



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

RAK Academy

**Ras Al Khaimah
United Arab Emirates**

Date
Inspection number

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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, over 100 lesson observations took place. School documentation and policies were analysed and school data was reviewed. Students' workbooks were seen in lessons, and discussions were held with the staff, parents and informally with students. The inspection took place over three days. Inspectors worked at all sites and one inspector visited all of them during the three days.

The lead inspector was Dr Mark Evans. The team members were Paul Fisher, Ben Hawkins, Nichelle Jackson, Abbas Khan, Jade Linton, Misbah Mohiuddin, Greg Ryan, Benjamin Tabner, and John Trudinger.

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

The school has continued to make excellent progress, on its journey to becoming excellent. Middle managers have become empowered and effective on some sites, driving the pace of development, especially of learning and teaching. Facilities management is now excellent, and contributes significantly to the increasingly impressive learning environments. The focus of the board and the senior leaders on driving up standards is outstanding, as are the plans for the immediate development at Khuzam and Al Hamra.

3.1 What the school does well

Al Hamra

Students' attitudes and behaviour are excellent. They have strong communication skills and there was a clear culture of respect throughout the school.

Al Hamra has worked hard to become a data rich organisation where students' academic and pastoral data is centralised and accessible, giving a holistic view of each child, demographic and cohort.

Al Rams

The culture of the school is a strength. The students and staff all know the school values and it is embedded within the school.

The students behaviour is exemplary and the relationships between students and staff is very positive.

Khuzam primary

Talk for writing is strongly embedded as the school approach to the teaching of writing with shared language and methodology used across all phases.

Bilingualism is a clear strength in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), with notable progress observed in learners who receive support in their native language. Progress in early years from the students' starting points is very strong.

Khuzam secondary

The leadership of the secondary school is its strength, echoed by parent and the pupil focus groups. There is a clear strategy for improvement and the head of school is clear about the priorities. Systems and processes have been embedded thoroughly throughout the school which is reflective of the strong leadership.

Student behaviour is a highlight of the school. School celebrates and embraces the diverse culture of the community they serve.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

Overall

- i. Further improving teaching and learning, with a focus on appropriate challenge in all lessons; on special needs support; and on high-ability students receiving both the support and challenge necessary to fully extend their learning.
- ii. Further improve the focus on data, especially the accuracy of the internal data and its application by teachers.
- iii. Develop the monitoring of policies and procedures across the schools, by senior and middle leaders.

Al Hamra

Continue to embed the new approach to teaching and learning through rigorous monitoring and accurate self-evaluation in order for the vision of the school to be consistently reflected in practice.

Al Rams

Develop quality teaching for students with high needs (Level 3).

Khuzam primary

Clarify the curriculum vision and make sure it is widely understood by staff, students and parents.

Khuzam secondary

Develop a clear approach to the teaching of critical thinking skills, problem solving and challenge.

4. The context of the school

Full name of School	Ras Al Khaimah Academy				
Address	Ras Al Khaimah, UAE				
Telephone Number/s	+971 7 236 2441				
Website Address	www.rakacademy.org				
Key Email Address	graham.beale@rakacademy.org				
Executive Principal	Graham Beale				
Chair of board/Proprietor	Her Highness Sheikha Amneh Saud Al Qasimi				
Age Range	3 - 18 years				
Total number of pupils	2629	Boys	1411	Girls	1218
Numbers by age	<i>0-2 years</i>	0	<i>12-16 years</i>	457	
	<i>3-5 years</i>	589	<i>17-18 years</i>	51	
	<i>6-11 years</i>	1530	<i>18+ years</i>	2	
Total number of part-time children		n/a			

4.1 British nature of the school

Al Hamra

The school meets the BSO standards. All students follow the national curriculum for England and the language of instruction is English. The school reflects its British nature in numerous ways including a house system, democratically elected student leaders and through its vision, curriculum activities, displays and events. Although there is a clear uniform policy, this was not adhered to by a significant number of pupils.

Al Rams

The school meets the BSO standards. Britishness is reflected at the school because it follows the national curriculum for England and the EYFS programme. Other factors that reflect the British nature of the school are: The schools leadership structure reflects that of a common British School; the students wear school uniform; there is a house system; student leaders are voted for through a democratic process; the holistic view of the student is looked at and not just academics giving importance to them as citizens; there is a significant number of native English teachers; child protection policies are derived from UK best practice; there is a large amount of literature and materials of the type you would see in a British school and the school's values are closely linked to that of British values.

Khuzam primary

The school meets the BSO standards. The school works hard to incorporate UAE and UK links within planning across the school, within restrictions of the host country. The school follows a structured, hierarchical leadership system that ensures clear roles, responsibilities, and efficient decision-making. It adopts the English national curriculum, maintaining a strong British educational framework while accommodating its diverse student demographics. English is the primary language of instruction, with most signage and student communication also in English. The multifaceted curriculum is complemented by some extracurricular activities that enhance learning beyond the classroom. Further refinement of the curriculum direction is needed. Parent feedback also mentioned the need for an expanded ECA program that included whole school performances.

As a result, students can transition smoothly into UK schools. The British character of the school is reinforced through its house system and strong pastoral care. Most teachers are British-trained, with extensive experience in the UK state system, primarily in England and Wales. Classrooms are structured similarly to those in the UK, and students are organised into year groups, key stages, and school sections based on standard British educational definitions.

Khuzam secondary

The school meets the BSO standards. The curriculum is based on the national curriculum for England with IGCSE, AS and A Level public examination requirements. The school campus and facilities support the curriculum in place and provide appropriate areas for learning, socialising and recreation. Year groups and key stages are aligned to the British education system. The school's interpretation of the curriculum has been carefully designed to reflect its British nature but also take into account the requirements of the UAE MoE. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is in place to support and extend the formal curriculum. Pupils in the secondary school wear a school uniform and the leadership and staffing structure reflects that of a school in the UK. A house system is in place and each house represents values which reflect the Britishness of the school. Displays in the corridor can be seen that remind students that it is a British international school. Approximately 20-30% of pupils go on to higher education at universities in the UK.

5. *Standard 1* The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided is good, with many outstanding features.

5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good, with some outstanding features

Al Hamra

The curriculum aligns with the British national curriculum. Curriculum maps have been developed to ensure progression and coherence across subjects. Subject leaders collaborate to create a thematic approach where appropriate, promoting meaningful connections in learning. While the school has a clear vision for its curriculum, further refinements are needed to ensure full consistency across all lessons and to meet the diverse needs of all learners, specifically in ensuring all students are challenged. The curriculum has been adapted to suit the school's context, with ongoing improvements planned. Enrichment opportunities, such as the Wider Horizons programme, enhance pupils' experiences, broadening their skills and interests beyond the classroom. Sustainability remains a key focus, equipping students with a strong awareness of global responsibility as evidenced through displays, assemblies and the sustainability garden. There is currently provision for modern foreign languages, however, the leadership is in consultation with parents to assess the demand for this.

Al Rams

There is good provision for basic skills, the school has identified reading and grammar as a requirement and this is focused on daily. This has been a curriculum adaptation based on the low CAT4 Verbal scores. In EYFS, students have targeted intervention time focused on basic skills each morning alongside continuous provision. The curriculum shows progression and units of work and skills are mapped out from Pre-K up to Grade 5 by subject co-ordinators. The curriculum schemes of work focus on values and skills and not just content. The curriculum is data driven and has been modified as a result of previous student outcomes. Some evidence of this being impactful is beginning to be seen. The curriculum is well-designed and offers a broad, balanced and interesting offering for students. However, this is not always being replicated in the classroom with the teaching of the curriculum varied in its delivery.

The curriculum provides students with opportunities outside of the classroom, for instance, Emirates Literary Fest; Mission X (train like an astronaut); Sustainability workshops; spelling bees to name a few. The STREAM Curriculum has been introduced to make topics of learning more cross-curricular. The school has an extra–

curricular programme 'Widening Horizons' which has provided further opportunities for students beyond the classroom. Although, this is only one day per week and student voice showed that students would welcome more after school provision.

Khuzam primary

The curriculum is broad and balanced although progression needs to be monitored closely to ensure learning is cumulative. The merging of PYP and NC has caused some confusion between all stakeholders. The school needs further clarity on the effectiveness of the current pathway. The talk for writing methodology is a strength and has been implemented and embedded consistently across the school. The EYFS curriculum is well planned and adapted to cater for the individual needs of students. Using language based lessons across the curriculum is consistent and the benefits of this are visible in lessons.

Khuzam secondary

The curriculum is broad and balanced, allowing pupils to explore their passions and interests. The different pathways give pupils the skills and qualifications needed for the next stage in their education. The school has a well-planned and coherent curriculum which aligns with the English national curriculum within an international context, including MYP elements and IB Pathways at Post 16. However, the linkages to specific IB terminology/ skills was not always explicitly visible in lessons. The curriculum is ambitious and there was a low percentage of lesson indicative of inquiry based learning. Missed opportunities for cross-curricular links that could enhance the curriculum and provide deep thinking and learning. Students are well equipped with the knowledge, skills and understanding to enter or re-enter the British system. There are transition programmes in place between the from grade 7 and from grade 11 . The school's step into the sixth form programme includes 'subject talks' and 'market stall' events organised by the students themselves. Alongside these events, individual meetings with senior leaders and up-to-date advice from the careers counsellor ensure an effective and appropriate transition. This personalised support ensures that all pupils are well prepared and understand the demands of the A-level and BTEC qualifications. The school guides sixth-form students through the universities and colleges admissions service (UCAS) application process and about 30% go on to UK universities.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is

Al Hamra

Overall the quality of teaching in Al Hamra is good. Positive praise and encouragement are prevalent in the majority of lessons. Students display respectful attitudes towards teachers, have an excellent attitude to learning and their behaviour in lessons is generally very good. In the most effective lessons, teachers employed a variety of instructional methods to maintain student interest and to promote active learning. For example, a Grade 4 Topic lesson about human exploration of space involved a variety of teaching techniques, resulting in animated and involved students. Differentiation was observed in some classes, but teachers could further improve lessons by including more memorable learning experiences for all and including higher level tasks and effective questioning to extend and challenge the more able students. In a pre-K lesson, students did demonstrate high levels of engagement where expert questioning effectively deepened their understanding of the story. In the less strong lessons, questioning tended to be undirected and answered by those students who raised their hands first. Teaching assistants are present in some lessons but often their role was to support the teacher rather than actively to support learning.

Regarding feedback, this is inconsistent with a few teachers giving short, written regular feedback to which students respond. Although there was student work on display in corridors, there was little evidence of students' work on display in classrooms. Classroom displays generally consist of commercial posters and information, and teacher-made displays.

Students are assessed regularly and teachers moderate assessments each half term. These assessments could be used to adjust effectively activities and lesson content to meet the needs of individual children, especially high achievers. Specialist teachers for English and Maths in Grades 4 and 5 have been introduced as a result of analysis of GL end-of-year assessments.

Al Rams

Teaching in Al Rams overall is good with the key strengths being the support of pupils with needs in the classroom (unless Level 3); deployment of support staff to support learning and relationships between teachers and students. More consistent good practice was seen in EYFS. The best lessons used adaptive teaching methods to scaffold the learning for students. A Grade 2 English lesson was a good example of this with all students comparing features of books but with differing levels of support and challenge to achieve the desired outcome.

Students spoken to in lessons and in a student voice opportunity stated that they like their teachers and enjoy school but a number of students commented on sometimes being not challenged enough.

Assessment in Al Rams is regular and is beginning to be more rigorously used to inform planning and the needs of the students. This is not consistent across subjects and phases. When used effectively, there are intervention folders for each class that keep a track of students' progress to their specific targets. Too often, the data used impacts interventions rather than practice within the classroom. A range of assessment tools are used to inform attainment gradings including but not limited to *White Rose Mathematics* and *Rising Stars Reading and Science Tests*. Comprehensive data analysis of termly assessments was shared and showed how short term planning and intervention groups had been adapted as a result. This is inconsistent when visiting classrooms as to how this data analysis is impacting lessons. Teachers are given a chance to present data to middle leaderships team (MLT) and the senior leadership team (SLT) to empower them and give them ownership of the data.

Khuzam primary

Teaching overall is good. In the best lessons, teachers combined good classroom management skills with well paced explanations and focused questioning and prompts. Relationships between teachers and students were generally very good. Overall teaching was good across all phases of the school however the most consistent practise was observed in EYFS. The best use of adults was seen in EYFS. Differentiation is evident, with teaching appropriately tailored to the diverse starting points and needs of the students. However, it is important to ensure that groupings remain flexible, with high-ability students receiving both the support and challenge necessary to extend their learning. Written feedback is present in students' books; however, it is not always clear how effectively this feedback supports students in advancing their learning or provides clear next steps for improvement. Positive praise and reinforcement of desired behaviour was observed although in a minority of lessons some low level disruption was observed which affected the learning of the group as a whole.

Khuzam secondary

Teaching in Khuzam secondary is good, with some outstanding examples observed. School leaders show commitment in their drive continually to raise teaching quality through well established and rigorous quality-assurance processes. Teachers are well qualified, with strong subject knowledge and an understanding of how children of different ages learn. Opportunities are provided for students to review and retrieve information from previous learning through teacher questioning. Peer feedback and self reflection is evident throughout the school with the use of 'WWW' and 'EBI's. Teacher feedback is moderate and could be developed further specially in book work. The school follows a 3 tiered differentiation process, seating plans evidence use of data in almost all lessons. However, on occasion, little challenge was

given to the students. Effective questioning is a highlight of almost all good lessons. In lessons that were less than good, teaching was overly didactic or lacked rigour.

Students have positive attitudes to learning. They listen, concentrate and focus on their learning. They work well together using prepared resources. Relationships between pupils and teachers are extremely positive, respectful and trusting. Behaviour in all lessons is exemplary. This enables students to take risks in learning to deepen their understanding. Assessments are planned and structured based on the curriculum requirements, there is a moderation process in place across the school, however its impact cannot be clearly seen in the data.

IGCSE and A Level courses follow either *Cambridge International* or *Pearson Edexcel*. Teachers and students who were spoken to during the two days of the inspection are confident about the requirements of the respective courses. The most able students choose to follow the IB DP at grade 11 and 12. The school is beginning to include more of the MYP curriculum at key stage 3 although this was not visible in most of the lessons observed. The mathematics department have made the decision to move to the modular IGCSE course in order to reduce the number of examinations taken by pupils at the end of Grade 10.

5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

The standards achieved by students are good or better.

Al Rams

Standards on this site are good, due to the fact that in all core subjects there is evidence of good progress from student start points. Middle and senior leaders show an understanding of the gaps for students and are actively implementing different strategies to fill these gaps. However, the attainment is low and the data provided is contradictory. The live data dashboard shared has different attainment data to what is written in the school self evaluation form (SEF). The school is working to ensure the validity of attainment data, particularly internal data.

Al Hamra

External data across the school shows steady improvements in attainment since the last inspection and consistently strong progress. External and internal data are broadly in line and specific groups and cohorts have been effectively identified where standards are less strong. Standards in lessons did not always reflect the data, due to a lack of challenge provided.

Khuzam primary

The data provided in the SEF did not reflect what was seen in the classrooms or in the students' books. Attainment on entry to the school is low and there is evidence of good progress across the school given many children's starting points. However, the attainment is low and the data provided is contradictory. The live data dashboard shared has different attainment data to what is written in the SEF. The school is working to ensure the validity of attainment data, particularly internal data. Further developments are being made on the provision for EAL learners within the inclusion register.

Khuzam secondary

Standards of the school are good. Good teaching and learning supports the curriculum. However, students made expected or below expected progress in some lessons. The data picture is strong; however, not reflective of what is happening in lessons. The leadership is strong and is aware of the areas of strengths and improvement. The consistency in the leadership and best practices can be seen through the systems and processes placed in the school: impact is yet to be seen in all lessons.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with many outstanding features.

Al Hamra

The school fosters a strong sense of community, as evidenced through displays and discussions with parents, teachers, and pupils. It is clear that the school is a valued part of the wider community, promoting inclusivity and positive relationships. The school's culture is excellent, and encourages politeness, confidence, and respect among pupils, who consistently demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning. In lessons, students are engaged, take pride in their work, and uphold high standards of behaviour. British values, such as tolerance, democracy, and respect, are embedded into school life, ensuring pupils develop into thoughtful, responsible citizens.

Al Rams

Strong personal development is evident around the school through displays and from talking to staff and students, who are encouraged to think about the wider community. The students mostly show respect and kindness towards one another and their teachers. A sample group of student leaders spoke positively about the culture of the school and were able to talk in detail about the school values and how these feed into their learning every day. The assembly schedule for the academic year shows that the school values alongside the British and Islamic values are focused on. An assembly around caring was seen that gave the message about everyone caring for the school. Each class leads an assembly each year which fosters student involvement and helps them to display the core values. Alongside this, the school teaches using the UAE moral, social and cultural studies curriculum which has key themes of tolerance and respect throughout.

Khuzam primary

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good, with no significant weaknesses. Their positive attitudes, considerate behaviour, and strong relationships reflect the school's commitment to inclusivity and respect for all. The student council warmly greeted us upon arrival, showcasing pupils' confidence and responsibility. Interactions between students were positive, demonstrating their tolerance, cooperation, and respect for others. In the majority of lessons good behaviour can be seen and at break times highlights the school's high expectations, while opportunities for cultural engagement allow them to develop their talents and broaden their awareness of the wider world.

Khuzam secondary

There is a strong sense of community in the school. Pupils interact well with each other and with teachers both in lessons and during break times. Assemblies take place in the morning and there is a PSHE program delivered during tutor time. At IGCSE level students engage in debating and learn about global citizenship. Pupils engage in raising money for charity and

student leaders run activities for pupils during break time. There are separate mosques within the secondary campus and Muslim pupils attend Islamic studies lessons in line with the MoE requirements. In a grade 8 tutor group, pupils were observed working in groups to discuss an aspect of the theme 'mental health week'. The pupil focus group referred to the school house system and were able to recall the value that each house upheld. There was a clear sense that pupils were proud of the diverse nature of their school population. At post-16, pupils proudly wore the flags of their respective home countries on their sweatshirts.

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

The provision for welfare, health and safety is

Al Hamra

Health and safety policies, protocols and procedures are robust and ensure all staff and students are kept safe. Supervision and security around the site, including playgrounds and entrances are highly effective. Students expressed a feeling of safety and clear signage around the school supports a calm and safe environment.

Designated members of staff have specific responsibilities including child protection officers, a student development and enrichment lead and an e-safety coordinator. A positive education curriculum has been introduced and children systematically discuss and explore topics around mental health and their wellbeing. Blue ribbon week, e-safety scenarios in computing lessons and healthy eating initiatives are some examples of wellbeing activities.

Al Rams

The behaviour displayed by all students is good with only a few minor disruptions in lessons. When disruptive behaviour is observed, it is quickly and effectively dealt with by the majority of teachers. The behaviour policy is clear and there is a record of sanctions in line with the school's policy.

The inclusion department has a clear provision map for all students on the inclusion register and reviews this termly along with teachers and parents. Intervention logs are kept so that the impact of interventions can be tracked and they are fit for purpose. Learning support assistants are given adequate training in order to deliver the interventions and the Inclusion team have regular check-ins with them for quality assurance purposes. Quality first teaching for Level 3 SEND students would be an area of development. Teachers cater for Level 1 and 2 students well.

Students who are gifted and talented are identified but only in small numbers. These students are not being challenged regularly enough and more is needed in this area. There is an academy wide gifted and talented policy in place now which should support the identification of students who are gifted and talented. Al Rams does put emphasis on the talents and has supported students in out of the classroom areas of talent i.e. horse riding and movie making.

Students are happy and safe on the premises. Staff are vigilant on duty and there is always a high adult to student ratio. The astro turf is one area that has potential to be unsafe as it is pulling up around the edges. The PE office/ store should be locked when not occupied as students are walking past it to go to the bathroom and there are potentially dangerous objects accessible.

Khuzam primary

Behaviour overall is good; students are polite, well mannered and welcoming around and about the school. Although a busy school, the movements observed throughout the school day were organised and ordered. The team were helped at various points over their visit by student leaders. The pastoral dashboard keeps a log of any behaviour concerns and leadership follow up as necessary according to the behaviour policy. The parents we met were extremely satisfied with how the school responded to reports of bullying both in terms of the responsiveness and related actions and follow up. Recently, the school has raised awareness of the importance of healthy eating - a superfood of the week is shared with parents and the teaching staff look for students with that food over the week, awarding house points when they see it. There is a clear reporting hierarchy for any child protection concerns. The numbers of staff on duty is good and vigilance levels are high.

The fire drill assembly point signage needs to be placed in the correct area. Due to the heat, students assemble under the roofed area not in the allocated area by the external wall. Rat traps were dotted around the site, it was not clear how students, particularly the younger students, did not touch the rat traps. This needs to be addressed. Reported child protection concerns were noted at approximately one per week. This is extremely low for a school of this size. A culture of vigilance and increased reporting should be prioritised as a matter of urgency.

Bilingualism is a clear strength in EYFS, with notable progress observed in learners who receive support in their native language. The inclusion department has a structured monitoring system and referral process for the high number of children on the register, ensuring students receive support at varying levels of intervention. Interventions are planned, with a strong emphasis on in-class support and group interventions that align with classroom practice.

Khuzam secondary

The student welfare, health and safety of children is very good. The “consequence system” has a very positive impact on student behaviour. Student behaviour is found to be very good in and out of lessons. The reward system ensures student behaviour and academic performance is recognised and celebrated in assemblies.

Students say they feel safe and happy in the school, including new children who say they settle into school quickly because of the support available. They know that they can talk to any member of staff, including the school counsellor if they have a concern or worry.

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

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

The ownership of the school has not changed in the last three years, and the board has continued its very positive drive for excellence. The chair of the board, Her Highness Sheikha Amneh Saud Al Qasimi and board members oversee school policies as well as the strategic direction of the school. There have been a number of very major decisions taken in the last few years, suggesting that the board is highly committed to the long and well as short term development of the school.

All local employment requirements are met, including the right to work in the United Arab Emirates and the suitability to work with children. The board ensures the school fulfils the safety, care and guidance requirements for all students. In addition, they take responsibility for the checking of staff credentials. Prior to the confirmation of staff appointments, appropriate checks, including police checks in the country of origin (wherever possible), are carried out to confirm identity, medical fitness, right to work in the UAE and their previous employment activity.

Teaching staff have appropriate teaching qualifications and/or experience in teaching in the UK or in British curriculum schools. The leadership structure is known and shared; staff are aware of their line manager and understand their roles. Job descriptions are clear.

RAKA maintains (and made available to inspectors), a single comprehensive register of all staff, volunteers and external partners who currently work in the school, showing the dates when they commenced and ceased working in the school. It also keeps (and made available for inspectors), records of all the checks completed in respect of staff and volunteers who currently work at the school or who have worked at the school since the date of the last inspection. It is an excellent and appropriate working document.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

Premise and accommodation of the school is good, with many outstanding aspects.

Al Hamra

The school is good, with some excellent features that enhance the learning environment. The outdoor area is a particular strength, offering a spacious and well-equipped space for physical activity and recreation, contributing to pupils' well-being and enjoyment of school. The premises are well-maintained, with all areas kept clean, and toilets regularly checked, as evidenced by the monitoring checklists in each bathroom. Security is a priority, with a single point of entry and well-trained security staff ensuring the safety of all students and staff. The buildings are well-suited to the age of the learners, providing a comfortable and appropriate environment that supports both academic and practical learning. Displays are regularly refreshed, adding to the welcoming atmosphere of the school. Overall, the facilities contribute to a safe, engaging, and enjoyable educational experience for all pupils.

Al Rams

The premises are good. The cleanliness and hygiene is excellent. The classrooms are inviting for the students. The students take pride in their environment. The premises are suitable to the age and stage of the students. Displays in corridors are bright and inviting and have lots of photos to share the journey of the school since the start of the academic year. Pre-K in particular have lots of space which they make full use of to good effect. Some Key Stage 2 classes are a little cramped as the classrooms do not grow with the students and class sizes higher up the school are larger. The premises are safe and secure for students.

Khuzam primary

The school's buildings and facilities, including spaces for outdoor and indoor activities, provide a safe and supportive learning environment. The premises are well-maintained, with good lighting, ventilation, and cooling. Security measures are effective, and there are no apparent health or safety risks. The clean and hygienic surroundings, both indoors and outdoors, enhance students' enjoyment of school. The indoor sports hall had a raised wooden floor with rubber matting around its perimeter, which posed a safety risk to students. The canteen is well-maintained, and the facilities management team deserves commendation for ensuring student safety during ongoing renovations.

Khuzam secondary

the school premises are fit for purpose, although the outside areas are in need of renovation. There are ample areas for the students to use during break times and students are given traveling time in between lessons in order to get to their next lesson. Bells throughout the day guide students and teachers to keep track of the time and there are two bells at the end of break to give students a five minute warning. There is a lift in only one of the buildings so there are some potential issues for wheelchair users moving around the whole site. Some of

the doors that are used by students do not have glass in them so there is a potential for students to be injured by the door opening in their face. The toilet facility for visitors was at the back of the students' clinic, which is a potential safeguarding issue and during the inspection visit there was an issue of low water pressure in the male staff toilets. Science equipment is old and in need of replacement. This was also echoed by the pupil focus group.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information provided by the school to parents, carers and others is

Al Hamra

Parents spoken to during the inspection visit commented that administrative staff, teachers and SLT are very accessible and approachable. Although on the website there is no information about how to contact teachers officially, parents were very positive about their communication with school and value the personal approach and regular contact that keeps them informed about all aspects of their children's school life. The school uses Dojo for daily updates and also ISAMS for termly progress reports. The latter are followed by a formal parent-teacher meeting; hence, parents feel that they are very well-informed about their children's progress. In addition, if parents have any concerns, they are easily and promptly able to speak to the child's teacher. Each class has an elected parent representative who acts as a formal communication channel for any general concerns. Parents feel that they are listened to and that concerns are taken seriously. They are extremely positive about the headteacher and the changes that she has made to the school. They feel that their children are in a safe environment and are making good progress.

Al Rams

Parents spoken to during the inspection feel that the school provides a safe and positive learning environment for their children. They feel their children are happy and making good progress. The parents can see vast improvements since the new leadership team was in place. They say that the teachers and senior leadership team are approachable and easy to contact. They are happy with the volume of formal communication in terms of termly parent teacher meetings and reports and that these are informative and they know where their child is academically. Parents feel involved in the school, they feel like they are listened to and have a voice. They are happy with how the school transitions students ready for the next phase of their education beyond Grade 5 for example teacher and student visits from Khuzam, workshops and visits to Khuzam. However, they would all prefer to keep their child at Al Rams if that was an option.

Khuzam primary

Parents spoken to were overwhelmingly positive about communication by the school and the responsiveness of senior leaders and class teachers. They valued class dojo for updates and also as a tool for being able to message staff individually. The parents valued ISAMS as a portal for reporting and assessment information. Parents mentioned that any concerns are promptly dealt with.

Khuzam secondary

Parents receive regular and detailed reports as well as formal and informal regular updates about their child's academic and personal progress. They have access to live information regarding their child's attainment and progress and current information specific to their child's class. There are also regular parent-teacher consultations across the school year. Parents report being very happy with the frequent and detailed communication from the school. The school's website is comprehensive and provides a range of easily accessible information about all aspects of school life. This includes basic information, contact details, admission processes, policies, examination results, university destinations, events calendar and news. However, policies are not up to date.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

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

RAKA has a clear complaints (known as the 'grievance') policy, that establishes a procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints relating to any provision of facilities or services provided. It includes all stakeholders, regardless of their age or position. The policy is available on the school website.

It is transparent and effective, and gives due regard to local regulatory requirements. It seeks to ensure any concerns or grievances are dealt with openly, honestly, politely and in confidence. The procedure confirms that all concerns and complaints are looked into thoroughly, fairly and in a timely manner.

Complaints are rare and nearly always resolved informally. The class or subject teacher is consulted first, but if an issue is not resolved, it can be raised with the subject, year and senior leaders. All parents have easy access to class teachers and to senior leaders at the start and end of the school day.

The policy encourages communication between stakeholders and the school, to ensure that problems arising during the course of the school year can be expressed and quickly resolved. Most grievances are resolved through informal discussions with class teachers, tutors or heads of year. Parents/guardians are asked to approach the school with any concerns they have. This can also be formally done in writing.

If the grievance remains unsettled, then the matter can be referred onwards in writing, to the head of the relevant school or the executive principal. If the grievance directly concerns the executive principal then the process is referred directly to the board level. Final appeal can be lodged in writing with the board.

Complaints are handled quickly and fairly. Initial responses at all levels are made within 7 working days. A final decision is reached, if necessary, not more than 2 months after the grievance arose, if the process moves to the third level.

The stakeholder has the right to be accompanied by a friend, colleague or professional representative at any meetings called to discuss the grievance. After all meetings, the chairperson writes to confirm the outcome of the complaint, normally within five working days.

All records are treated as confidential, and this is assured by all parties involved in the process. Records are stored in the central offices where they can be accessed by the appropriate bodies

at a later date, if required. In discussion with inspectors, parents stated they felt confident about raising concerns, should they have any.

12. Standard 8

Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are good, with many excellent features.

The board ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate excellent skills and knowledge, appropriate to their role. They ensure that the BSO standards are met consistently. Together, they actively promote the well-being of students.

The board oversees school policies as well as the strategic direction of the school: the vision, the passion and the commitment to the current strategy is highly commendable. The future of the school is bright: the current policy of seeking ideas, advice and expertise from outstanding schools internationally, is an illustration of the confident manner in which RAKA is progressing towards excellence.

The energy, vision and direction provided by the executive principal and his team have continued since the last inspection and are exemplary. The executive principal, ably supported by the executive vice principal and the heads of school, continue to have a significant positive effect, as the school pursues its vision of learning excellence with a community heart.

Significant improvements have been made in many aspects of the school, for example in the Khuzam secondary school and in the Rams and Al Hamra primary schools. With continued support from the RAKA senior leaders, the capacity for further improvement remains strong. There has been notable work carried out to further strengthen the middle leadership team across the whole school: where this has been most effective, the rate of progress is significant.

The leadership of the school have clarified that each school within the family has its own mission: individual and reactive to its local context, while still being part of the larger mission of RAKA. BSO re-inspection of all schools as one, in three years' time, is not likely to give the level of detail that the leaders would want.