



**British School  
Overseas**  
Inspected by Penta International

**Inspection report**

**Star International  
School, Mirdif**

**Dubai**

**United Arab Emirates**

Date **24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

Inspection **20230424**

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## 1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

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

The inspection and this report follow the Department for Education (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 students; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation (including boarding, where appropriate); and the school's complaints procedures. 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 students and students' 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 English Department for Education (DFE) on the extent to which schools meet the standards for British Schools Overseas.

During the inspection visit, over 75 lesson observations took place, as well as a series of learning walks and meetings. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, and a range of teachers, parents and groups of students. The inspection team were in school for three days.

The lead inspector was Colin Dyson. The team members were Ian Battersby, Mel Davis, Andrew McLaughlin and Andrew Smyllie.

## 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 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

Star International School, Mirdif, provides a high-quality education that meets the needs of its students. The school has many strengths and is continuing to develop further through innovation. The school offers a robust British education. The curriculum is rich and inspiring: students are engaged in their learning. Teachers make good use of the wide range of resources and creative outdoor spaces, to plan interesting lessons across all subject areas. Students' behaviour is exemplary, and they enjoy school. As a result, students make progress, and become confident and articulate learners.

#### 3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including the following:

- School leaders are hardworking, enthusiastic, and have the capacity to further improve the school.
- Students are confident, self-assured learners. They display excellent attitudes to learning and are excellent ambassadors for the school.
- The tangible impact that the principal is achieving with his collaborative and inclusive approach
- The vision and drive of the principal and leadership team; focused on continuous improvement in all aspects of the school's life
- The whole school community, teaching, non-teaching, administration and ancillary staff work as a team to promote high quality learning and care for all students.
- The quality of relationships is outstanding. Students show a genuine concern for the needs of others and display a high level of self-awareness and confidence.
- Parents value the family feel of the school, the open-door policy and the educational opportunities afforded.
- Prompt, targeted and effective support for students when particular needs are identified.
- Excellent administrative staff who enable the school to run effectively on a day-to-day basis.
- The collegiality of all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, contributes to a common drive and purpose that is supportive and highly effective.
- High teaching standards across the school. Most lessons were good or better. No lesson was judged to be unsatisfactory.

## 3.2 Points for improvement

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

- i. Further develop the use of data to effectively celebrate and track the excellent progress made by all students during their time at the school.
- ii. Ensure that a consistent, high quality and innovative approach to the teaching of phonics is embedded.
- iii. Support all leaders and managers to effectively evaluate the impact of new initiatives.

## 4 The context of the school

Full name of School	Star International School Mirdif, Dubia, U.A.E				
Address	24 B Street- Mirdif - Dubai (near Abaya Shopping mall) United Arab Emirates.				
Telephone Number/s	+971 4 288 4644				
Fax Number	N/A				
Website Address	<a href="https://www.starmirdifschool.com/">https://www.starmirdifschool.com/</a>				
Key Email Address/s	<a href="mailto:principal@starmirdif.com">principal@starmirdif.com</a>				
Headteacher/Principal	Neal Oates				
Chair of Board of Governors/Proprietor	Abigail Fishbourne				
Age Range	3-16 years old				
Total number of students	<b>903</b>	Boys	486	Girls	417
Numbers by age	0-2 years	0	12-16 years	160	
	3-5 years	193	17-18 years	1	
	6-11 years	549	18+ years	0	
Total number of part-time children	None				

Star International School Mirdif is a BSME accredited, co-educational British curriculum all through school in the heart of the Mirdif community in Dubai. Currently, the school has students from year groups Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) 1 through to Year 11, with plans to expand into Year 12 in September 2023. Star International School Mirdif aims to deliver a creative, yet skills-based approach to learning, which incorporates the objectives associated with the English National Curriculum.

The school encourages its students to become curious about the world around them, think critically about problems and issues which arise, to problem solve and to become independent learners.

Star International School is a highly effective school due to strong leadership from the principal, board members and senior leaders. The quality of teaching is at least consistently good and as a result students achieve well in all aspects of their education and development. Students and their teachers enjoy school. Strong relationships based on mutual trust and understanding are evident throughout the school.

## 4.1 British nature of the school

Star Mirdif follows the UK National Curriculum for England and Wales in all phases of school. The curriculum is mapped to UK standards with examinations exclusively iGCSE/GCSE and BTEC. The school offers a broad and diverse curriculum. Outside of the core subjects of English, maths and science, the school offers additional specialist provision such as music, performing arts, art, STEAM (which includes elements of computer science and DT) and PE.

Parents embrace the British nature of the school and are proud to have their children study at the school. British core values are embedded across the school. Democratically elected student parliament members work across the school to initiate change and provide constructive feedback to school leaders regarding school improvement matters.

The school celebrate and British events such as Remembrance Day and the up-and-coming King Charles III Coronation. Students actively participate in Community based learning that include developing further knowledge and understanding of King Charles III and the British Royal Family.

The vast majority of the teachers are British trained with the main language of instruction being English. Professional development across all phases of the school is research based and in line with UK standards.

To further develop learning and teaching across the school, teachers integrated the UK based CPD WALKTHRUS model. Students participate in the annual British Science

Week which has enhanced the learning opportunities for students and raised the profile of science across the school.

The structure of the senior and middle leadership team is based on the UK model with pastoral care being a key strength by providing students and parents with excellent support and guidance.

The school are members of BSME and actively participate in conferences, webinars and the BSME best practice network. Star School also has a variety of trips following the challenges brought about by COVID. In addition to sports fixtures and house/pastoral rewards trips, students have the opportunity to develop new skills through year group outdoor pursuits expeditions through a local provider, North Star.

Year 10 students participate in a week of work experience to expose them to the options and decisions around the world of work and selecting a career. There are also curriculum trips related to Geography fieldwork and visiting local places of interest related to science and enterprise. The introduction of the Duke of Edinburgh Award from August 2023 will provide opportunities for students to pull together their hobbies, skills and service with an expedition to achieve their Bronze or Silver Award before graduating from Star at the end of Year 13.

Across the Primary phase, students learn about British history including the suffragette movement, Emily Davidson, World War 2 and the Great Fire of London. In Geography, further opportunities for learning with explicit links to the UK include comparing and contrasting, Human and Physical features such as landscapes, mountains and rivers.

Annual events such World Book Day are celebrated through the recognition of British authors. Students also participate on trips and visits such as the Year 6 Mc Beth theatre trip and Stone Age workshop.

Within the secondary curriculum, the humanity subjects include British historical events, artists and entrepreneurs, whilst the students actively participate in Maths Pi Day, UK Maths Challenge and Book Week.



## 5 Standard 1

### The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided is overall good with many outstanding features. The school fully meets the standards for BSO.

#### 5.1 Curriculum

The school has a written curriculum policy, supported by schemes of work and appropriate planning documentation which details how students of all ages and aptitudes will be challenged and supported. The planning in all year groups is collaborative. The delivery of the curriculum focuses on meeting the needs of the individual learner and developing the vision of the school through stimulating and exciting memorable learning experiences. There is clear evidence of planning for good progression. The documentation is reviewed and updated.

The children's behaviour was exemplary, with teachers and managers having high expectations, linked to school values. Values and learning dispositions are embedded into the curriculum and embraced by the children.

The approach to learning in F1 and F2 is based upon the UK's EYFS framework. Continuous provision is established, consistently well planned, inviting and offers opportunities for children to explore and develop their ideas independently. Activities are designed to follow the children's interests. Phonics is taught using a variety of resources drawn from multiple schemes and approaches. As a result, the language used in teaching phonics varies according to the teacher. The school should review the approach to teaching phonics to ensure consistency across classes and different phases of the school.

In Key Stage (KS) 1, the curriculum is broad and well matched to meet the needs of all children. The curriculum is mapped to reflect cross curricular links, 'awe and wonder' opportunities and United Nations Sustainability Development Goals. Collaborative curriculum planning ensures consistency within year groups and subjects, whilst ensuring that the academic transition between year groups is effective. An interim phonics programme has been developed using strategies from a variety of sources and children are grouped according to ability. Whilst this has enabled good progress across KS1, a single programme could ensure a more consistent teaching approach and use of language throughout the school.

The primary school plans and delivers a broad and balanced curriculum. Students access a wide variety of different subjects through class-based teaching and regular high quality timetabled specialist lessons. Through project-based learning, students develop their wide knowledge across a variety of topics. The wider curriculum is

supported through a rich and varied extracurricular programme, extending students' skills, interests and talents. Across the primary school, teachers demonstrate a deep knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and use questioning effectively to develop learning. Students are challenged to do their best through the high expectations of teachers and this is demonstrated by the excellent behaviour and levels of engagement in lessons. The curriculum provides opportunities for all students to make sustained progress considering their starting points. Students are engaged in their learning and are positive about school. Nearly all students show interest in what they are learning in lessons and develop skills, knowledge and understanding. Many have a good understanding of how well they are doing and of what they need to do to improve further.

The secondary curriculum offered is broad and balanced and takes account of the curricula commonly used in schools in the UK. Awe and wonder are incorporated into the planning to allow students to make links to real life problems and experiences. Evidence from learning activities highlighted the use of ingenious hooks to engage the students, for example using round biscuits in science to develop understanding of the phases of the moon. Students commented positively on their broad range of activities they enjoy in the classroom.

A strength of the secondary curriculum is a recognition of the importance placed on oracy where the use of precise language and extended vocabulary enables the mainly EAL population to express themselves confidently and appropriately. Across both key stages in the secondary school, the curriculum is enhanced by interweaving personal social and health education. Students are encouraged to hold open conversations and discussions about key issues such as mental health and wellbeing. The curriculum is further augmented by the opportunity to participate in a range of before and after-school activities and trips that are linked to their wonder and awe input.

The curriculum is well monitored and adapted considering student voice when appropriate. In the secondary school, students broaden and deepen their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and methods because the curriculum is demanding and engaging. The progress students can make is excellent and by Year 11 they have planned work that is preparing them well for study in the forthcoming sixth form. The activities across all subjects were evidenced as exciting and engaging for the students and one student commented, "our teachers care to give us exciting lessons."

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

Teaching and assessment are good and often excellent.

The approach to learning in F1 and F2 is based upon the EYFS framework. Continuous provision is established, consistently well planned, inviting and offers opportunities for children to explore and develop their ideas independently: the quality of teaching is high and often excellent.

Activities are designed to follow the children's interests. For example, children were showing interest in washing the ride-on vehicles outside. The following day, the 'Star Car Wash' activity proved to be a great stimulus for the children's learning. Classroom environments reflect current themes and topics to further support learning. Giant body parts illustrating the 5 senses and a doctor's surgery were referred to in interactions between children and adults. To support the children's independent learning skills, characters, such as 'Active Ant' and 'Finding Falcon' bring to life the characteristics of effective learning in an age-appropriate way.

The quality of teaching and learning throughout KS1 is predominantly good with many outstanding lessons observed. In the best lessons students confidently and actively engage in their learning. This was evident in a Year 2 phonics lesson where the teacher creatively set the scene for students to be immersed into a full sensory jungle experience. Students were then able to explore rich detail and figurative language to describe the setting upon which they found themselves. Positive framing is used effectively to encourage individuals to build and challenge themselves and their peers to further explore ideas and concepts. The 'awe and wonder' curriculum was evident in several lessons. In a Year 3 numeracy lesson, students were visibly excited about their investigation about capacity, when they were given the resources to explore their predictions before articulating their reasoning about why the different containers hold different volumes of liquid.

Teachers consistently contextualise lessons, make links to prior learning and encourage students to consider where British Values may be evident. In a Year 2 writing lesson, students were exploring affirmations and compliments as new concepts but were able to make links to a story they had previously read. The learning went deeper upon the effective use of teacher questioning to facilitate a discussion about the fundamental British Values of Respect and Tolerance. Student collaboration and discussions are well established, offering opportunities to share ideas, to develop their confidence, reasoning, speaking, and listening skills.

In KS1 lessons, the success criteria and learning activities are sufficiently differentiated to provide opportunities for achievement and challenge. Teachers work closely with the learning support department to ensure that Students of Determination and those with English as Additional Language are monitored, supported, and make measurable progress. Workbooks are consistently marked

with appropriate personalised feedback to encourage individual progress and growth. There are clear expectations and routines in place as all students are focused on their learning and want to achieve the learning outcome.

Across the primary years teachers are confident and have developed an effective working relationship with students, offering lots of praise and encouragement. Teachers manage students' behaviour very effectively. The classroom management is strong, classroom time is well managed, and pace is appropriate. Teachers use well-judged and often imaginative teaching strategies. Students effectively use a range of learning opportunities such as hot seating, group and partner talk. As a result, they use language highly effectively to communicate on a wide range of experiences. Children in Year 4 demonstrated a highly extended vocabulary as they shared interesting vocabulary to describe some atmospheric settings. The encouragement and development of partner discussion led to Year 3 children sharing well developed ideas through critical thinking on why the Romans invaded Britain.

Teachers recognise and value the importance of using the correct terminology to enable students to make meaningful connections in learning and support their understanding of the world. Students in Year 5 investigated soluble and insoluble materials through a range of practical investigations. Sharing ideas and making hypotheses before using effective fair testing to evaluate outcomes. Teachers use questioning effectively to check on students' understanding and prompt deeper thinking. Ongoing verbal feedback is provided to the whole class and individuals

Students across the primary years are enterprising innovative, and independent learners who can effectively find things out for themselves using a variety of different sources including learning technologies. Critical thinking, problem solving, innovation and independent learning skills are skilfully developed in the most effective lessons.

The teachers create attractive classroom environments that support the learning in class and promote high standards of work. Resources are used creatively by teachers to enable students to grasp concepts quickly and make good progress. The curriculum provides opportunities for all students to make sustained progress considering their starting points. Students are engaged in their learning and are positive about school. Nearly all students show interest in what they are learning in lessons and develop skills, knowledge and understanding. Many have a good understanding of how well they are doing and of what they need to do to improve further.

The teaching in the secondary school is at least good and, in many instances, excellent. Students respond with enthusiasm to their teachers and in the best lessons observed teachers facilitated learning through practical activities and through clear routines and expectations that had been set for their students. Students and their teachers enjoy school and the strong relationships based on

mutual trust and understanding are evident throughout the secondary school allowing students to make good progress in lessons.

Within the secondary school lessons observations show almost all students are well behaved, know their routines well, participate confidently, and respect each other and their resources. Students are able to lead their own learning and happily work independently alongside others or engage in the well-planned activities with their peers. All teachers showed they have a strong depth of knowledge in their subjects and many teachers moved the learning forward quickly through skilled use of probing questions and appropriate pace of the lessons.

Students' attitudes to school are exceptionally positive and their conduct in lessons and around the school, were seen to be impeccable as teachers referenced the school's expectations around supporting one another's wellbeing, thus making a harmonious learning environment. In discussions students commented positively on the verbal feedback they got from teachers about their work and how it helped them to know how to improve their work. They also mentioned that they liked to have written feedback to refer back to when their work was marked, this was evidenced in some areas, but not consistently.

Students respond with enthusiasm to their teachers and in the best lessons observed teachers facilitated learning through practical activities and through clear routines and expectations that had been set for their students. Students and their teachers enjoy school and the strong relationships based on mutual trust and understanding are evident throughout the secondary school allowing students to make good progress in lessons.

## 5.3 Standards achieved by students

EYFS children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and moderated against other schools in the group. Child targets are aligned to the ELGs and updated regularly. Photographs of the children holding their targets are shared with parents via Seesaw. When the target is met, the photo is sent home and a new target is created. The attitudes and dispositions of children are exemplary, and the children are proud of their school.

In the three prime areas, (personal, social and emotional development, physical development and communication and language), children achieve significantly above UK expectations and make excellent progress from the school's baseline assessments on entry. Attainment in maths, English and science is good compared to UAE national expectations with very good progress being made in English and outstanding progress in maths and science.

In KS1, students are assessed internally during planned assessment periods for English, reading, writing, mathematics, science and moral social cultural studies. The school data for internal assessments showcases that all students made expected or above progress in 2022, with an overall attainment in English 86%, reading 87%, maths 90% and science 97%. At the end of Year 1 students complete the UK Phonics Screening check, where pass rates exceed the UK national standard.

In Year 2 students are assessed using standardised GL assessments to measure attainment and CAT 4 to demonstrate progress at planned data points. The school's external data reflect attainment in 2022 for English 92%, Math 81% and Science 92%. CAT 4 progress reflects the progress made across the three core subjects English 94%, Math 82% and Science 93%. The school will benefit from further embedding systems of robust data collection, monitoring and tracking to allow comparison of cohorts year on year and the earliest identification of emerging trends to inform teaching and learning. Students requiring extra support are identified during student progress meetings at the end of each term where intervention is planned, monitored, and reviewed. Student work is moderated within the year groups and collaboratively with colleagues from the partner school on the Altwar campus.

Students across the primary years are self-motivated to learn and curious to know more. They arrive at school on time and attend well because they enjoy school. Students are respectful and courteous to their peers and staff. Relationships are strong at all levels. Students know when to work, to manage distractions and study with intent.

The standards in students' workbooks and displays indicates students are working at age-related expectation and above in English, and at the expected level in maths. Display work across the primary school was of a very high standard and work displayed is created and presented by the students. Students talked articulately and

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confidently about what they were learning to do and what they needed to learn to do next. As a result, progress in learning is strong across the primary years particularly for students who enter the school with low academic attainment, with low self-esteem or no English. These students do exceptionally well. Highly positive relationships between staff and those students requiring extra support allows for this group of students to consistently reach their personalised targets.

Teachers have a good understanding of students starting points, using baseline data. Student outcomes are evaluated regularly throughout the year. Data on student's progress highlight that typically across KS2 90+% make progress that is above national expectations. School data identifies that for students in the primary years up to 50% demonstrate attainment that is above the expected national outcomes. At present school data does not clearly identify progress for individuals and cohorts across their full time in the school.

According to the school data attainment and progress in English, Maths and Science the students make broadly better than expected progress and reach levels of attainment above the UK expectations. The data manager works with the teachers in KS4 to set the expectations for the inaugural IGCSE students. Regular assessments in Years 10 and 11 ensure the students understand the terminology of the examinations and allows them to monitor their progress. From these assessments additional support has been given to students in Year 11 to help them achieve the necessary levels in the exams.

Students in KS 4 talked about knowing their predicted and their challenge levels and they reported that they liked to know where they were at during the year so they can do well at the end of the key stage.

Historical data regarding academic performance, would enable the school to track and monitor progress over time and highlight any key trends.



## 6 Standard 2 Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development of students

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students provided by Star International School Mirdif is excellent and fully meets the standard.

The attitudes and dispositions of students throughout the school are exemplary. Students' mindsets to school and learning are positive, and they are proud of their environment and its community. Students are happy and there is a real sense of individual character development throughout all aspects of school life. Students value their education which is demonstrated by their high levels of attendance (typically 95%+).

Relationships between all members of the school community are polite, respectful, and constructive. There is an effective behaviour policy which is cited by staff, students, and parents as being effective in supporting students to recognise how behaviours and attitudes can impact upon others. Students are aware of how they can raise concerns of bullying and unpleasantness. Although rarely used, there are procedures to deal with and record low level disruption and poor behaviour.

The school's core values (Self Belief, Teamwork, Adventure and Respect) are fully embedded across all areas of the school. Classroom rules are aligned to the core values, and they are integrated into all aspects of school life including the rewards system. The house system at Star is made up of Wildcats, Falcons, Geckos, and Oryx, which are led by Student House Captains. The House system facilitates a sense of belonging within the school community which is supported by data from the Pulse survey. House Points and awards are given for academic achievements and universal values. Regular House competitions include Inter House Sports Competitions, Star's Got Talent, Quiz Challenge, Ramadan charity events, Enterprise Week, and Star's Bake Off.

Students are active members of the school community, which is evident in the children's involvement, care, and pride. There is a student parliament in both the Primary and Secondary school which are elected through a democratic voting system. In the Secondary school, there is a head boy and head girl in Year 10. The student parliament has led several initiatives this year, from playground monitors, peer mentors and reading to younger students. One student shared that she joined the student parliament because she wanted to improve her school and make a difference. She was able to share an example of how the student parliament was able to support the improved facilities and resources on a once tired looking Astro turf playing area. There is an active eco council that has participated in a beach clean-up and led the Simply Bottles Recycling campaign. The school has recently received a Sustainability Grant from ISP and the eco council has now introduced a hydroponics area.

A diverse student and staff population represents many different cultures. This creates a rich community where students are given the opportunity to learn about and respect different cultures, as well as learning to make friendships and build relationships with others from a



range of different backgrounds. The school actively promotes tolerance and respect for human differences. This is embedded in the culture and ethos of the school. A KS2 student stated 'during a recent Quran competition, my non-Muslim friend helped me to revise because she knew how important my beliefs are to me. When I didn't win, she offered me support and was a good friend'.

From EYFS through to Secondary school, students are encouraged to be independent and resilient learners. The use of Zones of Regulation in EYFS has allowed children to develop and explore language about their feelings and give them strategies about how to overcome some emotions. Leuven scales are used by teachers to monitor students' wellbeing throughout the year. In the Secondary school, wellbeing is equally as important and PULSE data alongside PASS data allows the pastoral team to implement interventions as necessary. The school believes that this has a positive impact on their attainment as progress is above expected levels in all phases of the school. The VESPA model is applied in the secondary school to further support the student vision and development of successful study skills.

Extracurricular activities (ECAs) offered before and after school include a broad and balanced range of sporting, well-being and academic options in line with student interests.

Transitions at key points are well planned and delivered to facilitate progression between key stages and preparation for life beyond Star. The regular review of ECAs has seen the introduction of a popular Year 2 Chrome Book session to support student confidence and familiarity with the technology that they will have access to from Year 3 onwards. Year 6 students spoke about term three activities to encourage them to become more organised in their approaches to learning along with the planned visits to the secondary school lessons and break times to allow for a smooth transition.

There is a strong focus and programme of careers information advice and guidance from Year 9 and above whereby students are encouraged to further consider their iGCSE options. The students have been given the opportunity to attend external careers fairs, INJAZ workshops, have Uni Frog accounts, dedicated members of experienced and qualified staff on hand to offer CIAG. Impressively, Star held their own University fair on site with 12 universities from all around the world attending. This gave the students a more comfortable atmosphere to have more meaningful conversations with potential destinations.

All Year 10 students spend a week in the world of work where they actively seek a placement, apply for the role, attend work, and complete the roles and responsibilities. They document their time, reporting on skills such as time management, organisation, negotiation, decision making and problem solving. Students analyse their performance at the end of the week and have a briefing with their employer alongside a member of staff from the school. By the time they leave school, students have the personal and social skills needed to move successfully to the next stage of their lives or to actively participate in life in modern Britain.

## 7 Standard 3 The welfare, health and safety of the students

The provision for welfare, health and safety is excellent.

The welfare of students and staff a key focus in the school and fully meets the requirements for BSO.

Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and robust. Systems are monitored and maintained, with a strong designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who oversees the processes in action and a deputy DSL to support the procedures. All staff including contracted cleaners, receive annual Level 1 child protection training. Posters displayed around the school ensure that students are familiar with safeguarding leads. Systems for reporting concerns are understood and used effectively by staff and students alike.

Relationships are strong between students, and between staff and students. Due to effective procedures and support from the counsellor and pastoral teams in all key stages, students know they are cared for. A series of well-being-based activities further promote student care. The use of the online Pulse system allows students to report any concerns in private and these are dealt with immediately by appropriate staff.

Healthy eating is promoted, and there is a clear drive to develop healthy lifestyles and the newly fitted food nutrition room allows students to learn more about healthy food choices. Water is available at many points around the school to ensure students remain hydrated. Student parliament are proud to design and lead campaigns concerning anti-bullying and promoting student well-being and a student anti bullying ambassador allows students to talk to a peer when they may be reluctant to talk to an adult. Such campaigns and procedures promote the visibly excellent behaviour. These systems are complemented with initiatives put in place by school staff around areas such as online safety. As a result, students feel well cared for with a student describing the school community as a “happy school”.

A school focus is to ensure students are safe and well cared for through clear guidelines, and rigorous risk assessments for school activities, trips, sporting competitions and more. Risk assessments are prepared by the staff responsible for these activities and overseen by the facilities manager and shared with staff and students.

Comprehensive fire evacuation and lockdown procedures are in place and regularly practised during the year. Regular health and safety audits are conducted ensuring any issues are reported and dealt with in a timely manner. Students are well supervised whilst in and around the school buildings, and a harmonious atmosphere of respect exists. The maintenance and cleaning staff take a pride in ensuring the school is clean and safe for the whole community. The rigorous health and safety processes ensure the staff and students are well cared for and are kept safe.

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

The suitability of the proprietor and staff at Star International meets in full the requirements of the BSO standards.

Star International school meets the safety, care and guidance requirements for all students. The school ensures that all required checks are carried out on all staff who are employed to work at the school. This includes checks made against identification, medical fitness, the right to work in Dubai, qualifications, and suitability to work with children. These checks are made before the person is appointed to the role. All teaching staff and teaching assistants are approved by the ministry to gain a residence visa. This ensures further, that the checks on a person's suitability to work in the school are robust. Qualifications are attested and the school asks to see a police check certificate, International Police certificate and ACRO ICPC. Three references are taken up to check against the person's identity. Questions are asked of referees to provide assurances that the person is suitable to work with children. Systems regarding the suitability of staff to work at the school are robust and all information is stored centrally on a single record that is monitored and updated by a highly effective Human Resource team.

Staffing levels ensure the successful delivery of the curriculum. All teaching staff have qualifications appropriate to their role; some staff have further academic or teaching qualifications that enhance school developments. All teaching staff are suitably qualified for their role. British staff have UK qualifications and experience with the age range and subjects being taught. All teachers have appropriate local qualifications and experience. The school has an induction programme to ensure teachers are fully informed about policy and practice across key areas. The school also has a rigorous performance management system based on the UK teacher standards; where there are concerns the school makes use of a very thorough staff support plan to ensure that any weaknesses are addressed.

## 9 *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The school provides an excellent, very safe and secure environment for the students in which to learn; it fully meets the requirements for BSO.

The school campus is divided into 3 main sections catering for EYFS, primary, secondary. Classrooms and other areas are bright and well-resourced, with space used creatively to enable the curriculum delivery. Displays are of a high standard, with an emphasis on celebrating high quality students' work and information linking it to curriculum units displayed alongside.

Facilities include a generous number of classrooms, science labs, art and performing arts rooms, as well as a food & nutrition classroom, music room and a combined STEAM and DT room which enhance the learning for the students. They are well-appointed, well-resourced and with appropriate safety equipment to ensure students can learn safely. A hub for the secondary students not only allows a meeting place for students but is also utilised for lessons.

Physical education (PE) facilities for outdoor provision combined with a large sports hall allow for excellent provision of a wide range of healthy activities and sports such as football, basketball, netball and many more sports. The large swimming pool allows students in to learn to swim and improve stroke technique. Splash pools in the excellently resourced FS block allow students to develop water confidence in a safe area. These are all well maintained areas that are safe and conducive to physical development and allow competitive as well as participation sports to take place and all areas are equipped with sufficient changing rooms. The foundation stage outdoor provision areas combined with the indoor break out spaces allow students opportunities for physical and social development alongside their learning focused play.

The two clinics are expertly staffed and well resourced, with separate treatment rooms in both. First aid boxes and defibrillators are available in key areas of the school for the trained staff to use. Modifications have been made to the school building to allow access for all, including toilet facilities and lifts.

Indoor and outdoor areas for break times are appropriate to allow students to eat comfortably and socialise. Outdoor recreation spaces include covered areas, providing shade in the warmer months. Highly professional and well-trained maintenance and cleaning staff ensure that buildings are maintained to a good standard, clean and safe; students and staff take a visible pride in their school.

## 10 Standard 6

### The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents, carers and others fully meets the standard: this is a strength of the school.

Relevant policies and useful information regarding the school is published on the school's website. Written reports are provided to parents about their child's individual achievements followed by parent teacher meetings each term. In EYFS, *Seesaw* is used to celebrate the children's 'Wow' moments in school and to inform parents of the children's targets. *EPraise* is used throughout the whole school as a means of communication and to arrange meetings with parents.

Parents feel very well informed and that the provision of information is relevant and useful. All year groups send curriculum overviews at the start of the term to highlight the upcoming learning. In EYFS, class weekly newsletters are shared with parents; year group newsletters are shared further up the school. In addition, the videos shared by the principal are appreciated for their personal nature.

A wide range of channels of communication exist between the school and its stakeholders. Parents appreciate the school's open-door approach and the visible nature of senior leadership who are always available during the morning drop off and in the afternoon. There are many further opportunities for parents to meet with teachers and gain information on the life of the school. The school organises many face-to-face workshops for parents in all phases of the school, such as a reading and writing workshop for FS1 and FS2 parents, a maths workshop for primary parents, and the Year 9 options evening. In addition to these, 'Parents Share' events provide an opportunity for students to share their learning with their parents.

Specific information meetings are arranged for students with learning needs and these are followed up with regular updates through emails, phone calls and follow up meetings. Parents felt that the level of individual care provided was a strength.

'Friends of Star' is a proactive and enthusiastic parent teacher group who have supported the school in activities such International Day and the Ramadan Charity Drive.

## 11 Standard 7

### The school's procedure for handling complaints

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

The procedures for handling complaints are set out in a clear and comprehensive parental complaints policy which is readily available for parents on the school website. The school has an open and approachable ethos and all staff ensure they are approachable and accessible. The senior leadership team ensure they are available for parents to approach for discussion during morning drop off and afternoon pick up.

In the first instance, parents are directed to raise any concerns with the class teacher. Any complaints raised are responded to within 24 hours. The aim is to resolve all complaints informally and speedily. However, should this not be possible, the policy sets out a clear process for complaints escalation; in practice this is rarely needed. There is an emphasis on fairness, neutrality, and a consistent approach to the handling of any complaint which might arise. The parental complaints policy sets out guidance for parents as well as staff dealing with a complaint in the first instance, with a detailed and clear step-by-step process. The policy explains the roles and responsibilities of the principal and leadership team in the complaints handling process. Should it not be possible to resolve a complaint by speaking directly with school staff, including the principal, then it would be escalated to the Core Board of Governors.

School records highlight that all complaints to date have been handled effectively with a satisfactory resolution. The policy is reviewed regularly by the senior leadership team. All complaints and meetings relating to the complaints are recorded.

## 12 Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding and fully meet BSO requirements.

The principal has a strong sense of purpose and combines emotional intelligence, resilience and a shared conviction towards a constant goal of driving forward school improvement. The school is run in a highly efficient manner. The senior leadership team (SLT) are hands-on, flexible and highly committed to the students and to the school. The principal provides an outstanding example to all, being a hard-working, dedicated and down-to-earth leader who knows his staff and students very well and provides strong direction for all.

Through highly effective distributed leadership, instead of merely delegating tasks to teachers the principal gives teachers real power and ownership over crucial aspects of the schools. This includes areas such as professional development, teacher mentoring and self-evaluation.

School development priorities are clearly identified through rigorous self-evaluation and clear plans are drawn up to bring about improvements in the areas identified. The school's self-evaluation demonstrates that school leaders and managers have a clear understanding of its present effectiveness. They are strongly motivated to ensure leadership and management at all levels is successful in securing, developing and motivating the highest quality of teaching and learning for all students. Thoughtful planning, clear direction, effective delegation and self-critical evaluation are strong features of the performance indicators the school is aiming to embed fully.

A programme of performance management linked to student outcomes, school development priorities and individual professional targets, provides feedback and guidance to teachers. The school's leaders conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of the students' academic performance through learning walks, workbook and lesson plan monitoring and lesson observations. The information gathered informs training needs. Teachers are committed to the school and talked about the high quality of support they receive from the school regarding their wellbeing and professional development. Continuous professional development (CPD) provides the relevant support to move on and embed developments, as well as meet individual teacher's training needs. School leaders are forward thinking and keep themselves and staff abreast of the latest developments in best practice in the UK.

The principal instils the importance of shared values and respects the importance of building a strong community and has an ambitious vision to ensure the school achieves high status through a strong commitment to continuous improvement. A direct result of the leadership and management of the school is that the students at Star International are happy and motivated to learn. They enjoy their education and even the very youngest are able to develop their personal qualities to the full. Relationships in the school are positive and strong.

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Leaders model the best examples of relationships and behaviours, so that respect, courtesy and good manners are the norm. The school leadership team have established highly successful strategies for engaging parents and carers. Regular contact, both face to face and electronically, ensures that they are provided with the information required about the school as well as their child's progress. Parents and carers are given specific guidance about how they can support their child at home.

The school board has secure systems of checks and balances to assess the effectiveness of the school. The separate responsibilities of the governors and the school's professional leadership are understood and respected. Collectively governance has a highly effective impact of the school's work.