

GEMS Wellington Academy, Al Khail

British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

Inspection Dates: 17 – 19 November 2019

Lead Inspector: Sally Lane
Team: Kaushi Silva, Robin Attfield

Age Group: 3-18
Report Published: 11 December 2019



Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection report follows the English Department for Education (DfE) Schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas. The inspection was carried out by three inspectors from Education Development Trust who spent three days at the school. Education Development Trust is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas and quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

Education Development Trust is one of the world's leading not-for-profit education companies, providing a range of education services in the UK and internationally. Education Development Trust employs over 2,500 staff worldwide, all working on projects relating to educational quality.

To be recognised by the Department for Education, a British School Overseas must have an inspection report which shows that its performance against all the standards is at least satisfactory. This reflects the standards required for continuing registration as a school in England. Schools meeting the standards will have their inspection reports published on the Department's website and will be registered on Edubase.

Inspectors report on the extent to which schools meet the relevant Standards for British Schools Overseas. These were updated with effect from September 2017. The inspection follows closely the framework for the inspection of independent schools in England but, where appropriate, also takes account of compliance with local regulations.

A policy update was issued by the DfE in October 2018. The Department confirmed that 'our policy is now to accredit schools in countries where to meet certain standards would be in breach of the host country laws, as long as there is evidence to substantiate this, and all other standards are met'.

The Standards are as follows:

1. The quality of education provided by the school (Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment)
2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils
4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff
5. The premises and accommodation
6. The provision of information
7. The manner in which complaints are handled
8. The leadership and management of the school
9. The quality of provision for boarding.

The purposes of the inspections are to:

- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education and of the care for their welfare
- provide rigorous and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and celebrate their strengths and to identify and remedy any weaknesses
- inform parents and the wider public of the quality of British schools overseas by placing reports in the public domain.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Proportions used in the report

90–100% Vast/overwhelming majority or almost all

75–90% Very large majority, most

65–74% Large majority

51–64% Majority

35–49% Minority

20–34% Small minority

4–19% Very small minority, few

0–3% Almost none/very few

Information about the school

GEMS Wellington Academy Al Khail is an inclusive, privately owned, co-educational school that caters for children from three to 18 years. The school is located in the centre of the Dubai Hills community in Dubai, alongside two other schools in the GEMS family. It is part of a group of 48 GEMS schools located throughout the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The school is smaller than others of a similar type but is growing. It opened in 2013 and currently has 1007 pupils on roll. This year the school's first Year 13 students will graduate and around 90% have already had offers from UK universities.

There is a total of 77 countries represented in the school. The largest groups represented are any other white background, Asian, Arab and White British/Irish. English is the language of instruction for all pupils. More than half of all pupils speak English as an additional language and, depending on their level of need, receive extra withdrawal language support in addition to high-quality teaching. There are 79 pupils, approximately 8% of the school, who have recognised special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The Principal has been in post for two and a half years and the academy leadership team is ensuring stability and consistency. A well-qualified team of 95 teachers, the very large majority of whom trained in the UK, provide a ratio of, on average, one teacher to every 10 pupils.

Teacher turnover is low and decreasing. Last year it was just 10%. Pupils' learning is supported further by 29 teaching assistants in Primary and Early Years, seven SEND teachers and three who specifically support those with additional language needs. In addition, 30 learning support assistants, paid for by parents and carers, support pupils with more severe learning needs and/or disabilities. Most of the school's systems and procedures are based on British best practice.

Summary of the evidence base used by the inspection team

The BSO inspection was carried out by a team of three Education Development Trust inspectors. The inspection dates were agreed with the school with 10 weeks' notice of the start date of the inspection. The inspection team had access to information about the school prior to the inspection. Over three days, the team observed 57 part-lessons, 11 jointly with members of the leadership team. Inspectors held 21 meetings during which discussions with staff, pupils, parents and governors took place. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, surveys of the views of parents, pupils and staff and school documents and generally observed the school at work.

Evaluation of the school

GEMS Wellington Academy, Al Khail is an outstanding school and provides an outstanding quality of education for pupils from three to 18 years.

The school meets all of the Standards for British Schools Overseas except those which it is precluded from meeting because of the host country's legislation. These are explained later in the report. The requirements of the host country take precedence and no action points are, therefore, specified in relation to these unmet standards and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

The vast majority of children arrive in the Early Years foundation stage (EYFS) with little experience of formal education and most have limited exposure to English. Initial data shows that most children begin their time in school working at levels well below those typical for their age in the UK. By the time they leave the Early Years, they have made outstanding progress and the vast majority are working at least at UK typical standards. In the previous academic year, a large majority of children achieved a good level of development before leaving the Early Years. Internal data predicts that, at the end of this year, all children will have achieved a good level of development by the end of their time in the Early Years. Rates of progress are fastest in communication, personal and social development and in the mathematical areas of learning.

Well-planned activities, matched closely to all areas of the EYFS framework, help children develop key concepts through concrete and abstract ways of working. Almost all classes present a rich and varied environment which is well organised and supported by high-quality resources and books. Teachers have high expectations and routinely plan engaging activities for independent as well as whole-class work. The well-planned phonics programme enables children to develop early reading skills as well as learn common sight words. Planned outdoor activities enable children to develop gross and fine motor skills at an age-appropriate level. Participation in the varied and innovative opportunities in the classroom helps children to develop their social skills. The focus on independent tasks encourages children to take risks in their learning and solve problems.

Planning identifies children's achievements, as well as their next steps in learning. Teachers use observational and task-based assessments to plan individual and group challenges. By the time that they leave the Early Years, almost all children are ready for the challenges of the Year 1 curriculum. Partnerships with parents are very strong. The majority of parents appreciate the opportunities to celebrate their child's achievements by participating in class events and activities.

In the Early Years, attainment in **English** is in line with expectations. Most children arrive at school with limited communication skills. Almost all have English as an additional or new language. Through well-planned, challenging activities children become increasingly confident and proficient in using English to communicate. A very large majority are able to sequence stories and talk confidently about the characters in their favourite books. Writing skills develop well with many children able to write short sentences. The majority make outstanding progress and achieve good levels of development in communication and language by the end of Early Years.

In the Primary phase, pupils' attainment is in line with UK expectations. The focus on reading skills, with ambitious individual reading targets, has resulted in confident readers whose vocabulary has grown rapidly, as has their awareness of different reading genres. Inference skills are developing well. Writing skills develop well through the systematic exposure to a wide range of writing models. The incorporation of the teaching of grammar skills through daily writing tasks is supporting pupils in producing accurate writing models. The vast majority of pupils make outstanding progress in their reading and writing skills as a result of excellent teaching and high levels of challenge.

In the Secondary phase, pupils' attainment and progress, as reflected in their examination results and as shown in lessons, are outstanding. In 2019, in iGCSE examinations, overall pupils attained well above international averages. In lessons, they demonstrate excellent speaking, text-analysis and writing skills. They confidently evaluate complex concepts through reflective discussions about demanding literary texts. Accurate self-assessment, based on a good understanding of examination requirements, is a feature of many lessons post-16.

Across the school, targeted pupils with English as an additional language or those who are new to English are well supported and make outstanding progress across all skills.

Standards in **mathematics** have improved throughout the whole school over the last three years but especially rapidly in the early and Primary years as a result of the carefully planned curriculum which is now being extended into key stage 3.

In the Early Years, children quickly acquire skills and knowledge and start to investigate mathematical ideas and concepts. By the end of the Early Years foundation stage most recognise two- and three-dimensional shapes and the most able children can describe some of the properties of different shapes. Most children can count accurately to at least 20, have mastered the concept of equivalence and can write single-digit numbers accurately. A large majority exceed UK expectations in learning about shapes and measure and a small minority do so in number. This represents outstanding progress.

In the Primary phase, pupils make outstanding progress as a result of the excellent teaching they receive. A key feature is that they think deeply about different ways to address mathematical challenges. This was seen in Year 4 when pupils explored and evaluated different

ways of completing multiplication of two-digit numbers. By the end of key stage 2, a large majority exceed UK expectations.

By the end of Secondary school, pupils perform very well in GCSE examinations, exceeding the UK average, although not quite matching the outstanding progress made in many other subjects across the school.

Students are progressing well in the sixth form with the first cohort taking A-level examinations in mathematics at the end of the academic year. Pupils with SEND and those learning English as an additional language progress very well with many making outstanding progress.

Attainment in **science** is outstanding in all phases and exceeds expectations in the UK for all key stages. Pupils make outstanding progress throughout their time in the school.

Children in the Early Years are beginning to understand the world around them. Currently their focus on the Three Billy Goats Gruff story is encouraging them to build bridges. Children in Reception have been very successful in growing plants using hydroponics. They learn how to grow and then harvest vegetables and discuss why things might not grow. They understand where they each come from through the World-map display.

By the end of Year 6 the majority of pupils are working above UK averages. In external progress tests the large majority met or exceeded their 'if challenged' predicted grade. Attainment in external progress tests has improved considerably since 2016/17 and has remained constant over the past two years. All groups of pupils make similar levels of progress from their starting points. This improved progress has come due to opportunities to work in the science laboratory, opportunities to work at a deeper level and more focus on working scientifically using a consistent approach across the phase. Teachers focus on a love of learning science throughout the Primary phase and plan exciting activities to enthuse pupils. Year 4 pupils were learning about the effects of climate change on the whole world and its danger to living things.

By the end of key stage 4, all pupils achieve 5+ in all triple science subjects and most achieve 4+ in combined science. Very high proportions of pupils achieve the top grades, particularly in comparison with UK national averages. Overall, pupils make exceptional progress, achieving an average of two grades higher than initially predicted. Girls perform better than boys in GCSE science subjects. Overall fewer pupils with SEND meet their challenge target compared to others.

There are no A-level results yet, but it is clear that most students are making excellent progress in their work so far. In a Year 12 physics lesson, students were completing a momentum challenge and explaining the results to their peers with clarity. This meant that when they moved on to the exam question, they could complete it with more confidence.

Across the school, pupils make outstanding progress in a range of subjects to reach high standards, well above UK averages, particularly in the context of non-selective schools. In the 2019 GCSE examinations, pupils' results were on average almost two grades higher than predicted. These results represented the highest improvement across the 12 British GEMS schools in Dubai with GCSE results analysed through the Fischer Family Trust. Students in the sixth form are being well prepared for life beyond school through the wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities, work-related learning, visits and trips. Students say they are well

supported in their university applications and almost 90% have had an offer from a UK university. The retention of students on study programmes is high. A new initiative is VESPA (Vision, effort, systems, practice, attitude) lessons. Activities are designed to transform students' commitment, motivation and productivity and encourage them for example to reflect on study skills and how to use time effectively.

Summary of other judgements against the BSO standards:

- The quality of the curriculum provided by the school is outstanding (see Standard 1 below). To develop the curriculum still further, the school could consider offering alternative pathways in the sixth form. Leaders may also wish to consider best practice to broaden the curriculum at key stages 2 and 3.
- The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding overall (see Standard 1 below).
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding (see Standard 2 below).
- The welfare, health and safety of the pupils are outstanding (see Standard 3 below).
- The standard for the suitability of the proprietor and staff is met (see Standard 4 below).
- The premises and accommodation meet the requirements of the standard (see Standard 5 below).
- The provision of Information for parents meets the requirements of this standard (see Standard 6 below).
- The school's procedures for handling complaints meet the requirements of the standard (see Standard 7 below).
- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding (see Standard 8 below).

As a result of this inspection, undertaken during November 2019, the school has demonstrated that it meets the Standards for British Schools Overseas (2017 updated) except for those standards that cannot be achieved legally in the host country. Those precluded are marriage and civil partnership; gender reassignment; sex and sexual orientation. The school's provision prepares pupils well to enter or re-enter the UK independent school system. This judgement is endorsed by the British Government, quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and is valid for a period of three years.

Standard 1. The quality of education provided by the school

Most of the standards relating to the quality of the education are met except for the standard in paragraph 2 (2) (d) (ii). This is not met because of the requirements of the host country relating to the provisions of the UK Equality Act 2010.

The **curriculum** is outstanding and enables pupils to make outstanding progress. The curriculum and schemes of work are well documented, understood and implemented. Programmes offer a broad curriculum which is fundamentally British in character, evident in lessons and underpins British values. The house system and pastoral-care arrangements allow pupils to develop understanding of values such as democracy and the rule of law. Pupils study important periods in English history and the lives of some of its eminent men and women, both

past and present. Remembrance Day, Pink Day to develop cancer awareness and Mental Health Day are amongst events celebrated. There is clear progression and a strong British focus throughout. Consequently, the curriculum equips pupils with the knowledge and skills to enter or re-enter the UK education system smoothly and at an appropriate level.

Children follow the EYFS curriculum in the Early Years and then the English national curriculum and associated examinations at GCSE and A level. Moral, personal, social and health education are given a high priority with a focus on respect for all other people. The school promotes respect for all of the protected characteristics of the UK Equality Act 2010, including age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief but, because of UAE laws, cannot fully meet the requirements of the Act in relation to civil partnership, gender reassignment, sex and sexual orientation.

The school's principles for teaching and learning underpin the curriculum, developing learners who not only attain high academic standards but also acquire essential skills for modern-day life. The school's 'WEK Learner Profile' is integral to learning with five key attributes: risk-taking, inquiring, critical thinking, reflecting and team working. This is a key feature in developing pupils who think deeply and enjoy challenges and solving problems and prepares them extremely well for the next stage in their education.

The school offers a wide choice of options at key stage 4 and pupils and parents are well supported in making choices that reflect pupils' strengths, interests and aspirations. Most pupils take nine subjects at GCSE. The school offers 20 subjects at A level. Leaders are aware that, as an inclusive school, they will need to develop its provision for potential sixth-form students who need to follow a vocational curriculum. Careers education and guidance start in the Primary stage with pupils taking on enterprise work and becomes formalised as they make option choices for GCSE and sixth-form study and move on to higher education.

The curriculum is vibrant, organic and under perpetual review. Pupils' views form an important part of the process, which has led to exciting innovations in the provision of both project-based learning in the Primary department and the development of extra-curricular activities and special events within the school and beyond. The school works well with the local and wider community and during Ramadan pupils, parents and staff prepared and served food for support staff and raised money to support less fortunate children in Yemen.

There is an extensive range of high-quality extra-curricular activities. Clubs have produced national swimmers and a whole range of young triathletes who compete nationally and internationally. A significant proportion of pupils enjoy participation in the annual school production. Such opportunities play a key role in pupils' social and emotional development and growing understanding of the world at large.

Transition between year groups and between all stages is very well managed leading to continuity in learning. In a recent initiative, some Secondary teachers worked with groups of Year 6 pupils as early preparation for their transfer. The school recognises the need to synchronise further its Secondary curriculum continuity to build on the work undertaken in the Primary department and support progression for pupils and to provide additional specialist teaching in upper key stage 2, particularly in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects.

The school modifies the curriculum exceptionally well for pupils of all abilities and talents. This includes those with SEND, those learning English as an additional language and those who undertake long hours of training for their elite sport. The curriculum provides excellent preparation for all pupils to move forwards to the next stages in their lives.

The quality of **teaching, learning and assessment** is outstanding. Almost all teaching is highly effective in supporting excellent progress. Teachers across the school have both excellent subject knowledge and understanding of how best to teach pupils of all abilities. They use a variety of appropriate methods and are careful to ensure that pupils are neither too challenged nor too protected and are able to learn in different ways. They create outstanding opportunities for pupils to learn with, and from, each other. In a Year 3 physical education (PE) lesson, for example, the teacher prepared written criteria describing the qualities needed to increase pupils' running pace and pupils were able to make meaningful assessments about how well they and others had performed and how to improve. Pupils of all ages are fully engaged in their learning and consistently give of their best, respect and like their teachers and support each other.

Teachers have established sound routines for learning. Classroom management is excellent. On entry, pupils are regularly challenged by a key question or activity and lessons proceed swiftly, with plenty of different activities which support pupils in the development of their learning. From an early age, children reflect on what they are doing and learn not only the subject content of a lesson but how they can use their growing knowledge and skills in other contexts. They soon develop an ability to analyse their learning and so know what they need to do to improve. In nearly all lessons, teachers judge very well the amount of time needed for pupils to practise learning before moving on to further challenges.

Lessons are very well planned and teachers make excellent use of interactive whiteboards to help pupils to see visually how learning develops. They recognise that to master learning, from an early age, pupils need to progress from concrete to pictorial approaches to learning and finally to mental ones. In a foundation stage lesson, for example, some pupils were counting numbers using small plastic balls and moving them physically. Others were able to do similar calculations drawing pictures to show numbers added on and some were able to do so without any such aids. Lessons are purposeful, exciting and pupils are highly engaged.

The use of ongoing assessment is a strength of the school. Teachers continually track the progress of pupils and use this information to modify future teaching accordingly. They have an in-depth understanding of every child they teach and use this knowledge to determine how much challenge and support to provide. In a Year 10 art lesson, for example, careful and well-chosen individual questioning by the teacher helped pupils to reflect on how best to improve their own work. Pupils with particular needs are nearly always very well supported in class and make good progress as there is careful planning of how staff should provide the right balance between support and opportunities for independent learning.

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

The standards relating to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils are met except for the standard in paragraph 5 (b) (vi). This is not met because of the requirements of the host country, relating to the provisions of the UK Equality Act 2010.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils is outstanding. The vast majority of pupils attend school regularly, are punctual and participate actively in all lessons. One Year 6 pupil confidently stated, 'I like coming to school to discover new ways of learning and new ways of using my brain!' This commitment to learning is also demonstrated through many pupils'

commitment to long hours of specialist and elite sports training as well as attendance at the many extra-curricular activities. Pupils thrive in a supportive environment and their attitudes towards learning are exemplary. They are highly engaged in lessons and work well, independently and in collaboration with others, to meet their personalised learning targets.

The pupils' strong moral code has developed through the wide range of activities that further promote and challenge their understanding of right and wrong. In Moral Education lessons in the Primary phase pupils are challenged to consider big questions such as, 'Can there ever be peace after war?' They provide evidence-based reasons for their responses. These opportunities enable pupils to reflect on the impact of their behaviour on others. Pupils are well informed about their responsibility for the planet in terms of conservation, sustainability and care for others less well off than themselves. They are confident in developing innovative solutions to address world problems. For example, through the Horizons Project, groups of different-aged pupils plan and develop sustainable contributions to local and international communities and projects. During the inspection week, many pupils spoke of recognition for 'fallen heroes' of all wars, as a result of the school's Remembrance Day commemorations. SMSC policies and practices in the school encourage respect for all people.

A variety of curriculum opportunities enables all pupils to develop an understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, mutual respect and tolerance. These are well planned and provide active ways in which pupils can see those values in action. Pupils' understanding of the democratic process is enhanced through the student-council elections, which require election hustings and a fair voting process. Pupils are also involved in a variety of whole-school improvement initiatives including participation on the Local Advisory Board and on a pastoral panel to support pupils who may need extra support with their learning or behaviour. For older pupils, preparation for university and careers planning has promoted an in-depth understanding of British institutions, including Parliament, public services and legal systems. Pupils respond very positively and conscientiously to the many opportunities for them to take on leadership responsibilities, thus building their self-confidence and self-esteem.

The school is fully inclusive. Inspection evidence, including discussions with pupils, scrutiny of their work and examination of curriculum plans, confirms that leaders ensure that pupils show respect and tolerance for different groups of people. Pupils are supportive of one another at all times. Equality and understanding of the wide range of communities and cultures represented in the school are promoted through an overwhelming range of events and celebrations. These include major world faith celebrations as well as cultural celebrations. The school fully meets the requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the protected characteristics of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief. However, it is unable to meet the requirements in respect of gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation due to the laws of the host country.

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

The school meets the requirements of the standard, as well as the regulatory requirements of the country. Arrangements for welfare, health and safety are outstanding and ensure that all pupils, staff and visitors are exceptionally well cared for.

From the moment that pupils join the school, their welfare is considered paramount. The induction procedures are designed with pupils in mind, focusing on making each one feel secure and valued. Attendance is in line with UK levels at 95% and recording procedures comply with local

expectations. Admissions procedures ensure that staff have the necessary information about pupils' academic and medical needs so that specialist teachers are able to provide high-quality support for identified pupils. Senior staff are very visible around school and add another layer of high-quality pastoral care. Transition procedures are well established with a range of arrangements to ensure that there is limited disruption in pupils' learning as they move through school phases.

Safeguarding arrangements are meticulous and the reporting procedures meet national and British expectations. Staff receive regular training, procedures are widely shared, well understood and applied precisely, resulting in a shared culture of safeguarding across the school. Pupils and parents state that they know whom to turn to for support at times of need. Cyber safety is given a high priority and staff are highly vigilant and monitor any incidents closely. In information technology (IT) lessons, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and report that they know whom to go to if they feel vulnerable online.

The school's behaviour-for-learning policy sets very high expectations of all members of the school community as well as clear guidelines for positive behaviour. There is an emphasis on recognising and rewarding good behaviour. The use of sanctions is minimal but consistent. Parents confirm that incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with efficiently, effectively and sensitively. The positive-behaviour policy underpins the excellent behaviour observed at all times in the school day.

The school is diligent in its approaches to ensuring safety. Risk assessments and daily safety checks are robust and ensure that the school is a safe place for learning. Written policies are well implemented and reviewed regularly by the wider GEMS team. Fire regulations and procedures are as stringent as those in the UK and also meet UAE regulations. Regular, well-monitored evacuations ensure smooth and safe emergency procedures. Pupils are well supervised at all times. Safety procedures at the start and end of the day, in public areas as well as on school transport, are meticulous with high levels of supervision.

First-aid systems are well established. Well-staffed clinics provide high-quality medical advice and support for all pupils. Healthy lifestyles are actively promoted by the school's medical team. The broad PE curriculum and extra-curricular activities, including the family triathlon training, make a significant contribution to building an understanding of healthy lifestyles.

Standard 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets all the requirements of the standard. It ensures that all the required checks are in place to confirm that employed staff are not barred from regulated activity relating to children. Appropriate checks as to the person's identity, verification of qualifications, previous employment history, character and professional references and the right to work in the UAE are all carried out prior to the person's appointment. All checks are recorded on a single central register which is regularly checked by the Principal and child-protection officer. The human-resources (HR) department's checks are diligent and wide ranging with all documentation kept in personnel files.

Child-protection training is given annually to all staff and logged effectively. All staff designated to deal with safeguarding are trained to level three. Eight staff involved in the recruitment of staff have undertaken safer recruitment training. There is a dedicated safeguarding officer at GEMS

head office who can provide external support to deal with safeguarding issues, including complex ones. An annual safeguarding audit is undertaken by GEMS.

Standard 5. The premises and accommodation

The school meets the requirements of the standard. It has been purpose built and offers an extensive and attractive environment for learning. A number of recent innovations have improved the original building further. These include a superb covered swimming pool, tennis courts, improved outside play areas and a sixth-form centre which offers excellent study accommodation as well as areas for relaxation. There is a wealth of specialist facilities for learning with plentiful areas for creative, scientific and technological study which benefit pupils of all ages. Classrooms and corridors are attractive and the premises create a vibrant learning environment. The adjoining Primary and Secondary libraries are stimulating places to learn.

The environment is safe in every respect and all staff and governors play a key role in ensuring that it is maintained to the highest standards. Bathroom and changing facilities are plentiful and exceptionally well maintained, as are the medical areas. All regulatory requirements are met. Outside play areas are safe and drinking water is readily available. The building is free of barriers and is accessible to all.

The school is inclusive and has recently rearranged its provision so that staff from different areas of the school who teach pupils of similar ages can work together and collaborate readily. This has created a 'team around the child' and has been especially valuable in developing consistent approaches to working with those pupils who require additional support and delivering the school's vision of providing a truly inclusive environment. Parents have welcomed this development and early mornings see pupils, parents, teachers and specialist teachers communicating alongside each other in the open areas in each area 'hub'. This use of space has also helped to integrate Arabic and Islamic education provision.

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

The school meets the requirements of this standard. It complies with all requirements relating to information, including safeguarding policies, curriculum, support for pupils with SEND and how to contact the owners. Parents are pleased with the levels and quality of communication with them about all aspects of their child's education. They find the school very approachable and supportive of any concerns that they might have. As is common in the UK, the class teacher is their first port of call. Parents feel assured that as this teacher knows their child best their concerns will be dealt with sensitively. They report that the Parent Relations Executive and senior leaders are approachable, visible and vigilant and therefore are assured that they will deal with any complaints without delay.

Communication about pupils' progress is very effective. Parents have access to, and use effectively, several technological applications to learn about their child's learning and progress as it happens. Most parents also use these applications to find out about the curriculum, identify pupils' short- and long-term targets and celebrate their children's achievements. The high-quality reports, as well as the regular planned opportunities for parents to talk about their child's learning, are much appreciated by parents as they focus both on academic and personal development. During the inspection parents stated, most notably, that detailed discussions about each pupil's

next steps in learning enabled them to become active partners in their child's progress and to support learning at home.

Parents are very supportive of the school and proud of its achievements, particularly in recent years. Their views on school matters are sought regularly through a wide range of forums and GEMS surveys. The parent-relations executive provides a first port of call for all parents, which they appreciate. Almost all believe that the school prepares their child very well for further education and the world of work and also to successfully re-enter a British school. Parents are represented on the local board of governors. Members of the parents' council also have responsibility for aspects of the school's improvement plan and take this role seriously. They work closely with senior leaders to understand the purpose and impact of school-improvement activities. They are proud of their school and their role in contributing to the improving school.

Standard 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints

The school meets all the requirements of the standard. It has a complaints policy which is available on the website. It sets out clear timescales for the management of different types of complaint and clearly covers how formal procedures for different types of complaint will be dealt with and by whom. The highly competent and visible parent-relations executive is the person parents go to with informal complaints. These are dealt with appropriately in a timely manner and recorded. Eight informal complaints have been dealt with so far this year with none escalating to formal procedures.

Standard 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The school meets all the requirements of the standard. The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The leadership fulfils its responsibilities in ensuring that the BSO standards are consistently met. The school encourages respect for other people. This was seen especially in pupils' respect for one another and how they embrace one another's cultures and backgrounds. This is also evident in the 'WEK learner profile' that encourages attributes beneficial to their future life in an ever-changing global community. Leaders make a commitment to knowing all pupils and their families to ensure that their needs are met. Safeguarding is an extremely high priority and permeates the culture of the school. All leaders are excellent role models with high levels of respect for their pupils.

The stable leadership team, led by a highly motivated and committed Principal, has made incredible improvement over the last two years, so that now the school is achieving high standards, well above expectation, for both individuals and against international and UK standards. It shows excellent capacity for further improvement.

The school's vision and ethos are embodied in the Aspire, Create, Excel (ACE) Together strapline and embraced by all stakeholders. There is a sense of common purpose amongst staff, seen in the high levels of retention this year. They are proud to be a part of the school. The high levels of parental satisfaction in all the school is doing to improve are also seen in family retention and very positive parental surveys.

Leaders at all levels manage the performance of staff very well through the performance management cycle. There is a very good balance between the needs of the school and those of individuals. Teachers are encouraged to be innovative and opportunities are created for them to

grow and to be at the forefront of current research. Staff benefit from high-quality professional development and regular safeguarding training. The sharing of best practice including between different phases of the school is commonplace. Teachers say that while they work hard, they feel appreciated and that professional development opportunities meet their needs. They are keen to continually improve.

Middle leaders and the Early Years leader are competent, passionate and forward looking. They are held to account for the quality of their improvement plans, which are informed by forensic data analysis. In turn these inform the whole-school improvement plan, hence all decisions can be clearly traced through to action in the classroom.

GEMS Education provides corporate governance led by the GEMS Chief Education Innovation Officer. It has clear financial policies and ensures that the school operates legally and is compliant with all requirements. It ensures that safeguarding procedures are effective. The local advisory board (LAB) provides an extra level of challenge. It has a secure understanding of the school's performance and priorities because of its close relationship with the school. It meets regularly with school leaders to review progress and hold them to account and reviews safeguarding procedures, acting as a critical friend. The separate responsibilities of the board members and the school's senior leaders are well respected. Parents are part of the LAB and student leaders work in partnership to ensure that their views contribute to the improvement of the school. Both parents and pupils feel strongly that their views are listened to.

The school is truly inclusive, has high aspirations and challenges all pupils. It nurtures, inspires and cares for every one of its pupils. Pupils are clearly happy, enjoy their learning and make the most of all the opportunities the school has to offer.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

GEMS Wellington Academy Al Khail meets all the required standards except those that would be in breach of the host country laws.

It cannot fully meet the standards set out below that relate to the UK Equality Act 2010.

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;

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

What the school could do to improve further

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

As a recent all-through school, develop further the rich and varied curriculum offer so that:

- key stage 2 pupils benefit from additional specialist teaching, particularly to develop STEM skills
- key stage 3 pupils experience the connected curriculum model, successfully used in Primary classes
- the sixth-form offer is broadened to include alternative pathways such as vocational courses.

Summary of inspection judgements

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

The quality of education

Overall quality of education	√			
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils	√			
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs	√			
How well pupils make progress in their learning	√			

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	√			
The behaviour of pupils	√			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils	√			
--	---	--	--	--

Leadership and management

Overall effectiveness of leadership and management	√			
--	---	--	--	--

The quality of provision for boarding

	n/a			
--	-----	--	--	--

School details

Name of school	GEMS Wellington Academy Al Khail
Type of school	Private. For profit
Date school opened	September 2013
Age range of pupils	3-18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	1007
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	0
Annual fees (day pupils)	AED 43,941 to 86,670
Annual fees (boarders)	n/a
Address of school	PO Box 391922, Dubai, UAE
Telephone number	971 4 5129100
Email address	Principal_wek@gemsedu.com
Headteacher /Principal	Neil Matthews
Proprietor	GEMS Education. Mr Sunny Varkey.

GLOSSARY

Achievement – Progress made by a pupil taking his/her individual circumstances and starting point into account.

Accreditation – The system whereby a school or similar organisation is assessed against agreed standards and if deemed as having achieved the standards required is provided with some form of official certification or recognition.

Accreditation Board – The body responsible for the strategic direction, operation and conduct of the accreditation service provided by Education Development Trust

Assessment – The process of finding out how well pupils have learnt what they have been taught. It is a continuous process that occurs throughout the school year, using a variety of forms for different purposes.

Attainment – The level pupils reach, usually measured by reference to benchmarks, such as test and examination results.

British Schools Overseas Inspection (BSO) – Inspection framework and standards defined by the DfE for British schools overseas to opt to be inspected against.

Education Development Trust – Formerly CfBT Education Trust, we are one of the world's leading not-for-profit education companies providing a range of education services in the UK and internationally.

Central Support Team – Personnel based in Education Development Trust Head Office who are responsible for the administration of the various educational services provided to international schools.

Combined or Joint Visit – a BSO Inspection visit combined with an ISQM accreditation or re-accreditation visit conducted (or DSIB inspection in Dubai) at the request of the school. This will be carried out concurrently with reference to both frameworks and sets of standards. Some of the standards against which the school will be inspected are common, but some of the BSO standards relate to the British nature of the school.

Cycle of Inspection – The period of three years between BSO inspection visits.

Curriculum – The educational programmes or courses of study taught by a school including subjects and activities inside and outside the classroom, as well as extra-curricular enrichment programmes.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) – All private schools in Dubai are required by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority to be inspected by the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB). A joint DSIB/BSO inspection may be requested through the KHDA's strategic partner Education Development Trust.

Leadership – Leadership at any level (for example Principals/Headteachers, governors, board members, team/subject leaders) involves setting direction, empowering staff to work

effectively, creating a suitable environment for learning, and setting an example to others. It entails different skills from management.

Learning – Pupils’ gains in knowledge, skills and understanding.

Management – The practical business of running a school, department or aspect of a school’s work in an efficient and useful way.

Ofsted – The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills is the non-ministerial government department of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Schools in England and is responsible for school inspections in England.

Progress – The gains in learning made between two points in time. A pupil can be described as having made insufficient progress, satisfactory, good, or outstanding progress in relation to his/her starting point.

School self-evaluation – The identification by the staff of a school of its strengths and weaknesses across the key aspects of its performance. Effective self-evaluation focuses specifically on the impact of the school’s work on the outcomes for pupils.

Standards –

- (1) The levels of knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils and a school demonstrates at a particular point in time.
- (2) The evaluation requirements to be used in the inspection of British Schools Overseas.

Teaching – All activities undertaken by the teacher aimed at enhancing pupils’ learning.

With 40 years' experience of delivering education services worldwide Education Development Trust exists solely to provide education for public benefit.

Teaching and learning are the essence of what we do and we have more than 2,500 staff around the world designing and delivering services. Education Development Trust staff support educational reform, teach, advise, research and train. As one of the top 30 charities in the UK, we work for and with individuals and communities in order to help them reach their potential

Education Development Trust has built a reputation for providing high quality educational support and inspection services to national organisations such as Ofsted, the Teacher Training Agency and to schools in the north of England. Our main aim is to improve schools through high quality school inspections. We have strong values and a clear vision to deliver a world class inspection service that will directly contribute to improving the quality of teaching, learning and care of all children and young people in settings, schools and colleges.

Education Development Trust first delivered inspections on behalf of Ofsted in 1993. Since then we have developed our experience and expertise in the field of school evaluation and improvement to become one of the UK's first major providers of inspection services.

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

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