

Al Khor International School

British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

Inspected on
29 November – 2 December 2015

Primary Lead Inspector: David Collard
Secondary Lead Inspector: Steven Goldsmith



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Inspection number:	1115
Type of school:	Private International
Phase	Primary and Secondary
Number of pupils/students:	2975
Age range:	3 – 18
Gender:	Co-educational
Appropriate authority:	Supreme Education Council of Qatar (SEC)
Proprietor:	RasGas and Qatargas
Chair of Governors:	Dr Farid Nouri (Rasgas Education Manager)
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List of Inspectors

Primary Phase	Secondary Phase
David Collard	Steven Goldsmith
Linda Kelsey	Joanna Jones

The Purpose of the Inspection

This inspection was carried out by 4 inspectors from Tribal Education as part of the accreditation process by the Department for Education (DfE) for British Schools Overseas. The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, prospective parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's owners on the overall effectiveness of the school and the standard of education it provides.

The accreditation for British schools overseas requires inspection against the standards in the following areas:

1. the quality the curriculum - graded
2. the quality of teaching and assessment - graded
3. the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils - graded
4. the welfare, health and safety of pupils - graded
5. the suitability of proprietor and staff - not graded
6. the school's premises and accommodation - graded
7. the provision of information for parents, carers and others - not graded
8. the procedures for handling complaints - not graded
9. provision for boarding (where applicable) - graded
10. leadership and management - graded
11. Early Years (where applicable) – not graded
12. The Sixth Form (where applicable) - graded

Key for inspection grades

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

A guide to proportions used in the report

Proportion	Description
97–100%	Vast/overwhelming majority or almost all
80–96%	Very large majority, most
65–79%	Large majority
51–64%	Majority
35–49%	Minority
20–34%	Small minority
4–19%	Very small minority, few
0–3%	Almost none/very few

Description of the school

Al Khor International School (AKIS) is a co-educational international school that offers the National Curriculum of England and the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum of India to children between the ages of 3 and 18. The school is owned by RasGas and Qatargas; the world's two largest producers of liquefied gas. It is managed by the RasGas Education Department and is licensed by the Supreme Education Council of Qatar (SEC). The school aims to provide a world class education to the children of the parent companies' employees. The children of Indian employees receive places in the CBSE curriculum and all other nationalities are given places in the British curriculum.

There are 2975 students on roll in the British curriculum. These comprise 1817 pupils in the primary phase and 1158 students in the secondary phase. There are 1596 boys and 1379 girls. The children come from 48 different countries. The largest groups are Indonesian, Malaysian, Pakistani and Qatari. 222 students (7.5%) speak English as a first language. 209 students (7%) have identified English as an additional language (EAL) needs and receive targeted provision. 248 students (8%) have special educational needs (SEN) and also receive targeted provision. This includes 80 students on school action, 128 students on school action plus and 40 students with statements. A very large majority of students are children of RasGas and Qatargas employees (92%), for whom schooling is free and entry non-selective. In the spirit of engagement with the local community, the school also offers some places (8%) to non-sponsored, mostly Qatari children, who pay fees and sit a basic admissions test or have an admissions interview.

The British curriculum is led by the senior leadership team comprising the Head of British Curriculum (Headteacher), Head of Infants, Head of Junior and Head of Senior. The school follows the National Curriculum of England and complies with SEC regulations regarding the provision of Arabic, Islamic studies and Qatari history. The British core subjects of English, mathematics and science and a range of optional subjects are taught. From the start of Key Stage 4, GCSE courses are available and post-16 there is a range of A level courses. The pastoral care of students is overseen by the Co-Heads of Student Affairs who support the academic and personal development of the students.

Information about the inspection

This 16 day inspection was carried out by a total of 4 inspectors, 2 in each of the primary and secondary phases. A range of inspection strategies was used to collect evidence, including:

- observations in 78 parts of lessons across all age ranges
- discussions with senior staff, administrators, teachers, parents and students
- scrutiny of students' work, displays and workbooks
- a visit to the separate nursery provision
- investigation of information provided by the school about students' progress, administration checks, safety and regulations
- investigation of extra-curricular activities, breaks, mealtimes and the use of the buses to bring and take students to their homes.

Executive Summary**Grade: 2**

- The Al Khor International School fully meets the accreditation standards for a British International School, as set out by the Department for Education (DfE) for England.
- This is a school that has established the right balance between promoting British values and combining them with the needs of its corporate owner and the many nationalities of the families at the school. As one older student remarked, 'This is like a family, I have learned so much about other cultures and people from all over the world.'
- Leadership and management are good. Self-evaluation is accurate. Significant changes have been made to the management structure since the last accreditation so that the proprietors and staff now form a strong team which has brought about improvement. The school has become a more effective organisation, although for some staff and parents there is a lack of clarity over roles and responsibilities. Very good continuing professional development (CPD) has had a significant impact on the continuity of learning for the large majority of students so that they achieve well.
- The curriculum is fully balanced and develops key skills across subjects. It is particularly well suited to the individual needs of current students. Students' academic and personal progress through the school is good. The development of English language skills through the school is impressive. As students move through each key stage, subject specific vocabulary provides the building blocks for learning. External examination results reflect the good progress. Notable achievement has been made in mathematics at GCSE where standards are high compared to those in the UK.
- Teaching through the school is good with evidence of a minority of teaching that is consistently excellent. Teachers in the Foundation Stage understand how young children learn so progress is rapid. Across all key stages, teachers' subject knowledge is secure. They plan and structure lessons appropriately for the ages and stages of development of the students. Teachers are aided by well-directed learning support. In a few lessons where teaching is not good, teachers do not use prior assessments well enough and are slow to respond to the needs of students of all abilities. When this happens, there is frequently a lack of challenge for the higher attaining students. It is particularly the case within the primary phase.
- Within the post -16 group there are not enough opportunities for students to make decisions about what they are learning, such as through synthesising information and using different study approaches. As a result, they are not prepared well enough for the advanced thinking skills they will need in the future.
- The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good in this multi-cultural community. Students and staff have excellent relationships and there is a real sense of harmony. Behaviour is generally good with very little disturbance to lessons. The school provides many opportunities for students to develop cultural awareness.

- The school is rightly trying to develop its ethos of 'one-school' and has started on the journey of providing students with the opportunity to have a seamless education from Foundation Stage to Year 13. Much has been achieved in a short time but there is still a gap in combining expertise, review and analysis between the primary and secondary phases.
- The welfare, health and safety of students is good. Each building has a well-stocked clinic and suitably trained personnel. There are many opportunities both in lessons and in extra-curricular activities to understand the purpose of a healthy lifestyle. Particularly good is the way that girls are encouraged to undertake sports activities.
- The premises and accommodation are very effectively used in this ever-growing school. They are fit for purpose and include a wide variety of extra facilities. The school recognises that better information technology (IT) provision is needed to support all areas of the curriculum. At present, this does not allow students enough opportunity to undertake research and work independently.
- There is very strong communication with parents through regular formal and informal meetings, the Majlis, parent forum and reporting of students' progress six times a year. Complaints are dealt with centrally through a strong, specialist administration department.
- All policies and procedures are in place although these are not always easily accessible to parents.

What the school should do to improve further

- **Ensure all students in all years make the best possible progress and are well prepared for each phase of the school through improving teaching and learning to that of the best by:**
 - providing all pupils, but especially the higher attaining pupils in Years 1 to 6, with more challenge in the individual tasks they undertake
 - providing post-16 students with more opportunities to undertake tasks that enable them to synthesise information, make decisions and undertake different study approaches
 - using prior assessment data to set work at the correct level for students of all abilities
 - allowing students to use a range of IT across subjects to undertake research and find out information that will help them work more independently.
- **Improve the staff and parents' understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the leadership team by:**
 - developing a greater common sense of purpose across the whole staff
 - ensuring all policies and procedures are known and easily accessible
 - placing all school policies on the website
 - ensuring leadership teams across the primary and secondary phases work together and use the best expertise to develop the school's aim of 'one school'.

Primary Phase

Main Findings

Grade: 2

- The good leadership and management are ensuring that the primary phase has improved and, because leaders have undertaken strong analysis of the strengths and weaknesses, this has good potential to continue into the future.
- The proprietors provide a good oversight of the school's developments and are making sure that suitably qualified and good quality staff are employed.
- The quality of education is good. The curriculum emphasises the British nature of the school and provides a rich, balanced and broad curriculum. Teaching is almost always good and there are some examples of outstanding teaching that can be used to provide effective professional development for those who need it.
- Assessment is used well by leaders to determine how well pupils are learning but is not always used as effectively to provide the highest level of challenge for those who find work too easy. Assessment is not shared well enough when pupils move from the primary to the secondary phase.
- Pupils are kept safe and secure with strong procedures to support their welfare. They are encouraged well to live healthy lives and many do so through sport, good quality meals and being taught how to live in a modern society.
- Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They behave well at all times and build good relationships with their friends and adults. They are developing good moral judgements and a tolerance of other cultures and beliefs. The regular assemblies emphasise a broad spirituality and a sense of belonging.
- The buildings are fit for purpose and there are some good specialist areas to support learning. All areas are kept clean and tidy. There are clear policies to ensure all safeguarding procedures are fully met, including thorough staff checks prior to employment.
- Parents are kept well informed through regular newsletters, formal and informal meetings and through the school website. The school is reviewing this website to ensure that relevant documents such as a complaints policy are easily accessible.
- Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they quickly learn school routines. From virtually no spoken English they quickly pick up sufficient language to hold conversations and to use these skills across a variety of subjects.

The quality of education – the curriculum**Grade: 2**

The broad and balanced curriculum is supported by medium and short term schemes of work and detailed daily or weekly planning. It follows the English National Curriculum closely and includes the teaching of additional languages, such as Arabic and mother tongue languages as a first or second language. Most teachers plan lessons using the curriculum guidance well and try to take account of pupils' different needs. Teaching assistants, briefed before and during lessons, support pupils well. The curriculum schemes show that most lessons follow a three part plan which questions pupils' knowledge from a previous lesson, develops new ideas and concepts through peer and group work and summarises learning through a plenary session. Questioning skills are developed well and teachers use these intelligently to develop the pupils' English language to a wider and higher level. The curriculum prepares them well for the secondary phase. Higher order skills in discussion, analysis, and forming hypotheses are not developed well enough alongside basic skills in literacy and numeracy. There are some opportunities for pupils to set up their own lines of enquiry such as the pupils who tested the effect of different quantities of sugar on yeast but these are not always common to all lessons. There is particularly good support for pupils with SEN through well directed teaching in-class, in small groups or from specialists. These specialists are well-coordinated to provide specific support to different areas of the curriculum such as in improving English language or basic numeracy skills. As a result, these pupils' progress is good with almost all being confident English speakers by the time they reach Year 5.

Pupils' personal, social and health education is interwoven through everyday activities such as assemblies or developed through sport and food technology teaching. For example, pupils discuss the importance of healthy eating by making 'smoothies' and regular exercise keeps the vast majority fit and well. There is an extensive range of additional clubs and sessions run after the main school day. The school uses outside expertise as well as staff talented in certain curriculum areas. For example, there are many sports clubs, art and drama clubs, a choir, and an orchestra. These are enthusiastically enjoyed by large numbers of pupils and help provide a good balanced curriculum in their education.

Quality of teaching and assessment**Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching is good throughout the primary phase. This is an improvement since the last accreditation visit. All teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach and about how children learn. The teaching of English is particularly good and enables pupils to access a wide range of vocabulary that will help them across a range of different subjects. For example, in a Year 4 lesson on fractions the teacher corrected a pupil who used the word 'fourths' instead of a quarter. In another, pupils confidently used the word 'divisible'. In English, pupils are taught to use grammar correctly ensuring that by Year 6 many are confidently expressing their views and know and use paragraphs. Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use to ensure lessons are interesting. In food technology lessons, pupils are encouraged to wash their hands and the reasons for this are clearly explained. Teachers use a variety of methods to gain pupils' interest. For example, video cartoon clips are used with younger pupils while older pupils are encouraged to help one another in small groupwork. Well devised peer assessment is a key feature in the very best lessons and pupils show a tolerance and understanding when making comments about each other's work. Displays show that, throughout the year, pupils are stimulated to think and to use different forms of thinking skills that they have previously acquired such as in a murder mystery exercise where pupils had to analyse and synthesise information. In this

way learning becomes interesting, motivating and stimulating and provides an atmosphere where pupils want to do their best. Pupils gain the essential knowledge they need across a range of subjects and the ability to use a variety of skills. As a result, they are well prepared should they need to re-enter the UK educational system.

Planning for lessons follows a structured approach that is aimed at building knowledge, understanding and skills year on year. In the main this works well although in a small number of cases the planning is followed too closely. It does not use previous assessment well enough to alter the tasks set following each lesson so that all pupils can make the progress of which they are capable. These assessments and the work in books show that lower and middle attaining pupils make more progress than those with the highest ability. For these pupils, work can sometimes be too similar to others, relying on them finishing a task more quickly rather than being given different work from a higher starting point. Nevertheless, comprehensive end of term and year assessments show that results are at, or above, age expectations when measured against UK standards. Unfortunately, this information is not, as yet, used well enough between the primary and secondary transition period to allow for a seamless continuation of education. The school has prioritised this in its next improvement plans. Pupils with SEN are supported very well through in-class and small teaching groups. Their needs are clearly identified and specialist teachers and support assistants provide well targeted tasks to help them improve. As a result, their achievement is good.

Relationships between adults and pupils are almost always strong. This is because teachers provide pupils with opportunities to take responsibility such as in a library session where pupils responded well to being allowed to find books and discuss them with each other. In the small number of weaker lessons, teachers do not always provide the correct level of challenge, particularly for the higher attaining pupils, to ensure they do not become bored or disinterested. When this does happen, pupils become distracted and do not get on quickly with their work.

Specialist teaching is of a good quality. Creative and physical development is encouraged through a wide range of activities and lessons both inside and outside the school day. Music teaching has a high profile and consequently there are a number of competent musicians and singers. Similarly, work in food technology and art uses good resources in specialised rooms. Information technology is available but is not used as an integral part of learning. Therefore, there are few opportunities for pupils to undertake deeper research or to develop specific skills such as word processing outside of the formal computer lessons.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural is good. Throughout all year groups teachers successfully encourage pupils to think for themselves, work collaboratively and to make the right decisions. For example, in a cold write session in Year 1 the teacher encouraged paired conversations and peer assessment which helped pupils to write better full sentences with the correct letter formation. Younger pupils are relatively reticent speakers because of their lack of English vocabulary but by Year 6 pupils can confidently provide answers such as discussing multiples and prime numbers in mathematics. As a result, pupils are increasingly self-confident, take pride in their work and have a good understanding of what they are learning. While there are a number of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and to show initiative, work in lessons is, on a few occasions, too directed. Consequently, pupils are not able to think for themselves or to take charge of their own learning.

Pupils demonstrate their good understanding of right and wrong, for example when playing during break times. Different nationalities, genders and cultures mix socially and help each other harmoniously. As a result, there is very little poor behaviour either in lessons or when away from direct adult supervision. Most teachers guide their learning rather than imposing it. For example, pupils are encouraged to finish work and to check themselves that it is complete. In the instances where teaching is too directed pupils do not gain the independence and confidence they need as they grow older.

Citizenship is encouraged through the 'House' system and pupils' studies combine an understanding of British culture, their own background and that of Qatari culture. In one assembly taken by the Head of House, the story about right and wrong was acted out as the story was told. Pupils often talk informally about similarities and differences for instance, between how people's family lives differ. In this way, pupils gain a good understanding of the world and how to be tolerant of each other's beliefs and cultures.

The welfare, health and safety of pupils

Grade: 2

The school takes its responsibilities for welfare very seriously. Consequently, the welfare, safeguarding, health and safety of pupils is good. All relevant policies are in place and subject to review. They are first prepared in draft by the school leadership and staff team. These are then passed through the administration staff and executives of the proprietors for legal agreement. This ensures that all local and British regulations are adhered to and correctly carried out. However, the process can take time and the final result is not always transparent. Some parents and staff remarked that they were unsure where information could be found and this has caused anxiety in the past. Acting upon this, the school has now started the process of ensuring that all policies, such as those for bullying and raising a grievance are placed on the school website in a similar format to that in a UK school. The school is a safe place with regular checks, maintenance and review conducted through the proprietor. The school's clinic is well staffed and stocked and the nurses have relevant qualifications.

The suitability of proprietor and staff

The range of checks carried out on staff is systematic, thorough and follows all local and British regulations. Administrators ensure that safeguarding checks are made on new staff in their home country where this is possible, so as to provide information on three years of continuity in previous employment and obtain at least two written, legitimate references. The correct right to work documents are obtained locally. The small number of volunteers and helpers are subject to the same stringent procedures. The procedures are very carefully overseen by an experienced and knowledgeable human resources department provided by the proprietors.

The premises and accommodation

Grade: 2

The large and expansive premises are safe, secure and fit for the purpose of education. There are many good quality specialist facilities located within the primary area, such as music, art and food technology rooms and others that can be used in the senior school, such

as swimming pools and sports resources. All classrooms are a good size, air conditioned well and have up-to-date furniture and resources for pupils to use. These are used well and provide pupils with opportunities to experience a wide range of resources and activities. Year groups are mostly grouped together in blocks enabling teachers to work well together as a team. There is easy access to the outside and evacuation procedures are in place to ensure safe exit in the case of fire. These are all well marked and signposted throughout the primary and Foundation Stage of the school. The early years' classes are a good size and have good open and free access to the outside. This is used well to provide a free-flow of activities in different environments. All are partly covered to protect children from the sun and are well used. Various facilities are used by the local community, senior students and the CBSE school.

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

Parents are generally well-informed about the processes of the school through a well-run parents' forum (Majlis) a parent teachers' association and school web site. Induction for new families and staff to the school is excellent. The programme, run by the In-House Human Resources team informs them about life in the Middle East, what to wear, where to visit and how to behave in public places. Parents are less aware of some of the more formal procedures in school such as policies on bullying and behaviour management and how to make a complaint if one arises. As most families are employed by the proprietors' company, parents know generally how the policies are applied. These are not so obvious to those who are from families employed elsewhere. Parents are well informed about their children's progress and receive reports six times a year. In addition, they meet teaching staff regularly to talk about their children's targets. Parents are highly supportive but would like to see their children respect the rule about mobile phone use in school and a few expressed a wish for more homework to keep them occupied at home.

The school's procedures for handling complaints

The school has a suitable complaints procedure showing the procedures and stages of the process. Teachers are approachable and parents say that their few concerns are dealt with personally and efficiently at this informal stage. When a complaint is escalated to a formal process, local regulations and company policy are adhered to closely. In light of wanting to improve the openness of the process and to bring it into line with British expectations, the school is presently reviewing the procedures to allow for independent representation on the panel hearing.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the primary phase have significantly changed since the last accreditation visit and both are now good. There is generally a good working relationship between all staff although some uncertainty exists among a few staff as to the best ways of bringing about improvement to the school.

The Head of Infants and the Head of Juniors, working alongside the Head of the British Curriculum, have brought an experienced and clear educational direction aimed at achieving

the best for all its pupils. The vision they have set out is shared by the majority of staff who are working well together as a team. There are some differences in the leadership approach of the middle managers although all understand the common aim to bring about a 'one school' ethos and are working well to achieve this. For example, year group timetables do not always reflect what will be taught in each lesson which makes it difficult for senior leaders to check that sufficient time is given to each subject. At the heart of the changes has been a desire to provide the highest quality of teaching staff with as many as possible having had recent experience of best British and overseas practice. The evidence of the success of this approach is seen in the way that planning more closely reflects pupils' individual needs and in the methodology and pedagogy used in lessons which is in line with best practice in teaching and learning.

Senior and middle managers have a good oversight of the quality of provision. The self-evaluation, school improvement plans and monitoring of teaching closely reflect the findings of this inspection and there is a realism about the changes needed to make the improvements sustainable. This all indicates a primary phase with good capacity to continue to improve. There are some notable examples of early successes. The good quality professional development of teachers has improved work in the classroom and the assessments show that this has impacted well on the better progress that pupils make. There is a little way to go still to ensure that the weaker elements of teaching are eliminated. The behaviour of pupils, which was variable at the last visit, is now almost universally good.

The recruitment of teachers has been improved and recent appointments have brought good expertise. The development of subject and year group leaders has provided good continuity of learning for pupils whatever class they are in and better identification of those who need help. Appraisal is at the centre of improvement and teachers are rightly becoming more accountable for their work.

There is a regular review cycle, both of legal policies as well as progress reporting. These are comprehensive, use a good range of data to help inform them and provide time limited actions that are reviewed. The new leadership has a realistic understanding about what needs to be done to ensure the school continues to improve. The personable, approachable and effective expertise of leaders has already had an impact on increasing the quality of teaching and thus pupils' progress leading to higher standards.

Early Years

Children start school speaking a number of different languages. English, for the majority, is a new language. Many families do not speak English at home and initially children are reluctant and shy speakers. They quickly develop early communications skills, learn how to play, share resources and get on with others. Children make good academic and personal progress through carefully organised and planned lessons with a high focus on speaking and listening, initial letter sounds and words. They develop fine motor skills such as using scissors, tongs, paint, glue, pencils and crayons. The rich curriculum provides activities to improve children's physical and creative development as well as early skills in writing their name, initial letters and numbers. On just a few occasions there are missed opportunities to develop learning by using other resources. For example, one small group were making collages of butterflies but did not have pictures to know what a butterfly pattern looked like.

Leadership of the Early Years is good. There are good relationships between happy children who play well together. Teachers provide good opportunities to talk about experiences. Teachers and teaching assistants have good knowledge and understanding about the Foundation Stage curriculum which is highly appropriate for children's needs. The consistent management of high expectation is supported by rewards for achievements and good behaviour. This leads to rapid and visible improvements in levels of progress in acquisition of language skills, quickly enabling access to other areas of learning.

There is a good range of curriculum opportunities, across all areas of learning. Phonics is taught formally, but there are many opportunities provided for exploration, experimentation and finding out through child led activities. A themed approach to topics maintains children's interest and curiosity. Some work has a high teacher focus and is planned around what children need to do next in learning. For example, children enjoy using equipment to weigh objects with good links across the curriculum to develop mathematical thinking alongside playing. Children are assessed when they enter school (PIPS) and a traffic light system monitors their progress. Parents are kept well informed of their progress through home-school books.

Good size classrooms have free and open access all year round to outside areas where children can ride bikes, play with larger equipment, use climbing frames, balls, skipping ropes and bats. The very well organised learning areas provide effective opportunities for role play, creative work, scientific and number work.

Letter for Primary Pupils

16 December 2015

Dear Pupil

Inspection of Al Khor International School

Thank you for making us so welcome during our recent visit. We very much enjoyed joining you in your lessons. Thank you to those of you who helped us find our way around and explained what you do during your school day. I am pleased to be able to let you know what we have written in our report.

- Your school meets fully the requirements for a British School overseas. Your education should allow you to fit in easily to a school there should your families ever decide to live in the UK.
- We agree with many of you that you are taught well. This means that most of you are reaching at least the levels that would be expected for your age. We have especially noted how quickly you learn English and we soon realised that, for most of you, this is a new language when you join the school.
- We could see how well you concentrated when you were working and how much you wanted to learn new things. Keep this up and you will do very well through your lives.
- We think the leaders of the school are doing very well to make sure that your school continues to improve. We have said that since the previous visit by inspectors we can see how much better the school is.
- You are kept safe and secure while at school and we agree with you that there is very little poor behaviour. You move about the school between lessons very well, mostly without teachers having to say anything.
- You have a very wide variety of different subjects to learn. It is very helpful that you can use some specialist rooms such as those where we saw you making 'smoothies'.
- We have suggested that those of you who find some work too easy should be given more challenging work, perhaps different things to do. This will help you become even better in each subject.
- We also hope that you can make more use of laptops, tablets and computers during lessons to help you do some research.

We hope you continue to enjoy your education as you move through the school and look forward to seeing how much you have achieved in the future.

Best wishes from the inspection team
David Collard and Linda Kelsey

Summary of inspection judgements – primary phase

Inspection Judgement Recording Form	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
The quality of the curriculum		✓		
The quality of teaching		✓		
The quality of assessment		✓		
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
Welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
The premises and accommodation		✓		
Leadership and management of the school		✓		

Secondary Phase

Main Findings

Grade: 2

- All aspects of leadership and management are good. Through their procedures for self-evaluation, the proprietors and the senior leaders have a clear and well-articulated understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The proprietor has been subject to all of the relevant checks and has met all of the local requirements. All of the required checks have been made by the proprietor in respect of all members of staff prior to their appointment.
- The curriculum provides opportunities for all students to progress and develop well. Students make good progress and show good attitudes to their work, as a result of effective teaching. In a few lessons teachers do not respond to the needs of groups of students of different abilities resulting in them having difficulty with the task or finding it insufficiently challenging. Post-16 students do not have enough opportunities to make decisions about their learning.
- The school cares for its students well. There is a high level of commitment of the staff to promoting students' health and safety. Arrangements for the safeguarding of students are robust and regularly reviewed. Arrangements to promote good behaviour are very effective and result in a calm environment for learning.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's commitment to promoting good relationships between people regardless of age, race, gender, disability, ethnic heritage or sexual orientation is overt and effective. The school's promotion of modern British life including UK attitudes towards tolerance, democracy, respect for freedom of expression and other human rights is reflected in students' good understanding of this.
- The school's buildings and premises are good. The buildings are fit for purpose, in good condition, with good lighting, cooling and ventilation. They are kept clean and hygienic at all times. They are a good fit to the school's curriculum, with the requisite specialist facilities. External security is good and there are no risks to students' health and safety.
- The school has compliant systems to ensure that it provides all of the basic information about the school to parents and prospective parents. All of the required policies are in place but these are not easily available to anyone wishing to scrutinise them. The school provides parents with good quality reports on the progress and attainment of each student. The school complied promptly and positively to requests for information in connection with the inspection.
- The school has a complaints procedure that has regard for the proprietors' and local regulatory requirements and circumstances.

The quality of education – the curriculum**Grade: 2**

The curriculum meets the needs of all students well, ensuring their rapid progression and effective preparation for their next phase of education. It is broad and balanced in Key Stage 3 and well-structured to help students achieve their best. At Key Stage 4 and post-16 the curriculum has been focussed on providing courses and qualifications which align with the career aspirations of the students. As a result, it ensures that nearly all students would be able to enter or re-enter the UK educational system successfully at the appropriate level.

In Key Stage 3, the wide-ranging curriculum develops students' talents and skills in physical, technical and creative subjects. The SEC requirements to study Qatari history are met. A literacy programme strengthens students' use of English. In Year 9, students planned their writing using a template to ensure all assessment criteria were met. For students of Arabic as a second language, 100% gained A* in Year 9.

By Key Stage 4 students' preferences narrow the curriculum because their interest in science and mathematical careers mirrors those of the majority of their parents. Most students gain 8–10 GCSEs. All native speakers study Arabic, with other nationals studying it as a second language. Islamic studies is offered to all Muslim students with others taking a global citizenship qualification. Daily tutor periods encourage students' personal development alongside spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. British values and knowledge of the UK permeates the curriculum. Younger students are aware of British traditions and festivals whilst older students study UK rural and urban settlements.

In the 16 to 19 programme of studies the majority of students choose to continue with mathematics and sciences but a full programme is offered. Students' progress has been exceptional in some subjects such as film & photography and art. However, it is not consistently good or better across the range of subjects. Advice on subject options and higher education choices is given by students, teachers and visiting speakers from universities. The school offers students the choice of tutoring and assessment for the British Council's international English language testing system (IELTS).

Students benefit from an impressive range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, for example a wide variety of sports, visits to other countries and the International Award (Duke of Edinburgh's Award). As a result, there are many opportunities for students to pursue their interests and develop new ones, as well as experience cultures other than their own. Students are well prepared for life in the modern world and have a very secure understanding of British values.

Quality of teaching and assessment**Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching is good with a minority of teaching that is consistently excellent. Teachers provide effective learning opportunities and engage well with students. As a result, students absorb new ideas and are keen to learn. Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use effectively to pose challenging questions and clarify misconceptions. This allows students to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers plan and structure lessons appropriately for the ages of the students. However, in a few lessons where teaching is not good teachers are slow to respond to the needs of the abilities of all

groups of students resulting in them having difficulty with the task or finding it insufficiently challenging.

Teachers encourage students to adopt positive attitudes to their learning. This was demonstrated emphatically in a physical education lesson, where the Year 10 girls practised the skills of basketball and then put these to excellent use during the highly energetic and clearly enjoyable match. Teachers provide students with appropriate written and verbal feedback which focuses on how students can improve their work. Teachers give students opportunities to reflect upon this feedback and consider how to improve their work.

From 33 Year 10 examination entries in 2015 students of Arabic as a second language all gained high grades with 91% at A* to A. Most students make impressive progress in English language and English Literature. This is evident in the high quality of their work produced during lessons and assessments. Students in Year 10 and 11 develop their skills exceptionally well, particularly in writing. The large numbers of students who speak English as an additional language build up their expertise in class because all teachers are skilled in teaching the key words used in examination questions. Although students demonstrate less confidence in their speaking, they acquire and use sophisticated vocabulary. Their written work shows an understanding of audience and purpose with accurate spelling, punctuation and sentence structure. In literature assessments, students respond to character, setting and plot with empathy. A small minority of students achieve a GCSE in English as a second language. For some, there is an accelerated pathway in mathematics and science so they can achieve an A2 qualification at the end of Year 12. Achievement in mathematics in GCSE in 2015 was higher than UK national averages with 46% gaining grades A* and A.

Students with low levels of literacy are supported consistently well. They are encouraged to use subject-specific language in their verbal and written responses, which enables them to develop their communication skills more rapidly. Teachers are supported by good quality resources including well directed learning support.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students Grade: 2

The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is good. Most of them enjoy school and attend regularly. The school promotes good relationships between everybody regardless of their individual characteristics. Consequently, students embrace, respect and celebrate difference. They are unaccepting of any form of intolerance or prejudice. Their understanding of modern British life is demonstrated by this as is their appreciation of the importance of democracy and their respect for freedom of expression.

Supervision of students during break periods is good. The school has a calm, cohesive atmosphere and is a pleasant workplace for both students and staff. Displays are well presented. Many celebrate the work of the students, alert them to issues relating to current events, exhort them to think of others and give good prompts and information to support their learning. This is seen in almost all classrooms and public areas.

The welfare, health and safety of students**Grade: 2**

The school's work to promote students' personal development and welfare is good. Students said that they feel safe at the school. They are confident that, should they share a concern with a member of staff, they will be taken seriously and the issue will be resolved. Students are well informed about how to stay safe online, through their computing lessons and assemblies. All forms of bullying, including cyber bullying and racist bullying, are rare. On the rare occasions when bullying does occur the students are confident that staff deal with such incidents swiftly and effectively.

The school provides extensive opportunities for students to develop their understanding of the world they live in and to widen their experiences beyond their academic studies. Students have extensive opportunities to keep themselves healthy, including a range of sporting activities. The school's system of vertical tutoring, where form groups include students from across all year groups, provides students with opportunities to act as role models and to take on positions of responsibility within the school's student community.

Students are prepared well for the next stage of their education as a result of the effective careers guidance they receive. Students have a clear understanding of all of the options which are available for them at the end of Year 9, Year 11 and Year 13.

The suitability of proprietor and staff

As in the primary phase, the proprietor and staff have been subject to all of the relevant checks and have met all of the local requirements.

The premises and accommodation**Grade: 2**

The school's buildings and premises are good. The buildings are fit for purpose, in good condition, with good lighting, cooling and ventilation. They are kept clean and hygienic at all times. They are a good fit to the school's curriculum, with the requisite specialist facilities. External security is good and there are no risks to students' health and safety.

Maintenance staff are highly effective in their work, ensuring high standards are met and maintained. Furniture and fittings are appropriately designed for the age and needs of all students. Flooring throughout the building is well maintained and is in good condition. Washroom facilities are plentiful, hygienic and easily accessible. The main entrance is well manned and the school is surrounded by secure boundary fences. Security staff monitor the main entrance ensuring all visitors are checked and security badges issued.

There are several designated ICT resource areas in the school, with a range of appropriate specialist facilities serving the curriculum. However, the school rightly recognises that better IT provision is needed to enable students to use computers more effectively in their routine activities. Indoor and outdoor PE facilities are impressive. The school also has a large assembly hall and performing arts area. There are extensive outdoor areas, many of which are shaded, and provide a range of outdoor seating enabling the students to engage in comfortable social interaction. This all greatly helps support their personal development.

The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school has systems to ensure that it provides all of the basic information about the school to parents and prospective parents. All of the required policies are in place but these are not all easily available to anyone wishing to scrutinise them. The school provides parents with good quality reports on the progress and attainment of each pupil.

The school's procedures for handling complaints

Complaints procedures are common to both the primary and secondary phases. These have regard for the proprietors and local regulatory requirements and circumstances. However, they are not well understood by the staff. In addition, there is no provision for one person on the panel being independent of the management and running of the school when there is a panel hearing of complaint.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Grade: 2

The secondary phase is led by a newly constituted team which has been in place for less than one term. The Head of Senior and his deputies are a highly skilled, caring and committed team who have focused on improving the standards in the school. They are determined that students will achieve their potential as learners and develop into well-adjusted and responsible members of society. There is a sense of purpose that is shared by staff and students. The leadership of teaching is good. Leaders, including the Head of post-16, have a very accurate understanding of the school's performance and have addressed effectively all the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. They are aware of the need for further professional development to improve the progress for students in all subjects to match that of the best performing.

Leaders use information about students' progress and achievement thoroughly to monitor the work of the school. This ensures that teaching is of a high standard and swift action is taken to tackle areas identified for development. Middle leaders work together as an effective team. They very closely monitor student progress and rapidly respond to any underachievement, to provide bespoke support to students. Leaders are very skilled at working with staff to improve their teaching. For example, small groups of staff were carefully put together to develop each other's practice and expertise. As a result, they feel motivated and supported to improve, and feel their contribution to the school is valued. Students are encouraged to aim high because they are guided towards choosing the most demanding courses and qualifications. The curriculum makes very effective provision for the development of students' reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills. Parents are very positive about the school. They take advantage of the many opportunities they have to make their views known to the school leaders.

Post-16

Grade: 2

As a result of good teaching, students' progress has improved over the last two years, particularly at AS level, and is now good. Students' current work shows increasingly rapid progress. Leaders are aware that, although students' progress is exceptional in some areas,

it is not consistently good or better across the range of subjects. The curriculum on offer to the students' is aligned closely to their capabilities and provides a wide range of routes which enable them to successfully attain the qualifications they require to pursue their future career aspirations. Teachers have strong subject knowledge, and the courses are highly structured. However, there are not enough opportunities for students to make decisions about what they are learning such as through synthesising information, as well as innovative and collaborative approaches to prepare them well enough for the advanced thinking skills they will need in their future.

Leadership of the sixth form is effective, and this is demonstrated by the improvements that have taken place. Leaders track students' progress very well and take swift action to tackle any emerging underperformance. Students benefit from high-quality impartial advice and guidance, which begins well before they join the post-16 provision. This helps them to choose qualifications which are best suited to their needs and means a much higher proportion of students are retained on study programmes than is generally the case in the UK. Students behave exceptionally well. They show respect for each other and staff and set an excellent example to younger students. Students speak very highly of their teachers, who they regard as very supportive.

Letter for Students

16 December 2015

Dear Students

Inspection of Al Khor International School, Qatar

We would like to say thank you for making our inspection such a pleasant experience. We really enjoyed our conversations with you and were impressed with your commitment to your learning and your relationships with each other.

Your school meets fully all the requirements for British Schools Overseas and your teachers demonstrate clearly the intention of providing you with a good British education for an international future. You achieve really well throughout the school and your good examination performance ensures that you have a wide range of options for your future. You contribute really well to this process. You demonstrate genuine care and concern for those around you. You told us that you value the insight and understanding you develop from working with friends of different nationalities from many different religions and ethnic groups.

Good leadership and management by the Head of British Curriculum, the Head of Secondary and the senior team continue to provide you with a rich learning environment. They, together with subject specialists and pastoral staff, work hard to do their best for you.

We have discussed the ways in which your school leaders can:

- ensure that you all make the best possible progress by improving the teaching you receive; most of it is good but it would be better if it was consistently excellent
- improve the staff and parents' understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the leadership team.

By successfully making these improvements we are confident that Al Khor International School can succeed in its ambition to become an excellent school. We know that the school leaders will involve you in supporting them to achieve this aim.

We wish you every success in the future and are confident that you will all be successful in the coming years. Thank you for the privilege of being able to spend a few days with you and sharing some of your learning experiences – we learnt a great deal about you and your school during this time.

Best wishes from the inspection team

Steven Goldsmith and Joanna Jones

Summary of inspection judgements – secondary phase

Inspection Judgement Recording Form	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
The quality of the curriculum		✓		
The quality of teaching		✓		
The quality of assessment		✓		
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
Welfare, health and safety of students		✓		
The premises and accommodation		✓		
Leadership and management of the school		✓		
Post-16		✓		