



**British School
Overseas**
Inspected by Penta International

Inspection report

The Westminster School

Dubai

United Arab Emirates

Date **20th – 22nd January 2025**
Inspection number **20250120**

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1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

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

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

The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's management on the overall effectiveness of the school, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent schools in the United Kingdom.

The inspection and report will cover the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation; the school's complaints procedures; and leadership and management. If appropriate, there is a separate section on the quality of boarding provision. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for pupils and pupils' achievements.

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

During the inspection visit, nearly 110 lesson observations took place. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were seen in lessons, and discussions were held with the staff, parents and informally with students. The inspection took place over three days.

The lead inspector was Colin Dyson. The team members were Callum Rowan, Dan Emery, Hanane Ouna, Riaan Huyser, Tammy Naidoo and Vanessa Whay.

2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

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

and

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

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

3. Overall effectiveness of the school

The Westminster School Dubai (TWS) provides an all-round education of the highest quality in a truly inclusive environment. The school prides itself on being a happy place and its students are excellent ambassadors for the school. Teaching is consistently of a high standard and students make excellent progress in their learning.

3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including the:

- unique approach to delivering a high-quality learning opportunity for all students;
- strong family and community ethos of the school that ensures every adult and student feels a valued member;
- highly positive relationship between both adults and students;
- high quality of the learning support for all students, supporting them in achieving their goals;
- effective facility management that enhances the provision and safety for all students;
- highly positive school culture in which students feel they have ownership of their learning;
- sense of pride the whole community have in 'their' school;
- strong student-centred approach that provides a wide range of student leadership opportunities;
- excellent levels of student attainment, both academic and personal;
- focus on a wide range of communication channels to ensure all can fully engage with the school;
- shared vision by all stakeholders to achieve success;
- leadership team demonstrating outstanding strategic vision, inclusivity, and data-driven decision-making, fostering a culture of excellence and continuous improvement despite resource constraints;
- students who exhibit exemplary behaviour, mutual respect, and positive attitudes, supported by strong relationships between staff and students and a focus on social, moral, and cultural development which contributes to high student achievement.

3.2 Points for improvement

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

- i. Enhance student-centred teaching methods by further incorporating open questioning, collaborative project-based learning, and inquiry-based approaches to foster critical thinking and independence.
- ii. Staff and students should be supported with greater access to both technology tools and AI strategies to enhance 21st Century learning opportunities.
- iii. Ensure consistent quality of feedback across subjects, moving beyond surface-level corrections to foster deeper reflection and meaningful progress, especially with the older students.
- iv. Ensure the improvements to the buildings in the school improvement plan are fully implemented.

4. The context of the school

Full name of School	The Westminster School, Dubai				
Address	Al-Qusais1, School Zone, Baghdad Street, Dubai, UAE.				
Telephone Number/s	+971 42988333				
Website Address	www.gemsws-ghusais.com				
Key Email Address	principal_tws@gemsedu.com				
Executive principal	Mr Carl Roberts				
Chair of board/proprietor	GEMS Education				
Age Range	3 – 18 years				
Total number of pupils	5,255	Boys	2,707	Girls	2,548
Numbers by age	<i>0-2 years</i>	0	<i>12-16 years</i>	2,029	
	<i>3-5 years</i>	652	<i>17-18 years</i>	483	
	<i>6-11 years</i>	2,094	<i>18+ years</i>	0	
Total number of part-time children	0				

The Westminster School Dubai (TWS), founded in 1995, stands as a beacon of affordable, high-quality British education in the UAE. With a vibrant student body of over 5,000 students from more than 70 nationalities, this diverse community fosters a rich, inclusive atmosphere where students thrive academically and socially. Despite offering one of the lowest fees among British curriculum schools in Dubai, TWS consistently delivers above-average academic outcomes. The school's success is driven by its dedicated leadership team, led by the executive principal, alongside a supportive network of experienced educators. Remarkably, many staff members have served the school for over a decade, reflecting deep-rooted commitment to the school's mission.

TWS emphasises a nurturing and inclusive environment, supported by a comprehensive pastoral care system and a well-established house system that promotes unity and school

spirit. The school embraces an open-door policy, encouraging strong partnerships with parents and fostering a genuine sense of community. This familial atmosphere is strengthened by generational ties, as many students have parents who were once pupils themselves.

Academically, the school not only enables students to achieve qualifications surpassing UK averages but also prioritises holistic development. Students are equipped with essential skills, values, and resilience to navigate a competitive global landscape. This balanced approach has led to consistently high progression rates to higher and further education institutions.

TWS's commitment to inclusivity extends to its support for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), providing targeted assistance through dedicated teaching and learning support staff. Its popularity, evidenced by a long waiting list, and top rankings in parent satisfaction surveys confirm TWS's reputation as a leading institution offering exceptional value for money.

4.1 British nature of the school

TWS exemplifies a strong British character, aligning closely with the standards set by the British Schools Overseas (BSO) inspection framework. The school's commitment to delivering a British-style education is evident across various domains.

It follows the national curriculum for England, providing students with a structured educational pathway from the Foundation Stage through to the Sixth Form. Students are prepared for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), Advanced Subsidiary (AS), and A-Level examinations, affiliated with esteemed UK examination boards such as *Cambridge International Education*, *Oxford AQA*, and *Pearson Edexcel*. The entire curriculum is delivered in English, with the exception of Arabic and Islamic studies for Arab nationals and modern foreign languages. Students are supported through well-being lessons, which discuss Oxbridge and UCAS applications.

The school's adherence to British educational standards is validated by its BSO accreditation. The most recent BSO inspection in March 2022 concluded that TWS meets all British Schools Overseas standards. The report highlighted the school's high-quality education, inclusive ethos, and strong commitment of learners to their education and personal development. TWS has continued to develop these British standards since the previous inspection. The British nature of TWS is evident in its structure and academic approach. The school's mission is to deliver a high-quality British education at an affordable price. Students and parents value TWS, as demonstrated by the positive comments made to inspectors.

Under the leadership of the executive principal, TWS fosters a vibrant learning community rooted in shared values and a family ethos. This environment mirrors the supportive and inclusive culture characteristic of British educational institutions. Student leadership is a strength at TWS, and a democratic election process is embedded through which students and staff select the TWS student leadership. TWS has a school uniform and a school council, which contribute towards the Britishness of the school. The executive leadership of the school student council comprises Year 12 and 13 representatives from each house who join Year 6 representatives to meet with the executive principal regularly. Student leaders at TWS play an active role in school life, and the school promotes student voice and democratic processes through its student leadership structure, which allows all students to become involved in leadership and decision-making. Student leaders meet regularly with the executive principal and the rest of the school's senior leadership team to participate in whole-school decisions.

With a diverse student body representing over 70 nationalities and 294 teachers, TWS promotes mutual respect and cultural understanding, reflecting the multiculturalism inherent in British society. The school offers various extracurricular activities, supporting students' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development in line with British educational practices. The school hosts several events and competitions linked to British culture and historical events. The school promotes British values such as democracy, mutual respect, and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. These values are embedded in the school's ethos and reflected in its policies, curriculum, and daily life. These values are further promoted through the school's house system, where four different houses represent the values of tolerance, equity, wisdom, and courage. Inter-house competitions are held in sports, public speaking, dance, quizzes, art, music, and essay writing. The school's house point and rewards system reflect those used in UK schools.

British values are recognisable in student conduct in and around the school. Personal, social, and health education (PSHE), including assemblies, develop students' understanding of discrimination and inclusion. Bright, creative displays around the school celebrate students' achievements. British values are displayed around the school and form part of the school's ethos and culture.

Despite its age, the TWS campus is well maintained, thoughtfully designed, adapted, and utilised to provide a vibrant learning atmosphere. It features purpose-built classrooms and facilities that support a broad and balanced curriculum. Every possible space in the building is very well utilised to support student learning. TWS offers a wide range of academic and non-academic extracurricular activities to support and extend the formal curriculum, such as Model United Nations, drama, debating, elocution and public speaking, music, arts and crafts, creative writing, recitation, and sports.

The school's ethos has been carefully designed to reflect its British nature and consider its demographics and culture. The school's assessments are UK-sourced and benchmarked against UK standards. It also closely follows the national statutory requirements and is committed to providing a curriculum that is in line with the expectations of the Ministry of Education (MOE) and KHDA.

TWS successfully embodies the characteristics of a British overseas school, adhering to the BSO standards through its curriculum, leadership, cultural ethos, and commitment to continuous improvement.

The school's alignment with British educational values ensures that students receive an education comparable to that offered in the United Kingdom.

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

The quality of education provided is outstanding.

5.1 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding.

The curriculum meets the BSO criteria effectively, offering an excellent educational experience that balances high academic outcomes with strong personal development.

The school's focus on inclusivity, differentiation, and career readiness ensures that students are well-prepared for future academic and professional pathways. The curriculum at TWS demonstrates a strong alignment with the BSO inspection criteria, reflecting a comprehensive and inclusive approach that ensures students' academic and personal development. The curriculum is designed in line with the national curriculum for England, incorporating the values of GEMS Education and the UAE national vision, ensuring a broad, balanced, and forward-looking educational offering.

The curriculum at TWS is well-structured across all key stages, providing a balanced mix of academic rigor, vocational options, and holistic development opportunities. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage (KS) 1, there is a strong focus on foundational literacy and numeracy through differentiated teaching strategies. The use of interactive phonics programs and well-prepared learning environments fosters high engagement and progress in early reading and mathematics. Additionally, the *Hygge* approach in EYFS is developing extremely well with the use of nurturing, calming environments and resources that support the emotional development of the students. Ongoing investment in resources for this programme will drive further progress. At KS2, the curriculum is effectively aligned with NCFE and the UAE Ministry of Education expectations, offering subjects such as Arabic and Islamic Studies while maintaining the British curriculum framework. The use of differentiation techniques such as scaffolded tasks and higher-order thinking exercises ensures the curriculum caters to all learners.

KSs 3 and 4 provide a robust academic foundation, with a focus on preparing students for IGCSE and A-Level examinations. The school offers a range of subject choices, including newly introduced BTEC programs, which provide practical career pathways in addition to traditional academic routes. Lessons incorporate retrieval practices, critical thinking activities, and scaffolded complexity to challenge students

appropriately. Limited access to technological resources remains a challenge, but the school has measures in place to overcome these obstacles.

Lessons are planned with clear differentiation; this enables students to progress at their own pace while being challenged to achieve their potential in the most effective lessons. Collaborative learning opportunities are consistently planned to foster peer engagement and critical thinking. In particular, KS2 students benefit from interactive and project-based learning, such as robotics and technology-integrated lessons, which enhance their practical understanding.

Classroom routines are well-established, and behaviour management is consistently excellent, contributing to a positive learning environment. The introduction of PSHE and Life Skills programs further supports students' personal development, providing essential life competencies such as teamwork, decision-making, and resilience.

TWS places a strong emphasis on inclusivity, providing equal learning opportunities for students of all backgrounds in accordance with the UK Equality Act 2010. The curriculum aims to cater to Students of Determination (SofD) and Gifted and Talented (G&T) students through adaptive teaching and personalised learning plans. Regular monitoring and curriculum modifications is developing a more consistent approach to ensuring that the needs of all learners are met effectively.

Assessment frameworks at TWS are well-structured and provide a clear pathway for student progression. Data-driven instruction ensures that teaching strategies are responsive to students' needs, with regular assessments supporting their academic journey. The curriculum is reviewed annually based on stakeholder feedback, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with evolving educational trends.

The school integrates wellbeing into the curriculum through initiatives such as the *Oxford Wellbeing Curriculum*, promoting emotional and cognitive development. Extracurricular and co-curricular activities, including sports, arts, and sustainability projects, support students' broader development. The integration of UAE cultural and moral education ensures that students develop a strong sense of identity and global citizenship.

The curriculum offer for the sixth form meets the needs of the school demographic. A Levels, AS Levels and more recently BTEC, are offered to meet the varying academic needs of a large mixed gender sixth form. Over time the school is extending vocational pathways (through BTEC) to ensure all students have the widest pathways of learning opportunities.

Over 480 students are currently enrolled at the TWS sixth form, and they are provided additional academic and vocational pathways through the Heriot-Watt (HW) research programme. Professors from HW University, internal weekly career

sessions and assistance with UCAS and the common app and in house Internships provide highly effective support.

British values are exemplified in the curriculum by following a structured democratic process in electing student leaders. Student voice, timetabled wellbeing lessons and structured intervention to support effective study skills and mental health habits and an induction programme at the beginning of the sixth form, help to integrate students by utilising dedicated staff and external agencies to form a focused, balanced and respectful sixth form community.

The curriculum was observed to deliver a consistent high quality approach to lesson delivery and presentation of materials and documentation. Whilst this was often highly effective, moving forward a more targeted use and knowledge of research based pedagogy and innovative practice would widen opportunities for best practice for teaching for learning.

5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding and aligns well with the BSO criteria.

The school has implemented a structured framework supported by comprehensive academic policies, including teaching and learning, assessment, and marking policies. These policies ensure consistency across key stages such as EYFS, NCfE, and IGCSE-AS-A Levels. Most teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and effective planning, enabling students to systematically build on their prior learning. However, while lesson planning is data-driven, inconsistencies in implementation remain, with differentiation and personalised challenges not always fully addressing the diverse needs of students.

A key strength of the school is its student-centred approach, particularly in the EYFS and KS1. Innovative teaching methods, such as the *Share, Respond, Expand, Conversation* (ShREC) model, support the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Teaching quality continues to improve across the primary and secondary phases, driven by effective staff development programs. Encouraging more inquiry-based approaches and self-directed learning could further enhance student engagement and academic readiness.

Assessment practices are well-established, with both internal and external assessments, such as GL assessments and CAT4, providing valuable insights into student progress. While marking is consistent across subjects, the quality of feedback varies. Teachers do not always ensure feedback goes beyond surface-level corrections to foster deeper engagement with learning objectives. In primary education, best practices include consistent marking across year groups, with individual English and mathematics targets set for each child. Effective lessons incorporate mini plenaries to check student understanding, while the best lessons address misconceptions promptly. Effective questioning is a developing strength, particularly in mathematics at KS1 and KS3, where students justify their answers.

The passion and dedication of the teaching team are evident, reflected in their strong relationships with students and comprehensive understanding of their academic levels. Excellent assemblies from Year 6 and EYFS showcase commitment to both academic and pastoral development. The school recognises areas for improvement and is working to embed more reflective assessment practices.

The school's commitment to inclusion is apparent in its support for SofD and G&T students through personalised learning plans. Observations indicate that most lessons provide good or better support for these groups. However, differentiation strategies are not yet consistently applied across all classrooms.

Technology integration is a strong aspect of the school. Platforms such as *Gizmos*, *Achieve 3000*, and *MyiMaths* provide interactive and personalised learning

experiences. The 'bring your own device' (BYOD) policy has been instrumental in developing students' digital literacy. However, the effectiveness of technology use varies across departments, and not all students fully utilise available digital tools. Continued professional development on technology integration could help maximise its potential.

Teaching maintains a consistent delivery style, with clear objectives and success criteria shared with students. Teacher-student relationships are respectful and attentive, though lessons are predominantly teacher-led. Student engagement is consistently positive, with learners displaying a strong willingness to participate.

Books are used in all lessons, and assessments follow a structured approach that emphasises positive feedback and target-setting. Differentiation in lesson planning is consistent, with tasks scaffolded according to Minimum Expected Grade (MEG) groupings. However, opportunities to deepen learning are sometimes underutilised. Research-based teaching methods, such as recall and retrieval practices, have been observed, with Socratic questioning used effectively in subjects like Psychology. Although metacognition is referenced in lesson planning, its impact on students' independent learning and self-awareness in some activities could be further developed

Professional learning and development (PLD) opportunities for staff are extensive, with 93% of teachers finding training sessions beneficial. The leadership team is focused on translating professional development into consistent classroom practice.

The school provides a high standard of teaching and learning, frequently exhibiting outstanding features such as a well-structured curriculum, robust assessment systems, and an inclusive learning environment. Areas for further development include fostering greater student autonomy, ensuring consistency in feedback quality, and improving differentiation strategies to meet diverse learner needs.

Teaching and learning extend beyond teacher-led lessons. A notable example is an online assembly conducted via *Microsoft Teams* by sixth form students on technology and innovation. The presentation, which focused on preparing for the future and AI, was engaging and provided students with an opportunity to develop digital literacy, online safety awareness, and an understanding of the ethical use of technology.

Teaching in Years 12 and 13 is consistent in delivery style, with objectives and success criteria clearly presented. Teacher-student relationships are respectful, and students are generally highly attentive. However, some lessons remain predominantly teacher-led. Increasing student-led activities as in the best lessons could create more dynamic learning opportunities for all students.

Student engagement across all lessons is strong, with learners eager to participate. Assessment, reflection, and target-setting are evident in students' books, following a structured approach of identifying positives and setting improvement targets.

Differentiation is planned consistently but is not always fully exploited to deepen learning and embed knowledge effectively.

5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

The standards achieved by students are outstanding.

TWS consistently demonstrates high educational standards across all key stages, with students exceeding expectations in national and international benchmarks. The school's robust curriculum, strategic interventions, and commitment to personalised learning contribute to its outstanding academic achievements.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 (KS1)

The school's EYFS program effectively supports students who speak English as an additional language, offering opportunities to develop speech and language skills through the International Phonics Programme. Phonics instruction is delivered consistently, and students are regularly assessed and supported to ensure steady progress.

The introduction of the *Hygge* approach has fostered a nurturing environment, promoting mindfulness and exploration. According to the 2023-2024 Target Tracker reports:

- **76%** of students achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD), surpassing UK averages.
- Over **50%** of students showed significant progress across key areas.
- **75.5%** of Reception students reached GLD, outperforming national benchmarks.

KS1 assessments indicate high levels of attainment in English and Mathematics, further reinforcing the effectiveness of the school's foundational programs.

Key Stage 2 (KS2)

KS2 students consistently exceed age-related expectations. Standardised assessments show that the vast majority of students make above-expected progress, particularly in core subjects such as English and Mathematics.

Key highlights include:

- Strong performance in end-of-key-stage assessments, indicating readiness for future academic challenges.
- Well-structured transition processes, involving parent workshops, Transition booklets and Standardised documentation.

Additionally, many students exhibit high reading levels and an enthusiasm for books.

Key Stage 3 (KS3)

KS3 students display consistent good or better progress across core subjects, including English, Mathematics, and Science. Standardised data shows that the majority of students exceed expectations and develop a secure understanding of subject content.

Key achievements:

- Curriculum delivery from Year 9 effectively prepares students for IGCSE studies.
- Disadvantaged students and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) achieve above-average progress, reflecting the school's inclusive approach.

Key Stage 4 (KS4)

TWS KS4 performance is outstanding, with nearly all students on track to achieve IGCSEs at grade C or above. The school's emphasis on student autonomy in revision lessons fosters metacognition, creativity, and critical thinking.

Key results from the IGCSE June 2024 exams:

- **80%** of students achieved grades A*-C, surpassing UK averages.
- Students demonstrate a clear understanding of their academic targets and effectively articulate their learning needs.

Key Stage 5 (KS5)

A-Level results further reflect the school's high academic standards, with students consistently surpassing national benchmarks. Despite a lower mean cognitive ability score compared to the UK average, students achieve above expectations across key subjects such as English, mathematics, and the sciences.

Key statistics:

- **83%** of students achieved grades A*-C.
- **31%** attained grades A*-A, exceeding UK averages.

The school's strategic interventions and personalised support play a crucial role in achieving these results.

International Assessments

The school actively participates in international assessments such as TIMSS, PISA, and PIRLS, showcasing its global competitiveness.

- **PISA 2022:** Results indicate performance above the global average.
- **PIRLS 2021 & TIMSS 2023:** Students achieved the High International Benchmark standard, reflecting their impressive academic progress.

Monitoring and Intervention Strategies

Personalised targets are set at the beginning of each academic year, based on diagnostic tests, previous assessments, and CAT4 scores. The school's monitoring system ensures that students meet and exceed their academic goals through:

- Regular Challenge Meetings
- Intervention strategies such as Diagnose-Therapy-Testing (DTT)

These interventions contribute to consistent academic improvement.

The school maintains exceptional educational standards across all key stages. Its comprehensive curriculum, data-driven interventions, and commitment to personalised learning ensure that students perform above expectations in both national and international benchmarks.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is outstanding.

Staff and student relationships are outstanding. Students are confident, well-mannered, and respectful to others. They develop strong friendships and show empathy for others. Students enjoy coming to school and feel safe and proud to be part of the TWS community. They have a good knowledge and show respect for the beliefs, cultures, views, and lifestyles of other people. Festivals such as Eid, Diwali and Christmas are recognised appropriately, in line with host country law.

There is a strong emphasis on fostering students' spiritual growth. This is supported by the structured curriculum integrating Islamic Studies, PSHE and social studies. Assemblies with themes of anti-bullying and mental health take place. TWS is committed to fostering students' understanding of caring for their own mental and physical wellbeing through the implementation of the *Oxford Wellbeing* curriculum. A mental health survey for year 6 students carried out by the primary head boy and head girl highlighted areas to be addressed. These include having more posters around the school as well as encouraging students to talk with the wellbeing class representatives or going to a member of staff when needed.

Students are actively encouraged to take positions of responsibility and leadership in a range of areas including a primary head boy and head girl with deputies and a secondary head boy and head girl with deputies elected, as well as teaching and learning leaders, inclusion leader, Emirati leader, safeguarding leader and student council representatives. The *Peer-Joint* programme, led by sixth form students under the supervision of the inclusion department, plays a role in supporting students of determination.

The students displayed exemplary behaviour and the school community reflected a sense of calm and respect. Students were polite, courteous, and engaged in lessons, demonstrating active listening and participation. Movement in the corridors was quiet and orderly. Teachers and staff also contributed to the positive spirit of the school, promoting a supportive environment where mutual respect was evident. The overall behaviour reflected the school's strong values.

Moral development is fostered throughout the school by GEMS initiatives like the Jewels of Kindness and Respect (JOKR). The PSHE curriculum is well-structured and covers a range of topics for non-Islamic students. This is integrated with the wellbeing curriculum for all students.

The school actively promotes global citizenship through sustainability projects such as *The Big Green Legacy*, the green website and student-led charity initiatives including clothes and book collections in collaboration with *Thrift for Good*.

The school offers a programme of extra-curricular activities that adds to the wider curriculum. Activities include photography, volleyball, cricket and chess. Opportunities such as the Model Arabic League and Model United Nations (MUN) help prepare for challenges of the outside world.

The school permeates modern British values through the attitudes of the students and staff. In parallel, TWS promotes an understanding and celebration of UAE cultural history and traditions.

Students value their education and rarely miss a day at school. Attendance rates are exemplary and have been strongly maintained. A robust system to address attendance and punctuality is in place and well supported.

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

The provision for welfare, health and safety is outstanding.

The school demonstrates a strong commitment to care and pastoral duty, ensuring the effective management of a large student body within the constraints of a limited space. This is particularly evident during the secondary boys' break times, where well-established routines and effective student leadership contribute to an organised and structured environment with opportunities for supervised sporting activities.

Movement around the school is orderly and respectful, with consistent routines across the campus. Playground and corridor monitors, alongside staff, guide and support students as needed, contributing to a safe and welcoming environment where students feel secure. The observed behaviour across the school is exemplary. Students consistently demonstrate mutual respect, positive attitudes, and excellent conduct towards one another. A comprehensive behaviour policy is implemented across the school, supported by staff training in behaviour management strategies and reinforced by standardised parent sessions to clarify behaviour expectations. Incidents of bullying are rare; however, when they occur, they are handled promptly with a restorative approach, fostering confidence among parents and students that concerns are addressed effectively. This is also supported by clear and embedded policies.

Appropriate and established policies are in place to ensure student safety within and around the school campus. All active gates are monitored by security personnel, with inactive gates securely padlocked. Signage across the exterior walkways provides clear information regarding operational hours, pick-up and drop-off points, lanyard coding, and parental notices.

The school adheres to all local and international guidelines, including KHDA regulations, to uphold the welfare, health and safety of students. Significant modifications to the infrastructure, such as wheelchair ramps and stair chair lifts, ensure accessibility for all.

Policies on health and safety are meticulously implemented and monitored. A first aid policy ensures that currently 10% of staff are first aid trained, while 20% have received fire safety training in accordance with civil defence regulations. Termly drills are conducted, with feedback promptly actioned to address any issues. The school is exploring new methods for reporting health and safety concerns, enhancing its robust risk assessment procedures for trips and shared educational spaces.

Attendance at the school is excellent, with an average of 98%. Attendance is celebrated through initiatives designed to encourage and sustain high levels. Healthy lunches are encouraged, and staff monitor food choices to support student wellbeing.

The medical team, comprising nurses and doctors, is allocated to specific areas of the school, such as EYFS, secondary girls and secondary boys, to ensure appropriate care. Clinic areas are well-equipped to meet students' needs.

The school places a strong emphasis on maintaining a safe, hygienic, and secure environment for students. Support staff play a vital role in ensuring this, adhering to the standard operating procedures established by GEMS Education.

The school operates a clear BYOD policy to promote positive online behaviours and digital citizenship. Cyber security ambassadors programme is a tangible example of where students are actively involved in their ownership of their own welfare and safety. In the science laboratories, strict policies govern the safe storage and use of resources and chemicals, with access restricted to authorised staff to guarantee student safety. Other safety measures such as extinguishers are regularly checked and guidelines are in place for this.

Wellbeing is a central focus of the school, with student leadership playing a key role in fostering resilience among peers. Despite not having the resources of premium schools, the school creates an exceptionally supportive environment. The wellbeing web, comprising wellbeing leaders and a mental health portal, provides additional avenues of support for students.

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

The suitability of the proprietor and staff at TWS fully meets the requirements of the BSO standards.

The rigorous safer recruitment policies and processes in place are exemplary. TWS is owned and operated by *GEMS Education*, the largest K-12 education provider in the world. A dedicated safeguarding officer at the GEMS school support centre provides external support to address safeguarding issues, including complex cases when required. Annual safeguarding audits are conducted and quality assured by external agencies.

The board and the executive principal collaborate to develop a strategic plan that outlines the school's direction and priorities. The board offers guidance, resources, and expertise to assist the leadership team in implementing the strategic plan effectively. For example, the board planned to further develop the campus by adding additional shaded areas and extending outdoor spaces for students to access during breaks, much of this work has been completed in a highly effective manner.

Progress is regularly monitored through meetings and performance evaluations, with feedback and suggestions for improvement provided. Additionally, the board engages in professional development opportunities to stay informed about educational trends and best practices, sharing this knowledge with the leadership team to promote continuous growth and improvement. The school has implemented comprehensive policies and procedures to ensure full compliance with BSO requirements.

Safeguarding at TWS reflects a deeply embedded commitment to student welfare and safety. The school's approach goes beyond compliance to foster a culture of care, prioritising student welfare at every level.

Evidence from policy and practice highlights robust implementation and transparent systems that empower staff, students, and parents to report concerns confidently, knowing they will be addressed with sensitivity and professionalism. Policies are not merely documents but are integrated into daily practice, embraced by all staff, and reflect a shared responsibility for safety and well-being.

Regular, targeted training equips staff with the skills to identify and address potential risks, fostering vigilance and accountability. Comprehensive training ensures staff are confident in addressing concerns, while student education empowers young people to understand their rights and seek help when needed.

The integration of safeguarding into the curriculum promotes student awareness and resilience, teaching them to recognise and respond to unsafe situations. Effective

communication channels facilitate seamless collaboration between pastoral teams, external agencies, and families. A culture of trust, inclusivity, and respect ensures every student feels valued, secure, and supported to thrive.

The school champions inclusivity and respect, ensuring every child feels valued and protected. This unwavering dedication not only fulfils legal obligations but also upholds the highest moral standards, setting a benchmark for safeguarding excellence globally.

A comprehensive safeguarding policy, aligned with BSO standards and local legal requirements, underpins all efforts. Policies are clear, widely disseminated, and regularly reviewed. They include protocols for identifying, reporting, and addressing risks, with explicit roles and responsibilities for staff at all levels. Senior leaders and board members take appropriate responsibility to ensure that all safeguarding measures are monitored and evaluated for effectiveness.

Regular, high-quality training is provided for all staff, ensuring they are confident in identifying and managing safeguarding concerns. This includes cultural and contextual training to address unique challenges in international settings. Specialist staff, such as Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), receive advanced training to coordinate responses effectively.

Rigorous recruitment procedures, including background checks, ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. These procedures also extend to contractors and external providers engaged with the school.

9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

Premise and accommodation of the school are good and meet the standards for BSO.

The school ensures accessibility to all floors through lifts and seven stair lifts, ensuring full accessibility for individuals with mobility needs to all general areas. Access to the main reception area is facilitated by a stair lift and a ramp, and all common areas are equipped with ramps to enhance inclusivity. Bathrooms throughout the school are maintained to a high standard, monitored constantly by cleaning staff, and equipped with additional disabled facilities in all areas and sections of the school.

Hygiene is a priority, with hand sanitizers available throughout the school corridors, ensuring an exceptionally clean environment in all areas.

The medical facilities are well-structured, with separate clinics for boys and girls from Year 5 onwards. All medical records are centralised in the two clinics and updated annually in line with KHDA standards. Both medical clinics and their personnel are certified to meet local regulations. While the Senior girls' and primary clinics have limited space, they comply with local standards but struggle to accommodate the demand during medical checks and student screenings. They also lack privacy for older girls needing medical attention. Dedicated clinic nurses manage general medical needs and refer chronic or emergency cases to the two full-time doctors on staff. Over 10% of the general staff are first aid trained, and the school continues to invest in expanding this training during the academic year.

The school adopts a realistic approach to admissions, ensuring that facilities and resources can fully support the physical and individual needs of students. If the school determines that it cannot fully support a child's learning needs, admission is not granted.

The school layout includes distinct and purposeful segregated areas for EYFS, Primary, and Secondary students, with boys and girls separated from Year 7 onwards. Given the number of students per class, the classroom sizes are sometimes insufficient to facilitate active learning and movement.

The school environment is welcoming, with its vision and mission clearly displayed in all key stages and sections. Parents are realistic about the premises and facilities, which align with the tuition fees charged. Despite spatial constraints, the facilities support a broad and highly purposeful curriculum, with the school employing creative measures to optimise the available space. Regular maintenance and upgrades are scheduled, such as updates to the EYFS area, painting during the winter break, and the installation of additional shading in outdoor areas.

The majority of communal areas are outdoors, which limits certain activities during the hotter months. However, the school adapts to these challenges by revising its calendar of events, such as scheduling sports day in December and hosting assemblies online. The multi-purpose hall provides an excellent venue for school events, sports, graduations, and more. An outstanding art and design exhibition was held, allowing students and the community to

celebrate student achievements. Clear investment is evident in this area and with the new astroturf; however, additional investment is necessary across various areas of the school. There is insufficient lighting in the Secondary boys' wing, and although bathrooms are maintained constantly, the girls' facilities need to be updated to a higher standard.

Dedicated facilities include a specialized music room for secondary and upper primary, a music room for EYFS, and an art room for students in Years 9–13 who have selected art and design electives. Science labs for physics, chemistry, and biology are available on both the Senior girls' and boys' corridors. Although lacking a prep area, practical science is adequately resourced and supported by five lab technicians. Libraries are well-resourced for the space but are small considering the number of students. There are separate senior boys' and girls' libraries. The primary library, though smaller, is utilized effectively by upper KS2 students. Lower KS2 and KS1 students currently do not have access to the library. A small snack shop is available for students from Year 3 and above, and designated snack areas are provided for each phase of learning.

Recreational spaces include two outdoor areas for secondary PE and recreation and one outdoor area for primary students. Given the number of students, these areas are limited, but the school utilises the spaces to their maximum potential. Two prayer rooms are available for students, ensuring their spiritual needs are accommodated. The school demonstrates resourcefulness and creativity in managing its space to provide a comprehensive and stimulating curriculum, despite the overall physical space not adequately accommodating the student population. Attention to detail, such as maintaining high standards of cleanliness, medical provision, regular updates to facilities, and effective adaptations to constraints, reflects the school's commitment to delivering a quality learning environment.

10. Standard 6

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

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

Parents noted that GEMS Connect, the Parent Portal and Phoenix is used highly effectively to communicate to parents both academically and pastorally and allows them to be involved in their son/daughters experience at TWS. For example, assessment and attendance is easily accessible and in addition curriculum activities such as homework, classroom resources and materials, wellbeing initiatives, celebration days and opportunities to involve the wider family are shared.

Parents reported that their concerns are listened to and actioned in a timely manner. Online and digital platforms such as Zoom and Teams are used to help share new initiatives, policy updates and seminars.

The executive principal is a constant visual presence and this is highly valued by the parent community, not only as an example to others but as an added opportunity to communicate.

Parents noted that innovative digital strategies such as the student-led “Principal’s TV” and various social media streams are used consistently to inform parents of school life and student achievement.

Parents receive reports regularly in secondary and primary, outlining their child’s academic attainment and progress as well as written comments from teachers. Students in EYFS receive settling-in reports. The school provides formal and informal opportunities to meet with teachers to discuss their child’s personal development after reports have been distributed. Teachers send regular email correspondence relating to their child’s progress.

A well-documented and evident range of events encourage a strong partnership between the school, students and parents. Anti Bullying Day, International Day, Grandparent Day and eco based days are tangible examples of wider community engagement. The Parent Council is a highly valued, respected and integral conduit for home and school information. Parents welcome opportunities to attend and participate in school events, including parent consultations, to help them gain a better understanding of their child’s education. Parents particularly commented on how much they appreciate the consistent promotion of British values, which can be exemplified through a vibrant Parent Council.

11. Standard 7

The school's procedure for handling complaints

Overall, the school's complaints procedure fully meets BSO expectations, reflecting a commitment to high standards, fairness, and continuous enhancement of its conflict resolution processes.

The complaints procedure at the school aligns well with the expectations set in the BSO standards. The school's approach demonstrates a structured and transparent system designed to handle complaints effectively while prioritising the welfare of students, parents, and staff. The school has a well-defined complaints resolution policy (CRP) that is regularly updated to meet evolving requirements. This policy is readily available on the school's website and included in the parent handbook, ensuring accessibility for all stakeholders.

Complaints are managed through a tiered approach, starting informally via emails and meetings, with escalation to formal procedures if needed. The process is structured with clear reporting levels, timeframes, and accountability measures, ensuring timely and effective resolutions. The school adopts a fair and open approach to complaint resolution while maintaining confidentiality at all times. Complaints related to child protection or safeguarding are promptly referred to the DSL, demonstrating compliance with safeguarding requirements.

Recognising its multicultural environment, the school provides support for non-English or Arabic speakers by offering interpreters where possible, ensuring inclusivity and equitable access to the complaints process.

The school emphasises learning from complaints by continuously improving its policies and procedures. A dedicated complaints resolution team (CRT) ensures concerns are addressed constructively, fostering a culture of openness and responsiveness. The school encourages open dialogue with students, parents, and staff to ensure concerns are addressed constructively and efficiently. Sanctions and resolutions align with relevant policies such as the TWS rewards and sanctions policy and GEMS staff disciplinary policy.

Overall, the school's complaints procedure meets BSO expectations effectively, reflecting a commitment to high standards, fairness, and continuous enhancement of its conflict resolution processes.

12. Standard 8 Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management at TWS are outstanding, characterised by a strong strategic vision, data-driven decision-making, a commitment to professional growth, and an unwavering focus on student and staff well-being.

The school's consistent high performance, even with limited resources, is a testament to the effectiveness of its leadership and management structures.

The leadership team demonstrates a clear alignment with the school's mission and national educational goals. The introduction of new leadership roles, such as the deputy head of secondary and the assistant principal for pastoral care and inclusion, has significantly enhanced operational efficiency and strengthened the school's focus on inclusion. The successful completion of UAE leadership licensing exams by the executive leadership team (ELT) highlights their commitment to professional excellence and compliance with national standards.

The strategic planning process is robust, with frequent meetings of both the ELT and the senior leadership team (SLT) to address critical areas such as teaching, learning, safeguarding, and well-being. This ensures that leadership decisions are data-driven and responsive to emerging challenges.

The school maintains high standards of professional development, offering tailored training programs through partnerships with renowned institutions. The implementation of the TWS leadership development programme, which has resulted in tangible leadership advancements within the staff, underscores the school's dedication to building leadership capacity from within.

Performance management is a continuous cycle, supported by systems such as *BlueSky*, which allows for consistent tracking of progress and alignment with the school improvement plan (SIP). Regular self-evaluation and external reviews further strengthen the school's commitment to maintaining excellence.

A key strength of the school's leadership is its focus on inclusivity, demonstrated by the restructuring of the inclusion team to better support students of determination. Dedicated teams across primary and secondary levels ensure that these students receive targeted support, enabling them to make consistent progress. Staff well-being is also a high priority, with initiatives aimed at fostering a positive work environment. This is reflected in high staff satisfaction levels and low turnover rates compared to regional averages. The attainment of the *Optimus* wellbeing award further highlights the leadership's commitment to holistic development for both students and staff. Effective leadership is evident in the strong relationships cultivated with stakeholders. The local advisory board (LAB), comprising

representatives from the parent community and educational experts, plays a crucial role in governance and strategic planning. Regular interactions with parents, including formal surveys and informal engagements at school gates, ensure that parental input is valued and acted upon.

The distributed leadership model fosters a culture of accountability and empowerment, ensuring that all members of the school community are aligned with the overarching goals of excellence and continuous improvement.

The school's resource management is exemplary, particularly given its status as a low-fee institution. Resources are strategically allocated to ensure high-quality education without compromising sustainability. The school's financial prudence allows it to outperform higher-fee institutions, highlighting strong fiscal leadership.

Operational management is equally efficient, with stringent adherence to safeguarding policies, health and safety regulations, and quality assurance frameworks. Regular internal and external audits help maintain high operational standards.