions of the school.

The quality of teaching and learning across the school can be further improved if pupils are given more opportunities to take risks and to complete practical, collaborative tasks by focusing on higher-order questioning and critical thinking skills. Pupils could be given more structured time to respond to feedback, which is then followed up to provide evidence of rapid progress. The school can also ensure the consistent implementation of assessment for learning practices across all key stages by providing exemplars and peer observation opportunities.

The school SEND provision has developed significantly in the last year since the appointment of the new Head of Inclusion. The department includes a school counsellor, inclusion assistants, inclusion teachers and twenty individual learning assistants. SEND screening, trial mornings and parental consultations were introduced in the admissions process to assess the individual pupil needs. SEN pupils receive Tier 2 and Tier 3 support, focused teaching sets and small intervention groups are organized to ensure targeted attention. Support teachers prioritise confidence-building through the English curriculum, with differentiated materials designed to enhance both language and conceptual understanding.

The inclusion team remains proactive and fully engaged in ensuring equitable access to learning for all pupils. Adaptive teaching strategies are increasingly evident in lesson planning, enhancing differentiation and supporting a culture of continuous improvement across the school.

5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

The standards achieved by pupils are considered to be good.

Standards of progress across the primary section are good, as evidenced by internal value-added data, which demonstrate that most pupils make sustained and measurable improvement over time relative to their starting points. Teachers engage pupils well and ensure that learning builds progressively on previous knowledge and skills. Subject leaders have developed internal tracking systems that allow for clearer identification of strengths and next steps for individual pupils. Progress is monitored for the SEND pupils as well, on a 1-6 levels scale. There remains, however, scope to increase the consistency of achievement recording and analysis across year groups and classes. Strengthening a unified approach to assessment practices would enhance the school's ability to identify long-term trends and evaluate the impact of specific teaching initiatives across recent years.

At KS3, standards are good and showing signs of continued improvement. Pupils make consistent progress, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics, and science, where curriculum planning ensures continuity with the primary phase. The majority of pupils achieve or exceed expected progress targets, with increasingly strong outcomes in creative subjects. *GL* assessment data confirm that existing pupils outperform new entrants across almost all cohorts, reflecting the positive impact of effective teaching, targeted support and constructive feedback. Where variations exist, leaders are addressing these through focused mentoring and shared teaching strategies.

At KS4, outcomes have improved across many subjects, most notably in sociology, art, and business studies, where pupils demonstrate strong understanding and analytical ability. Longstanding pupils continue to perform more strongly than newer joiners, suggesting that sustained exposure to the school's teaching culture contributes positively to attainment. Leaders are building on these successes by promoting effective revision strategies and encouraging independent learning habits. Efforts to refine assessment moderation are needed, helping ensure more reliable and comparable grading across departments.

Standards in KS5 are rising, supported by increasingly selective pathways aligned to pupils' academic strengths and university or career aspirations. Achievement in year 12 is particularly commendable, with excellent results in computer science, biology, and business studies. While year 13 results dipped, leaders have taken prompt action to review teaching approaches and offer tailored intervention programmes. Among the most successful subjects are design technology and physics, which demonstrate consistently high levels of engagement and achievement.

6. *Standard 2* Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is considered to be outstanding.

The school's comprehensive focus on wellbeing fosters an environment where spiritual, emotional, and social growth thrives, creating a harmonious and supportive school community. The structured curriculum at Al Basma creates a profound impact on pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. The British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs are embedded across the curriculum, assemblies, circle times and wider school life, ensuring pupils gain an early and secure understanding of their importance. Teachers model fairness, respect, and responsibility in daily interactions, creating a culture where pupils feel valued and encouraged to treat others with kindness. This holistic curriculum ensures pupils grow not only academically but also as socially responsible individuals, ready to contribute positively to their communities. Teachers use praise, positive reinforcement and constructive feedback to build self-belief, while opportunities such as class assemblies, performances and presentations give pupils the chance to showcase their talents and develop confidence in front of others. Circle times, PSHE lessons and the school's values help pupils to explore their feelings, recognise their strengths and set personal goals.

At Al Basma, moral development is the basis of their educational philosophy, shaping pupils into ethical individuals who contribute positively to society. Rooted in their beliefs and cultural identity, pupils are empowered to embody strong moral values through the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ministry of Education's moral education programme. Delivered across primary and secondary school, this comprehensive programme equips pupils with a deep understanding of ethical principles and their practical application, nurturing responsible, empathetic and conscientious individuals. Moral values are also developed through Al Basma projects such as charity events and volunteering at local hospitals which inspire students to perform small acts of kindness and support the community. In moral education lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to explore their personal beliefs as well as being taught to respect others. The school's focus on moral development extends beyond the classroom, with the celebration of events such as flag day, national day and international day. Through impactful charity initiatives such as the Ramadan charity, or bake sales, pupils develop essential qualities like compassion, generosity and social responsibility, reinforcing their commitment to making a lasting, positive impact on the school community and beyond.

Awareness activities such as mental health week, anti-bullying week as well as weekly assemblies are planned to develop pupils' moral, social and cultural values. The *Oxford Wellbeing Curriculum*, woven into the school's academic and moral framework, enriches pupils' understanding of their role in caring for their body, mind, relationships and broader community. There is a key focus on well-being and the newly appointed pupil well-being ambassadors foster a sense of calm across the community and ensure pupils are playing

together positively. Morning movement tasks including 'Fitness Friday' and 'Wake-up Shake-up' organised in collaboration with the physical education (PE) department is another example of how children are well cared for and regulated as soon as they enter the gates in the morning.

Through the zones of regulation programme, pupils develop a sense of identity and self-awareness. By focusing on core values such as care, respect, empathy and tolerance, Al Basma not only equips students to navigate life's challenges but also nurtures their innate spiritual potential. This comprehensive strategy creates a learning environment where pupils and staff alike feel valued, empowered and inspired to contribute meaningfully to the world around them. The school also has two counsellors who support across the school and a third who supports in the inclusion department, ensuring pupils' emotional wellbeing is supported.

The house system also fosters a sense of belonging and pupils are eager to contribute to their house. House points are used as incentives and rewards, and weekly totals are shared in assemblies in a healthy competitive environment. Houses are all named after significant Emirati figures.

The school values are also at the heart of the behaviour policy; the mantra: "Is your behaviour respectful, safe and responsible?" is embedded across the school. The policy encourages pupils to demonstrate positive behaviour, respect and responsibility, complemented by restorative practices, demonstrating respect and fairness in their interactions.

Every year, a head boy and head girl are elected by the pupil body using a democratic voting system. The student council and pupil surveys play a crucial role in bringing the pupils' voice to the management, which uses this feedback to improve existing practices for the benefit of the pupils. They are empowered to gather and present suggestions, contributing to the continuous improvement of the school. Pupil leaders meet regularly with the principal and vice principal, and minutes of their meetings point to changes they have been allowed to make in the school. Pupil leaders are thus provided with multiple opportunities to build and hone their leadership skills.

Sustainability has recently been integrated into the curriculum to encourage pupils to become responsible global citizens. Pupils are taught to be socially responsible towards the natural environment and promote sustainability. The school has been involved in various sustainability initiatives in line with the sustainability drive of the nation and UAE 2030 goals. Al Basma is developing project-based learning, which enables students to think innovatively, connect their studies to real-life problems and develop refined, sustainable solutions.

Pupils fully respect and appreciate the heritage and culture that underpins and influences contemporary life in the UAE. Pupils visit local museums to gain insights into UAE culture and history. The Arabic and Islamic department regularly organises programmes for the pupils to promote Islamic values and Emirati culture by celebrating local festivals of Eid, Hajj, national day, the Prophet's Birthday (PBUH), flag day and the holy month of Ramadan. Emirati culture

and national heritage are regularly reflected in assemblies, celebrations, display boards and school functions as well as across the curriculum. The UAE national anthem is played across the whole school in the morning during registration time. International day is celebrated every year which brings parents and pupils together at school to celebrate and showcase the rich diversity of cultures from around the world, fostering a deeper appreciation and respect for global traditions. Pupils of all religions understand the relevance and impact of Islamic values on everyday life in the UAE and reflect upon key messages in relation to their own lives and experiences.

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

The welfare, health and safety meets the standards for BSO and is good with outstanding elements.

Senior leaders display a strong commitment to pupil welfare and safety. Their presence within the school community is visible and reassuring. Safeguarding leadership is exceptional. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) ensures that policies meet current requirements. Regular training and updates reinforce understanding and readiness among all staff. Safeguarding practice is embedded deeply in the school's culture, forming a central part of its identity. Governors are well informed and active in oversight. Governors reports on safeguarding, health, safety, and behaviour are detailed. The challenge and support from governors strengthen the school's continuous improvement and accountability for this area.

Matters relating to health and safety are managed with precision. Policies and systems are current, detailed and applied effectively across daily routines. Leadership teams monitor compliance closely, maintaining consistency and accountability in all departments. Risk assessments cover 21 key areas of the site. These are conducted regularly and documented thoroughly. Identified issues are addressed swiftly, keeping the school safe and operational. Fire and lockdown procedures operate smoothly. Frequent drills demonstrate strong preparation. Pupils follow instructions confidently, reflecting awareness and trust in the system.

Maintenance and safety checks are systematic. The reporting system functions reliably, ensuring that any facilities or safety concerns are addressed promptly. Communication between departments continues to improve, supporting timely repairs, ongoing safety improvements, and high standards of hygiene.

Transport supervision is exemplary. The start and end of the school day are calm and orderly. Staff guide pupils carefully, ensuring safety during arrival and departure. Attention to detail reduces congestion and promotes confidence among families.

The school clinic provides efficient and caring medical support. Health concerns are managed promptly, records are accurate, and communication with parents is professional. The clinic contributes significantly to pupils' overall welfare and security on site.

Behaviour across the school is generally good. Pupils are considerate and respectful towards one another and to staff. Lessons are purposeful, routines are clear, and classrooms maintain a calm climate conducive to learning. The revised behaviour policy, with its focus on positive reinforcement, is taking firm root. Staff use restorative practices to help pupils learn from mistakes. Reflection sessions and consistent follow-up build self-awareness. Leaders promote shared responsibility among staff to ensure expectations remain clear across all classes. The

leadership team supports teachers effectively, particularly those handling transition years and KS3. Guidance on classroom management and restorative approaches helps maintain consistency across departments. This targeted support ensures that all pupils, regardless of age, experience positive routines and clear boundaries.

Bullying is rare. When concerns arise, they are acted upon promptly and resolved fairly. Pupils express confidence in staff, acknowledging that their voices are heard and issues are taken seriously.

Relationships between adults and pupils are strong. Staff model politeness, fairness and empathy. Pupils respond by showing maturity, kindness and cooperation. This mutual respect forms the foundation of the school's positive ethos.

Attendance is closely monitored. Leadership tracks patterns carefully and supports families to address barriers to punctuality and attendance. Continued work in this area will further enhance engagement and learning consistency.

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

The suitability of the proprietor and staff meets the standard for BSO.

All aspects of safer recruitment are respected and given high priority. The human resources (HR) department and school management make sure that all the national legal requirements regarding the employment of the staff are met, for both local and international employees.

HR procedures are well organized, and the processes are well monitored by school leaders. The school ensures that prior to the confirmation of staff appointments all required checks are carried out on prospective staff, including checks to confirm identity, police checks in the country of origin, medical fitness, the right to work in the UAE and their previous employment activity.

The school maintains detailed records of all staff which are regularly updated. A Single Central Record (SCR) is in place which meets the requirements of the BSO. It is clear, registering the required information on each category of staff: teaching, administrative, international, or local.

Teachers benefit from a relevant professional development programme. CPD pathways are defined after discussions with line managers, including attendance of courses on different training platforms, peer-observations, learning walks with feedback, or registration on external courses. Special sessions, under the school's own programme of 'Teaching Guru' are led by expert teachers from the school on specific topics. Teachers are directed towards these sessions depending on their needs. Specific support is in place for senior leadership team (SLT) members; they benefitted from UAE inspection training, and had the opportunity to visit schools in the area who are considered outstanding in different domains.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation meet the standard for BSO and are considered to be good with outstanding features.

The environment is purposeful and conducive to learning across both primary and secondary levels. Although corridors and play areas accommodate the current number of students, classrooms in primary and lower secondary are relatively small. In EYFS, space is limited and the area would benefit from a greater variety of stimulating resources to promote creativity, critical thinking and independence. Primary breakout areas remain flexible and support diverse teaching methods effectively. Secondary classrooms have been upgraded with interactive panels that enhance lesson delivery. Classrooms are calm spaces where pupils can focus and thrive.

Specialist rooms, including science labs, art and design studios, computing suites, music and drama spaces and sports facilities, are modern and well-resourced, contributing positively to student motivation and achievement. The secondary library is well-organised, welcoming, and furnished with a suitable collection of books and comfortable seating.

School facilities are clean, well-maintained and ventilated, with equipment regularly maintained to high standards. Learning environments are bright, purposeful, and visually engaging. Display boards throughout corridors and classrooms showcase pupil work, reinforce learning, and share key information. Displays also highlight messages about respect and inclusion.

The canteen is hygienic and compliant with health regulations. Suitable changing accommodation, toilet and washing facilities are provided for the sole use of the pupils. Across the school, accessibility features such as lifts, disabled toilets, and seating ensure inclusivity.

The school clinic ensures separate areas for boys and girls. It also contains a record room with filing cabinets containing all medical records of each pupil. All medical provision is stored correctly. Two qualified nurses are permanently on site.

The school offers appropriate outside areas for PE and recreation, including shades. Pupils are well supervised, with highly visible members of staff on duty wearing yellow jackets, spread across the grounds. The two swimming pools are well kept and supervised at all times. Plans are underway to expand the Year 1 play area. Additionally, there is a goal to revamp the football pitch surface by next summer to improve sports facilities.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents, carers and others meets the standard for BSO, it is outstanding.

Parents consider communication to be a strength of the school and are appreciative of the communication methods used at Al Basma over the last 12 months. The school shares a weekly newsletter, keeping parents well informed of school events. The school uses the online platform, *Google Classroom*, to share year-group specific information with parents. Parents of pupils in the primary school also receive homework through *Bug Club* and *EdShed*, allowing parents access to the tasks being set to pupils. Parents also feel teachers are very efficient in responding to emails with queries. An area of improvement raised by parents included more use of parent voice by the school to manage homework expectations and support the uptake of homework activities at home.

The school website contains up to date information and key documents that can be accessed by all stakeholders, including policies: admissions, behaviour and conduct, SEND provision and curriculum. Previous BSO inspection reports are also shared on the website. The name of the principal, address and telephone number of the school can all be found on the school website along with the names of governors.

The school regularly shares information with parents on pupil progress and attainment through reports. These are shared termly and contain a combination of written comments and coloured indicators for progress and attainment. In primary, reports include written comments for core subjects, comprised of pupils' strengths and next steps, as well as coloured indicators linked to the application of life skills. Grades are provided for each subject using the school's newly adapted 1-9 grading system for primary. In secondary, from KS3-KS4, reports also use the 1-9 grading system as well as comments for attainment and effort and 'next steps' in the final term's report. KS5 follows a similar reporting structure but with the use of an A* - U grading system.

To support parental engagement, the school has held a number of parent workshops over the last 12 months: Phonics *RWI*; *Bug Club*, *Maths Shed* and *Spelling Shed*; the use of *Orison*, careers events, *White Rose Maths* and parent English and Arabic lessons. 'Meet the Teacher' events also take place to support parental induction.

Al Basma have recently extended their engagement through the use of social media platform, *Instagram*. Parents and staff have both described this as a useful platform to engage the community, keeping everyone up to date with school activities and allowing the community to follow along with regularly posted events.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school's procedure for handling complaints meets the standard for BSO.

The procedure for handling complaints is set out in a transparent, efficient policy for addressing parental complaints about the school. The policy for handling complaints is available on the website. The policy outlines procedures for handling both informal and formal complaints in stages, along with specific timeframes for processing each stage.

The procedure allows for complaints to be made and considered initially on an informal basis. Parents are encouraged to approach teachers with any concerns and address issues through open dialogue.

Complaints are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Parental feedback indicates high satisfaction with both the speed of response and the outcome of concerns or complaints.

12. Standard 8

Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school meet the standard and is considered to be good.

The school has been through a series of changes at the leadership level during the last academic year, which have been effectively dealt with by the new SLT. The recently appointed principal has a clear understanding of the school's priorities for improvement, accompanied by thorough respect for and knowledge of the school's current position in its journey.

The new leadership team is passionate and enthusiastic about school development, and there is a strong commitment to improve and move the school forward. Appointments were made at the senior and the middle leadership level as well, creating opportunities for internal promotion, alongside key additions from the outside. The leadership's capabilities are evident. Colleagues in posts of responsibility across the different areas of the school have a good understanding of what is needed to improve, including the quality of teaching and learning, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of pupil progress. Further focus needs to be given to the consolidation of a middle leadership structure across all areas of the school, in both primary and secondary.

The sense of commitment and loyalty among the leadership team to their school is an asset, which is also evident across many areas of the school. Leaders are actively involved in day-to-day classroom life and take the time to know pupils personally. Mutual respect extends beyond the classroom, into relationships between all staff members at every level, pupils and parents, generating a genuine feeling of warmth and care.

The school is making consistent adjustments to increase quality staff retention. Effective CPD is in place to support teachers. Further development of the directed CPD provision should be considered, in order to support areas such as teaching and assessment, use of data, and the implementation of new digital technologies in learning.

Procedures, plans and policies have been revised in order to further improve all systems. The school leaders need to continue to develop the internal self-evaluation and monitoring processes across all areas of the school to inform strategic planning effectively at all levels. This strategy can be mirrored at the departmental level as well, where specific procedures and action plans can be further linked to the school improvement plan, thus supporting the school's vision and mission. These elements will lead to further alignment and consistent implementation of all specific policies across all aspects of school life.

The school leadership ensures that the school provides a safe and supportive environment for pupils. Systems around child protection and safeguarding are rigorous. The school runs smoothly with a clear focus given to the wellbeing and security of staff and pupils.