



## **Inspection Report**

# **Kent College, Dubai**

## **United Arab Emirates**

Date            1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022  
Inspection #   20220301(1)

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## 1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education has put in place a voluntary scheme for the inspection of British schools overseas, whereby schools are inspected against a common set of standards that British schools overseas can choose to adopt. The inspection and this report follow the Department for Education (DFE) schedule for the inspection of British Schools Overseas.

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

The inspection and report will cover the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation (including boarding); and the school's complaints procedures. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for 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 English Department for Education (DFE) on the extent to which schools meet the standards for British Schools Overseas.

During the visit, most teachers were observed by inspectors. College documentation and policies were analysed, and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were scrutinised. Discussions were held with the senior staff, the management teams, a range of teachers, parents and groups of pupils. Two and a half school days were monitored. The lead inspector was Dr Mark Evans. The team members were Philip Davis, Sarah Pearce and Emma Shanahan.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

Kent College, Dubai (KCD) As a result of this inspection, the school has shown that it meets the standards for British Schools Overseas, except for those that cannot be achieved legally in the host country. These pertain to aspects of the UK Equality Act 2010. The school actively promotes tolerance and a respect for all human differences, within the confines of the law. This is embedded in the culture and ethos of the school. This judgement is endorsed by the British Government and is valid for three years. The inspection process is quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED).

### 3. Overall effectiveness of the school

The school offers an excellent British education that meets the needs of its pupils. The curriculum is rich, varied and imaginative. Teachers make good use of the wide range of resources; pupils are often excited by and highly engaged in their learning. Parents and pupils are very supportive of the school.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they clearly enjoy being at KCD. As a result, excellent academic progress is made, and pupils develop into confident and self-assured young people.

#### 3.1 What the school does well

The school has many strengths:

- Excellent use of data to support pupils' wellbeing.
- Strong monitoring and identification of intervention needs for pupils.
- Wide variety of opportunities for all pupils both through the taught curriculum and extra-curricular activities.
- Multiple pathways through school provide routes for all learners, giving every pupil the opportunity to succeed.
- Positive attitudes and enthusiasm of pupils for all aspects of school life.
- Pupils are interested and polite, demonstrating very positive behaviour towards their peers, to school staff and to visitors.
- The senior leadership team is outstanding. Led by a highly experienced and effective principal, the bursar and heads of school provide clear decisive and often innovative leadership.
- They work well as a team, sharing the vision for further school improvement.
- The leaders are held to account and supported by a knowledgeable, prudent and highly experienced board of governors.
- The school benefits from an excellent administrative and support team.
- The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding.

## 3.2 Points for improvement

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

- Improve the quality of learning and teaching further, so that all lessons are as effective as the best ones, for example providing more opportunities for pupils to demonstrate initiative in learning, and by developing a stronger whole school strategy for teaching English as an additional language.
- To use the engaging and innovative curriculum to drive and support challenge and progress in every lesson.
- Further develop provision of continuous professional development, for example by individualising programmes for teachers.

## 4. The context of the school

Full name of school	Kent College Dubai		
Address	Al Abjar Street, Exit 12, Nad Al Sheba 2, Meydan South Dubai - Dubai - United Arab Emirates		
Main telephone #	+971 (0) 4 318 0700		
Website	kentcollege.ae		
Email	info@kentcollege.ae		
Principal	Anthony Cashin		
Chair of board of governors	Shoaib Khoory		
Age range	12 months to 18 years old		
Number of pupils	Total = 1,257	Boys = 659	Girls = 598
Pupil numbers by age on date of entry	(0-2 years) 60	(3-5 years) 267	(6-11 years) 562
	(12-16 years) 306	(17-18 years) 61	(18+ years) 1
Total number of part-time pupils	0		

Established in 2016 with the aim of providing the same high-quality education to families in Dubai as that offered by the founding school Kent College in Canterbury, the school has quickly grown.

As a campus of a UK independent boarding school, there is a strong emphasis on the co-curriculum, led by teachers: this gives an opportunity for pupils to work with and learn from their classroom teachers in a totally different context. The school has as its mission, *to develop the full potential of each individual.*

With more than 135 years of tradition, history and heritage, both Kent College Dubai and Kent College Canterbury share the vision of developing a deep sense of personal, cultural and spiritual identity through key core values of tolerance, integrity and respect and aim to provide each pupil with an individual educational pathway that will fully prepare them for adult life.

## 4.1 British nature of the school

KCD is closely aligned with Kent College Canterbury in the UK, and has a strong British ‘feel’ and appearance, whilst celebrating its own identity as an international school with a diverse pupils population.

The curriculum is based on the National Curriculum for England, the Early Years Foundation Stage programme, (I)GCSE programme, and, unusually, 3 different post-16 options; a stream each for A-level, BTEC and IB Diploma. KCD uses UK schemes to enhance curriculum delivery, for example *Read Write Inc.* phonics and *Talk for Writing*. Pupils returning to the UK could do so seamlessly and re-enter the UK education system without disruption. The school places great emphasis on providing opportunities for pupils to explore their potential in an impressive range of academic, sporting, musical, social and cultural extra-curricular activities.

These are enthusiastically attended by the pupils who are keen to embrace all opportunities that KCD has to offer. All pupils are valued for the skills and talents they exhibit; they feel confident that they can make a valuable contribution to the life of KCD, and in the wider community.

The teaching styles observed are aligned with UK best practice - for example continuous provision in Early Years is skilfully implemented. Through observations and interactions, early years practitioners identify those pupils who need greater challenge, and those who need greater support, in all areas of the EYFS curriculum. They plan for, and adapt provision accordingly to meet individual learning needs.

The enthusiastic engagement of all pupils in learning was evident throughout the school. When given the opportunity, they are skilled and keen to demonstrate initiative.

The campus supports both the taught and implicit curriculum very well; learning spaces are well resourced and there are attractive, shaded areas for pupils to socialise.

KCD values of *Integrity*, *Tolerance* and *Respect* are wholly aligned with British values and are consistently evident in the interactions between pupils, staff and families.

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

The quality of education provided at KCD fully meets the requirements of the BSO Framework.

### 5.1 Curriculum

The curriculum provided by KCD is excellent and meets all relevant BSO standards.

In line with the school's vision to 'develop the full potential of each individual', KCD provides a rich, varied and aspirational programme, which aims to challenge and support each learner in the school. The school curriculum is based on the KS1 and KS2 English National Curriculum and the EYFS Development Matters curriculum in the junior school. In the senior school a range of pathways, including IB, A-level and BTEC, have been implemented and embedded in response to the needs of the community. All offerings are age-appropriate and aim to both support and challenge pupils at all levels.

Curriculum policies are firmly in place and subject leaders across both phases have a solid grasp on coverage, progress and attainment of pupils within their subjects. Leaders work with year groups and departments to offer advice and support in each subject area and curriculum maps, along with tracking software, ensure that coverage is maintained.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and interesting. In the junior school, pupils learn through a range of experiences and activities. For example, during Book Week, based around books by Julia Donaldson, pupils in Year 1 were using scientific equipment to 'free an insect' who had been trapped by *Wicked Lizard*, whilst pupils in Year 4 were writing scripts for a talk show to interview characters from *Hospital Dog*. A mastery approach to learning was demonstrated in mathematics lessons, where pupils were encouraged to 'twist' and 'deepen' their understanding of the concepts. As a large number of children cycle to school from the local area, a *Bikeability* programme in PE is in place to teach pupils road safety.

Phonics is taught in through the Read Write Inc programme, and opportunities to write are presented across all areas of the curriculum; for example, a Year 6 maths lesson encouraged children to disagree with a teacher's answer and explain their reasoning using written persuasive language.

A careers programme is in place for the senior school through PSHE, with a specialised program built into the timetable for Years 11-13; this supports the



pupils with career and university choices, as well as the application process to universities in the UK and beyond.

The 'Kenterprise' initiative develops the pupils' business and entrepreneurial skills. Furthermore there are a variety of opportunities in which pupils can contribute to the school and wider community, such as school council and ECOllege.

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are identified in planning and those that struggle to access an age-appropriate curriculum have adapted, personalised plans to ensure their progress. English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils are supported within the classroom and benefit from being exposed to rich language from peers, teachers and texts.

The availability and use of resources is effective across all areas of the curriculum. Science laboratories, design and technology laboratories, music recording studios and practice rooms, iMac suites, ICT and EIT laboratories and drama and dance studios are available across the phases, and each classroom and breakout space is well-resourced with technology and concrete materials to support learning and is well-utilised by teachers and support staff. Pupils demonstrated proficiency in the use of IT to complement their learning.

A rich and varied programme of extra-curricular activities is on offer to support and complement the taught curriculum. A wide range of sports are available throughout the year, with opportunities to represent both at house and school level on offer.

The performing arts department offers a variety of activities, including choir, and other inspirational options include Model United Nations (MUN), TEDEd Talks, Duke of Edinburgh/International Award and the school radio station which is heard each morning throughout the school building. The extra-curricular activities (ECA) programme is a strength of the school offering unique opportunities for pupils to find their niche.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment across the school is excellent: there is outstanding practice evident in classrooms in all year groups.

KCD pupils love to learn and the ‘buzz’ of learning is heard throughout the school. Teachers have routines built into the management of the classroom which ensure pupils feel safe to take risks with their learning.

At its best, teaching is inspirational. For example, a year 6 mathematics lesson which was engaging, lively, with clear differentiation (by level of support and pace of working), both stretched and supported learners. There were excellent attitudes to learning and routines for classroom management were firmly embedded. Learning objectives were clear and the pupils were having fun: they were audibly disappointed when the lesson ended. Pupils were encouraged to explain reasoning using mathematical language, and were given time to respond to feedback. All made progress and looked forward to the next lesson.

In one FS2 class, pupils were engaged in a variety of different learning activities that they had initiated based on their ideas for ‘hunting for the Gruffalo’. Some were making microphones to interview people, some were writing character descriptions; others had chosen to take their learning outside and were keen to show adults the roasted fox they had discovered in the box of clues. Pupils were confident and excited to talk to unfamiliar adults - ‘Do you want to come and see how to make scrambled snake?’. Engaging in meaningful play, one pupil had independently written a list in the Gruffalo café, taking orders and making the items. All were immersed and engaged with the theme; indeed, the purposeful play was focused on everything *Gruffalo*! One teaching assistant was supporting and moving learning on with questioning and support. The teacher was withdrawing individuals for phonics interventions. A very purposeful, happy and calm learning atmosphere was evident across the setting.

Differentiation was evident in many lessons within planning through success criteria and pupil tasks in many lessons. Strong questioning techniques from many teachers were seen to challenge pupil understanding further and check on understanding and progress.

Pupil behaviour is excellent and there are strong relationships within classes, which is very supportive of the learning environment. Positive reinforcement is used very well when feeding back to pupils.

It is evident that teachers put in a great deal of time and effort into the ‘hooks’ to engage and inspire, such as the chance to make the deputy head of the junior school ‘walk the plank’ in Year 2, and the use of story boxes in EYFS to excite the

pupils about *The Gruffalo* as well as engaging in meaningful problem solving to work out which animal was in the box. In the senior school, Year 7 pupils created a range of 'Horrible Histories' presentations about the Romans to demonstrate their knowledge and research skills; a Year 10 Moral Education class were researching, discussing and comparing the constitution of the UAE to that of the pupils' home countries. In a Year 11 mathematics lesson, self-directed learning was evident with each pupil revising a different concept, supported by the teacher as well as online resources.

There is good continuity of experience between parallel classes. For example in year 1 English, pupils were fully engaged by the creative and immersive theme, and excited by the learning. They were involved and engaged with the starter hook – 'the Wizard Lizard had stolen the animals and left a clue'... They had a photograph that required that they order the alphabet to discover where the lizard had taken the animals. After discovering the animal, they then discussed adjectives to describe the wizard, then recorded on a writing frame in their books. Self-assessment was evident. Feedback and marking was ongoing and responded to in the lesson. Pupils were invited to share ideas with one another and 'magpie' ideas. All were able to access the lesson's objective.

In the small number of less successful lessons, pupils are engaged, happy working and talking to one another, but less obvious progress was made. In these lessons, there was a choice of challenge but it was difficult to understand the differing skills needed, rather than just a change of task. The task (for example) was a follow-up of an experiment from the day before but it was unclear why that was worth doing again. In these lessons, books showed lots of self-assessment but less feedback from the teachers.

A wide range of resources are implemented efficiently and effectively to support pupils in classes. Support staff assigned to pupils identified in planning were deployed efficiently to support those pupil needs against the expected learning criteria. Use of technology and non-technological resources used and scaffolded to support pupils at different stages of learning.

There are usually plenty of opportunities for pupils to work independently, as a group, with a partner, or feedback as a class to share ideas. Teacher support is consistent and effective towards ensuring pupil progression.

Assessment is excellent, in general. Teaching methodology and practice in the school is underpinned by the principles of assessment for learning (AfL), inquiry-based and cooperative learning. The school has relatively small class sizes, so teachers are able to give time to each pupil. There are good opportunities to conduct group work and practical activities in an environment which is focused and allows pupils to get the most out of the time in the classroom. Smaller classes

also mean that teachers are able to differentiate effectively, can devote more time to each pupil's written work, and give constant feedback and monitor pupils' progress in the course of each lesson.

Teachers deploy multiple AfL strategies to maintain pupil engagement and ensure that all pupils respond in some way. AfL is used effectively to measure understanding and address misconceptions. Use of independent, paired and group tasks allow pupils to access the learning in a way that supports their progress. Pupils are willing to share answers confidently and respond on how others could improve. 'Twist it/deepen it' is used as a school initiative in order to challenge pupils further.

Internal assessments are taken in KS1 and KS2 for Reading and benchmarked against UK standards. The White Rose Maths Scheme is also UK sourced and benchmarked against UK standards. KS4 is a full iGCSE curriculum with assessment and course delivery benchmarked against the examining board's specification.

## 5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

Academic and other standards achieved by pupils at KCD are excellent.

The school has rigorous systems in place to monitor and track a pupil's progress and attainment across all subjects. These systems, driven by middle and senior leadership, include analysis of data at the school, key stage, year group and class level, with internal moderation monitoring systems on a regular basis. The school uses Cognitive Ability Testing (CAT4), historical data and teachers' expertise to help establish individual targets and support pupils.

Pupils attending the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision, upon entry to EYFS, are assessed against the Development Matters Framework (DMF), as they develop core skills. Pupils achieve a Good Level of Development (GLD), across the DMF. They benefit from small class sizes in EYFS, enabling teachers to know individual pupils well and monitor their progress closely. Teachers have an excellent understanding of pupils' personal and social needs.

Pupils in EYFS are formatively assessed and monitored by their teachers on a frequent basis. At the end of EYFS, 80% of pupils reached age-related goals. There are no comparisons with UK trends due to the Covid-19 pandemic, however, previous data trends indicate this figure to be inline/just above UK national average.

CAT4 and standardised tests in reading and mathematics are used in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, along with teacher assessment. GL Progress Tests, administered for Years 1 to 6 in 2021, indicate the level of progress and attainment of pupils meeting or exceeding expected levels are significantly higher than UK averages in: English, mathematics and science. The Progress Test in Science (PTS) indicates a notable increase in the number of pupils achieving a stanine grade exceeding the expected age-related level (81.59%).

In Key Stage 3, pupils are assessed in line with level descriptors and grades from 9-1. This is still in a transitional phase, as the school continues to review assessment rubrics to match learning outcomes: however, continuous professional development (CPD) for staff and support from the leadership team is ensuring the effectiveness through consistent monitoring and feedback. Development of assessment rubrics is an ongoing process, to ensure progress is matched against GCSE criterion and age-related expectation. Progress is measured against CAT4 data by the end of Key Stage 3. Data for the academic year 2020/21 shows excellent achievement, with 97% of pupils achieving or exceeding the expected age-related grade across all subjects. Progress is measured by Value Added against CAT4 results, again, data shows excellent progress is made by pupils with an average of 2.1 levels of progress being achieved. Standards of attainment in Key Stage 3 prepare pupils very well for the next stage of their education.

Key Stage 4, GCSE pupils achieved excellent results: 48% of pupils achieving grade 9-7, 85% achieving 9-5 and 94% achieved 9-4. These results are well above national averages and were based upon Teacher Assessed Grades due to the cancellation of examinations. Progress is measured by Value Added against CAT4 data as a starting point. Pupils in 2021, made an average of 1.7 levels progress against their CAT4 predicted target. This is above the UK national average.

In 2021, pupils in Key Stage 5 achieved excellent results in A-level. At A-level, 51% of pupils scored A\*- A, 97% A\*- C, and 100% of pupils achieving A\*- E. Data for the previous four cohorts of Key Stage 5 pupils, shows pupils at KCD working above the UK national average. Progress is measured by Value Added against CAT4 data as a starting point. Pupils in 2021, made an average of 1.3 levels progress against their CAT4 predicted target. This is above the UK national average.

Pupils are fully prepared for their next stage in learning through data being used to create pathways for pupils to achieve their maximum potential. 89% of pupils leaving Year 13 are reported to go on to their selected universities, with the remaining pupils attending the higher educational course of their choosing.

KCD entered the United Kingdom Mathematics Trust Challenge (UKMT) in February 2022. Although the selected challenge was intended for Key Stage 4 and 5 pupils, pupils identified within Key Stage 3 were also included into the competition. Matching the expectation of UKMT, of 50% of pupils achieving an award, KCD achieved this with some excellent results to show. One notable achievement was a Year 9 pupil achieving the recognition as 'Best in the School' (BIS), due to the high number of points achieved.

Reports show high academic standards are driven inside the classroom and as part of the schools' wider curriculum processes: however, this was not evident in all lessons observed. The school does implement strategies to support and monitor pupil progress at data points, which include pupil progress meetings, support and challenge sessions, and academic mentoring meetings.

Teachers set very high expectations in lessons across all year groups, fostering a culture in which pupils strive for academic excellence, grow in confidence and, at times, develop their independent learning skills. Consequently, attainment is outstanding across all year groups, and progress is being made in lessons by task-based learning.

In the junior school, pupils are assessed formatively on a regular basis from Years 1 - 6 and summatively via 3 data points throughout the year, on the school data system. In EYFS, the school data system, *OTrack*, is also used to assess pupils summatively at baseline, then at 3 data points throughout the year. *Seesaw* is used as a means to communicate and share learning in class with parents. There are two parent meetings through the year which allow for target setting discussions to happen.

The school leadership uses data captures to identify areas of development across the school and action CPD for relevant staff/departments. The CPD sessions are intended to highlight any areas the school wishes to address in regard to data, support teaching and learning to improve pupil achievement and progress, as well as implement new and focussed strategies across the school. All members of staff are involved within this process, with clear and open communication as part of the process.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding. It is a significant strength of the school.

Through the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Moral Education curriculum, KCD teaches pupils to be respectful and show care and compassion for all. The KCD ethos is proactive and positive reminders are a first step when managing pupil behaviour. Any 'poor choices' from pupils are managed in a calm and restorative manner, with discussions with key members of staff guiding pupil reflections. Any consequence is measured and constructive; staff emphasise to pupils their personal belief in their ability to behave in an appropriate manner. Whilst bullying in the school is extremely rare, Anti-Bullying week enables pupils and families to learn what bullying is - and what it is not - and what responses would be appropriate. The school counsellor supports mediation between pupils as necessary.

E-safety week focuses on all aspects of staying safe online, and pupils and families had the opportunity to further develop their awareness of cyber bullying with the visiting authority on the topic. Pupils are supported and encouraged to debate ethical, moral, political and social issues through the MUN ECA programme. Pupils were facilitated to demonstrate their passions and expertise through the TedEd Student Talks programme, with themes such as 'My love of Lego' and 'The subjectivity of Art'.

A strong sense of community is evidenced not only in the classrooms and corridors of KCD, but also in the activities staff, pupils and families engage in outside of school hours. 'Basketball for James' was held as a farewell to a long-standing member of the security team, and parent vs. teacher sports competitions engender a sense of belonging.

Pupil leaders spoke confidently about the induction of new pupils, with buddies assigned to enable them to quickly integrate into the school community. This is an embedded and seamless practice, as new pupils and families are enrolled throughout the school year.

Pupils have the opportunity to impact positively on school life through an established school council across the school, and a prefect system in the sixth form. There is a clear process in place for school council members to propose initiatives that are considered by the deputy head of the senior school. The junior school council have been involved in leading assemblies, for example during book week. A successful eco-initiative reduced the use of single use plastics in the school, introducing tin cans of water, and only allowing reusable cups in the onsite cafe.

The opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and skills are wide-ranging and aligned with the school mission of facilitating the potential of every child. The 'KCD



Speaks' newspaper has evolved into a high-quality online blog with regular articles, fun-facts and online games. The school radio station is another popular means by which pupils impact positively on the community of the school. 'Kenterprise' is a project that enables the senior school pupils to demonstrate independence and innovation by setting up a business, supported by pupils across the senior school. Pupils talked enthusiastically about house sporting events such as the 'Christmas Cup' that contribute to the sense of community and healthy competitive spirit. The 'Wellbeing and Inclusion' prefect introduced an art competition for pupils, and a talent show organised by pupils was memorable, allowing pupils to showcase their talents and interests.

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

The school fully meets the requirements of the standard, the regulatory requirements and cultural obligations of the United Arab Emirates and has an appropriate range of effective policies and procedures in place to promote the welfare, health and safety of pupils. An extensive range of policies and procedures are available via the school's website.

The school's arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are excellent and ensure that all pupils, staff and visitors are well cared for. Relationships and pupil voice are strengths of the school. The school uses an external system, Pulse, which helps to track and support pupil wellbeing. In all areas of wellbeing in the report, over 90% of responses from pupils reported to feel happy, valued, healthy and supported in their learning. Pulse allows teachers to regularly check in on any pupils who report any issues of concern, and the information is used quickly and accurately to support and identify those pupils. Pupils are happy and motivated young people who are evidently proud of their school and thrive.

Child protection and safeguarding are a top priority and integral to the life of the school and well understood and implemented by all. The use of CPOMS safeguarding software ensures reporting of incidents and concerns are timely and secure, and all relevant staff are informed with ease. Governors are aware of their responsibility for safeguarding; the recruitment process is aligned with best safeguarding practices with staff responsible for recruitment undergoing Safer Recruitment training. All staff have regular DSL training and are confident with implementing the embedded processes.

The behaviour of the pupils is exemplary and positive reward systems are promoted throughout the school. Should behaviour not meet appropriate standards, suitable consequences are in place and steps are taken in line with the school's published policies. The school makes good use of CPOMS for reporting concerns and to support pupils. Relevant members of the safeguarding team are responsible for ensuring appropriate and accurate actions are put into place when needed. The school leaders meet regularly with senior staff such as designated safeguarding leads, health and safety officer and the site manager.

Attendance and punctuality is monitored closely and procedures are in place to follow up with any concerns.

The school has effective policies and procedures in place for safeguarding and child protection and risk assessments are in place for activities. All staff undergo regular safeguarding training. Awareness of online safety, bullying, and wellbeing is promoted throughout the school through the use of appropriate displays. Staff, parent, and pupil

training sessions are implemented on topics deemed necessary to further support all members of the school community. Risk assessments are completed for all activities and appropriate actions are taken to ensure that identified risks are well-managed. Weekly site walks are conducted by designated staff, along with yearly external visits to ensure the school site is regularly checked and safe for all members.

The school site is secure and visitors' entry and access to the school's site is managed and monitored effectively by site staff and security. Traffic is managed effectively by key members of staff at both the beginning and end of the day. All visitors must wear a specifically coloured lanyard whilst on the school site and any person without is challenged. The school's compliance with fire regulations meets UK and UAE standards, emergency drills are held at least termly, and fire equipment is routinely maintained. Potentially hazardous resources and chemicals are stored safely and securely and disposed of appropriately and specialist classrooms are locked when not in use.

Pupils of all ages know who they can talk to and are confident that their concerns are listened to, and they would be supported. 'Open door' policies are in operation throughout the school including that of the principal. Pupils are supportive of one another, and academic peer mentoring support provision operates effectively.

School assemblies promote the schools' focus and update pupils on all relevant information on a weekly basis. Pupils actively participate in school assemblies, as do staff and the leadership team. During the inspection, the school was promoting World Book Day and pupils can interpret books in a different manner, in this instance a rap. Pupils and staff enjoyed creating and participating in a collective school rap, which encouraged pupils to be creative and embrace being confident in themselves. This ethos was supported by the school principal, who attended the assembly to perform the school rap alongside staff and pupils, to demonstrate the importance of embracing challenges and being willing to express themselves whilst learning and beyond.

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

The suitability of the proprietor and staff meets the standards required for BSO.

The school is an international branch of Kent College Canterbury in the UK, with the previous executive principal sitting on the KCD board. Members of the school board bring a wealth of business, HR and educational experiences that ensure the school principal is well-supported in strategic decision making, and also held to account. All governors are in full support of the school vision and goals; they have remained steadfast in their ambitions during the covid pandemic. Demonstrating their commitment to recruiting the very best staff, the board recently approved an improved salary scale in order to remain competitive in the international education market.

Links with the parents and friends association (PFA) are in place as the chair of the PFA also sits on the school board. The executive committee meets weekly to discuss school development and strategic plans. Termly, a full board meeting reviews progress of the school improvement plan, and is attended by both the board and senior leadership team of KCD. This regular communication and reporting process ensures the governors have a clear and accurate understanding of the strengths and strategic goals of KCD.

The college's safer recruitment policy ensures that all necessary protocols are followed and key staff complete appropriate training as per UK government documentation. Governors are fully aware of their role in ensuring all staff recruitment follows school policy, and execute their duties appropriately. The single central register is kept up to date and is checked on a regular basis by the designated safeguarding leads and HR. The school ensures that 2 references are obtained for every appointment and are used as part of the screening process. The school's recruitment strategy is to recruit colleagues with UK qualifications and experience.

Structured and well planned staff CPD ensures all colleagues have a shared understanding of appropriate teaching methodologies. Members of staff are encouraged to attain external professional qualifications; the deputy head of juniors is currently studying for their Masters in Education Leadership and the head of the junior school is currently studying for an educational doctorate, focused on coaching.

## 9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises at KCD are excellent and meet the standards of BSO.

The school's facilities are excellent and provide a stimulating and inspirational environment for the pupils. There are ample spaces for all year groups, with room for further growth without compromising the current offer. There are impressive facilities for sport and physical education, as well as the arts; classrooms are spacious and well-lit and are well-resourced for both classroom teachers and specialists. The resources and learning spaces available contribute significantly to learning throughout the school.

Displays and decoration in each part of the school reflects how the facilities are utilised, and two appointed 'environment officers', from the academic staff, are responsible for maintaining the learning environment outside of individual classrooms. This reflects the importance the school places on the learning environment and how the spaces can be best utilised for teaching and learning. Pupil learning is celebrated on the walls around the school, and there are a range of displays to inform and inspire across a range of subjects as well as to celebrate both the British nature, as well as the geographical location of the school. Maintaining the facilities is a high priority in the school; this is also true of the IT infrastructure.

An efficient system of reporting and prioritising maintenance issues is in place, with safety and security of the highest priority, and the administration team take great pride in understanding their role in the safety, learning and wellbeing of the pupils. There is a dedicated and very well-equipped school clinic which adheres to BSO standards for safety, and the school is compliant in its provision for pupils with complex needs. This is also true of toileting and washing facilities, as well as prayer rooms as per local regulations.

A committee composed of the bursar and the facilities manager meet daily to review all matters relating to the safety and performance of the school facility. This in turn is reported to the principal for corrective action. This committee is current with all regulations and incorporates the rules and guidelines of the local municipality and the local regulator. The leadership is proactive in their response to the needs of the school community in relation to the premises and have a comprehensive plan of improvement in place, including, but not exclusively, more office space for middle leaders, shading on the playground and expanded learning facilities for pupils of determination.

## 10. Standard 6 Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision for information for parents, carers and others fully meets the BSO standard.

Parents are satisfied with the level of information that comes as part of the whole school information channels. This includes the whole school newsletters as well as the use of *iSAMS* and *SchoolsBuddy*, which are used to update calendars with important dates, along with extra-curricular activity sign ups and school trips information and payments. A particular mention was given to the Principal's 'Cup of Tea' videos that are published online every Friday; parents enjoyed the human face this gave to the leadership of the school. Parents felt that, on a whole school level, they were given 'just the right' amount of information.

Teachers and leaders were praised by parents for their responsiveness to requests via email, for their willingness to answer questions and for always demonstrating their care and concern. The use of Seesaw helps the junior school parents to understand their child's learning journey. Reports from all phases of the school contain pertinent information regarding attainment and effort, and in the senior school, progress. Parent consultations complement the reporting cycle with regular evenings scheduled, or, in the case of the senior school, a combination of regular parents evenings with 'as needed' consultations, though some parents felt this approach was inconsistent.

Parents praised KCD staff for being 'concerned about wellbeing' as well as for being open to conversations about pupils and, as a result, felt their children were 'thriving' at school.

## 11. Standard 7 The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school's procedure for handling complaints meets BSO standards.

The school receives few complaints, and to date, none of a serious nature. A parent and guardian complaints procedure is in place detailing the steps that will be taken by the school in the event of a complaint being made. The policy outlines what will be done in the event of either an informal or formal complaint. This clearly states the school expectation of procedures parents and guardians must follow when making a complaint. The school has a complaints procedure (external) which appears on the school website. There is also a complaint procedure policy (internal) that covers all forms of complaints including pupil, parents, and staff.

Teachers aim to respond to a parent complaint within 24 hours unless the complaint requires further time to be investigated. Records of complaints are kept on the school monitoring system, *CPOMS*. The procedures in place ensure all stakeholders have access to, and are made aware of, the policies the school has in place. This has supported reducing the number of complaints made, as expectations are clearly outlined.

The school also has a pupil complaints policy. The policy encourages pupils to first talk to a preferred member of staff, their class teacher or relevant lead teacher. With an 'Open Door' policy and staff on hand at the entrance of school at the beginning and end of each day, KCD staff provide all round care for key stakeholders. This has supported the school in building strong relationships with families.

Pupils are also given the option to make a formal complaint. Similar to the policy for parents, pupils report any concerns/complaints directly to the relevant teacher for their year group. Parents are comfortable approaching the school and pupils said that if they had any concerns, they felt safe sharing concerns with teachers or leaders. Both policies are accessible to parents and pupils on the school website.

## 12. *Standard 8* Leadership and management of the school

The quality of leadership and management of the school is excellent. The school has weathered the medical and financial issues of the pandemic era very successfully, thanks to effective, focussed and strategic drive from the board of governors, the principal and the senior leaders in the school.

The senior leadership team is outstanding. Led by the highly effective, thoughtful, and sensitive principal, they work well as a team, share the vision for school improvement and know how to deliver it. The principal is multi-talented: from cups of tea to assembly raps, he is well known throughout the school community and puts the pupils, staff and parents first. As the key element in the leadership team, he has put in place effective strategies that have resulted in significant positive changes across an already very good school. The leaders are supported but held to account by a knowledgeable and highly experienced board. Together, they have combined to have an excellent impact on the current provision, long-term security and overall quality of education provided at KCD. They have been strong and successful stewards of the financial and pupil welfare, as well supporting the quality of learning and teaching.

The board members, leaders and managers have an inspiring effect upon the whole school community. KCD has a reputation for high standards in character development, wellbeing and behaviour as well as academic progression, personal development and inclusion.

The Covid-19 years have presented multiple challenges, especially within KCD, which is a young and growing school. Despite the recent medical, political and economic uncertainties the leadership team has driven rapid improvements in a variety of areas.

The quality of education has remained consistently high through online, blended and face-to-face learning. The school has adapted quickly and successfully to changing educational circumstances. Recent local regulator inspections assessing the quality of inclusion and online learning were all positive with standards achieved amongst the highest received within the country.

Pupil and staff morale and wellbeing are high, according to regular surveys and the high retention rates at typical transition points. Leaders place an emphasis on honest, realistic support and believe that relationships across the whole school community are key to the high quality education offered.

The leadership team has a good understanding of the strengths and necessary areas of development: robust self-evaluation and school improvement planning are strong features that have clearly supported recent growth.



Leaders throughout the school are aligned in a common vision for KCD to be a leading provider of the highest quality inclusive education, with success measured by the character and morals of the pupils as well as their academic achievements. Monitoring of these standards happens systematically and any concerns with provision (whether these are due to staffing, resourcing or facility management) are addressed immediately to achieve the best outcomes possible. Innovation and creativity are increasingly encouraged as part of this drive. KCD has all appropriate policies and procedures in place. The board reviews them regularly for effectiveness and appropriateness. The aims of the school are very clear and achieved.