

Kent College, Dubai

British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

Inspection Dates: 3 to 6 February 2025

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Age Group: 3 to 18

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection report follows the English Department for Education (DfE) schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas. The inspection was carried out by three inspectors from Education Development Trust who spent 4 days at the school. Education Development Trust is a body approved by the British government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas and quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

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

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

Inspectors report on the extent to which schools meet the relevant standards for British Schools Overseas (BSO) accreditation. The inspection follows closely the framework for the inspection of independent schools in England but, where appropriate, also takes account of compliance with local regulations.

The DfE updated the standards in August 2023. The new standards aligned the BSO standards with the Independent School Standards (ISS) and National Minimum Standards (NMS) for Boarding applied to schools in England; clarified and reiterated the relationship between the UK and host country laws and reshaped staff recruitment standards to ensure international applicability.

The British Schools Overseas standards are as follows:

Part 1. The quality of education provided by the school (Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment).

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

- Part 3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils.
- Part 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff.
- Part 5. The premises and accommodation.
- Part 6. The provision of information.
- Part 7. The manner in which complaints are handled.
- Part 8. The leadership and management of the school.
- Part 9. The quality of provision for boarding.

The purposes of BSO inspections are to:

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

Key for inspection grades

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

Proportions used in the report

90–100%	Vast/overwhelming majority or almost all
75–90%	Very large majority, most
65–74%	Large majority
51–64%	Majority
35–49%	Minority
20–34%	Small minority
4–19%	Very small minority, few
0–3%	Almost none/very few

Information about the school

Kent College Dubai (KCD) is a co-educational day school located in the Meydan South district of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The college opened in 2016 and is one of 31 schools owned by Aldar Education. The school joined this group in 2024. The school is a sister school to Kent College Canterbury in England, and engages in regular partnership work with this school. There are currently 1,464 pupils on roll aged three years to 18 years. The majority of pupils, almost 1000, are in the foundation and primary phases; 392 pupils are in the secondary phase; and 108 students are in the sixth form. The school is also linked to Kent College Nursery which provides education and care to children up to three years old and is housed in a separate building adjacent to the school. The nursery was not part of this inspection.

KCD is not a selective school and it prides itself on being highly inclusive, educating a growing number of pupils with significant learning needs. The school's commitment to diversity and inclusion is high, ensuring that pupils learn in a safe and caring environment.

KCD is organised into four phases of education. Phase 1 caters for children in the early years foundation stage (EYFS). Phase 2 is for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. These two phases form the Junior School for primary education. Phase 3 is for pupils in Years 7 to 11 for secondary education, and Phase 4 caters for sixth-form students in Years 12 and 13. Together, the school calls this the Senior School. The sixth form is relatively small but the number of students is increasing each year.

Pupils study the EYFS curriculum, followed by the National Curriculum for England (NCfE). In the Senior School, pupils take GCSE, IGCSE or BTEC qualifications leading to A levels or BTEC qualifications in the sixth form. The vast majority of students move on to a variety of universities worldwide with the largest proportion either staying in the UAE or moving to the UK.

There are 93 nationalities at the school, with British pupils forming the largest group at nearly a fifth of pupils. There are 141 pupils identified with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Approximately one-third of pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL).

Summary of the evidence base used by the inspection team

Three inspectors from the Educational Development Trust (EDT) carried out the inspection over four days. Beforehand, they received self-review documents from the school in addition to a range of other evidence to consider. The lead inspector also organised a planning meeting with senior staff.

On site, the inspectors made 58 visits to lessons, 6 of which were joint lesson visits with school leaders. They took part in 24 meetings with school leaders, teachers, members of the strategic board and governance group, a group of parents and with several groups of pupils. They also scrutinised a range of documentation, including programmes of study, policies, school development documentation, pupils' workbooks and information about pupils' progress.

Inspectors also took into account the staff and parent surveys sent out by EDT as well as internal surveys carried out by the school.

Evaluation of the school

Kent College Dubai is an outstanding school and provides an outstanding quality of education for pupils from three to 18 years.

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

Attainment and progress **in English** are outstanding across the whole school.

Almost all children in early years exceed the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and typically perform better than pupils in England. By the end of the Reception Year, almost all children, including those with EAL, make rapid progress in relation to their starting points. Progress accelerates as pupils move through the other key stages. Almost all achieved above their expected grade in IGCSE English literature and made outstanding progress from their starting points. There was only one A-level candidate

in the previous year. There will be 13 candidates for A-level English literature in the following year as the number of students in the sixth form increases.

There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. There is timely and high-quality support for those pupils with SEND that allows this group of pupils to make excellent progress from their starting points.

In early years, children enjoy blending and segmenting in phonics. 'Tiny Talkers' groups assist those in need of additional language support. In key stage 2, pupils become detectives when presented with a mystery, where they hypothesise over visual clues such as a knife, butter, bread and jam. This then flows seamlessly into an exercise on the use of instructional language as they proceed to make jam sandwiches. The quality of vocabulary in this phase of the school is advanced, for example, with pupils incorporating the meaning of 'languish, or 'dejected' into their sentences.

At key stage 3, pupils enjoy debating, predicting and working in pairs or groups. Higher-ability pupils respond well to additional challenges. Many volunteer their contributions and opinions even when they are unsure, as there is a climate of mutual support. Such an attitude permeates the school and the focus on discussion supports the development of both written and spoken language.

In key stage 4, pupils are able to analyse poetry, discuss characterisation and figurative language. They can unravel themes and identify symbolism from 'An Inspector Calls'. In another example, students in Year 13 showed how they could critically analyse the theme of feminism found in an Agatha Christie novel.

Scrutiny of pupils' work through books, folders and digital platforms supports the outstanding progress made across all phases.

Attainment and progress **in mathematics** are outstanding across the whole school. A common thread shown by pupils throughout the school is their exceptionally high understanding of mathematical concepts and terminology.

In early years, the provision for mathematics is outstanding. Children spot patterns, they recognise and manipulate number well, and they show confident understanding of concepts such as heaviest and lightest. The number of children exceeding the ELG in mathematics is higher than that typically found in England.

Pupils continue to make outstanding progress throughout key stages 1 and 2. Pupils show a confident grasp of division by constructing repeated shapes using matchsticks, helping them to understand arrays and remainders. As a sign of the challenging content, by the end of key stage 2, pupils extend their algebraic understanding through applying the concept of simplification.

In key stages 3 and 4, pupils typically achieve very high standards and make outstanding progress. For example, in Year 8, pupils show how they use prior learning of angles and shapes to create hypotheses for the description of Pythagoras' theorem. By Year 11, pupils collaborate on solving challenging problems, such as the application of quadratics to other functions. The ambition of the pupils to succeed is a particular strength of mathematics at this phase. Over one-fifth of Year 11 pupils have already achieved a high grade in their early entry IGCSE examination and are now studying the IGCSE further mathematics course. The performance of pupils in IGCSE in 2024 is well above England and international benchmarks.

In the sixth form, students often work in pairs, solving problems together and checking each other's learning. They are guided skilfully by the teachers to reach their full potential. Currently a small number of students study A level mathematics, making statistical comparisons unreliable. Attainment improved from the previous year, including for those pupils with SEND, and is now slightly above national and international averages.

The teaching of course specifications is enriched by a wide variety of mathematics competitions and extra-curricular clubs. Mathematics Ambassadors take responsibility for promoting the subject across the age ranges and exemplify the highly positive attitude that pupils have for mathematics.

In **science**, pupils in all phases of the school make outstanding progress and attainment from their different starting points. All groups of pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, make similar rapid rates of progress with most pupils achieving above expected levels. Most able pupils are stretched by extension tasks in lessons and by a range of science-related enrichment activities.

In the early years, children make rapid progress in their understanding of the world around them so that the overwhelming majority meet or exceed the ELGs. Teachers challenge pupils with the use of subject specific language, higher order questioning, and tasks that nurture their problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

As pupils progress in the primary school, they enjoy scientific challenges and develop a sense of enquiry in the 'Thinkerton' exploration room. They continue to acquire key knowledge and achieve well. For example, in a Year 1 science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics (STEAM) session, pupils were able to use botanical terms such as petiole to describe parts of a leaf and explain the functions of the veins and the midrib.

In the Senior School, attainment at IGCSE is significantly above Cambridge IGCSE averages in all three science subjects. At A level, the relatively small number of entries makes comparisons difficult but the large majority achieve good grades that exceed their predicted grades and their attainment is broadly in line with England average. Senior School pupils develop cross-curricular links between the sciences and other subjects, such as mathematics and geography. They develop their research and practical skills as well as their enthusiasm for self-directed enquiry. For example, in biology, pupils assessed the accuracy of their three-dimensional models of the lungs after witnessing a dissection of a goat's lungs carried out with surgical precision by their teacher.

Pupils make similarly outstanding progress in **other subjects** across the school. A range of specialist teachers helps to deepen pupils' subject knowledge at primary level, for example, in art and design and technology. The innovative use of rooms to promote STEAM subjects from early years onwards also assists in providing depth across the primary curriculum.

In the Senior School, there are typically small numbers of pupils taking many IGCSE and A level examinations in other subjects over the recent three-year period. Evidence presented by the school, and that seen in lessons and in pupils' work, suggests that the majority of pupils make outstanding progress, particularly in design and technology, geography and history at IGCSE level, business studies at BTEC level, and psychology and economics at A level. As cohort numbers are so small, judging any differences between girls and boys, or those with SEND, is statistically unreliable.

- The quality of the curriculum provided by the school is outstanding (see Part 1 below).
- The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding overall (see Part 1 below).

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding (see Part 2 below).
- The welfare, health and safety of the pupils are outstanding (see Part 3 below).
- The Standard for the suitability of the proprietor and staff is met (see Part 4 below).
- The premises and accommodation meet the requirements of the Standard (see Part 5 below).
- The provision of information for parents meets the requirements of this Standard (see Part 6 below).
- The school's procedures for handling complaints meets the requirements of the Standard (see Part 7 below).
- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding (see Part 8 below).

As a result of this inspection, undertaken during February 2025, the school has demonstrated that it meets the BSO standards except for those standards that cannot be achieved legally in the host country. The school's provision prepares pupils well to enter or re-enter the independent school system in England. This judgement is endorsed by the British government, quality assured by Ofsted, and is valid for a period of three years.

Part 1. The quality of education provided by the school

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

The quality of the **curriculum** is outstanding.

The curriculum is extremely broad and balanced providing opportunities for pupils to experience all areas of learning. The curriculum is informed, but not constrained, by the EYFS framework, the NCfE and the specifications for IGCSE, A level and BTEC qualifications. The curriculum is enhanced by a very wide range of enrichment or extra-curricular activities, trips, and visits in the UAE or further afield. This allows the overwhelming majority of pupils to make rapid progress to meet or exceed their goals in each phase of the school.

In foundation stage (FS) 1, the prime areas of learning are emphasised, and specific areas of learning are developed in FS 2. In the primary phase of the school, national curriculum objectives are reviewed regularly to ensure their relevance to all pupils and ensure a smooth transition to the Senior School. In the Senior School, the curriculum is highly successful in promoting the school's vision to develop the full potential of each individual. This is achieved through the adaptation of the curriculum to meet the needs of every pupil through adjustments in lessons or by the provision of personalised pathways. The key stage 3 curriculum is successful in developing pupils' love of learning through the experience of a wide range of subjects, allowing pupils to make informed choices for IGCSE.

Pupils choose freely from a range of option subjects at IGCSE. In the sixth form, pathways are being developed with the aim of creating bespoke programmes that match the aspirations, aptitude, skills, and talents of each student. This initiative is yet to be fully embedded. The newly introduced KCD Diploma in the sixth form maps the development of students' skills, such as communication, managing well-being, and leadership.

The curriculum, including the well planned personal, social, health and economic (PSHE), and moral and social education programmes, encourages pupils to understand and celebrate other cultures. For example, in a history lesson, pupils made wall displays to commemorate their home country's part in the First World War. The school's provision promotes respect for all people, paying regard to the protected characteristics of age, disability, race, religion or belief, pregnancy, and maternity. Those characteristics which UAE law precludes the school from addressing are marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, sex, and sexual orientation.

The outstanding success of procedures to promote inclusion is a great strength of the school. The expertise of the inclusion team has ensured that all staff have a detailed knowledge of the needs of pupils with SEND, EAL, and those identified as more able, gifted, or talented. Teachers fully understand the strategies required to ensure that all pupils make rapid progress and adapt the curriculum accordingly. Pupils are challenged according to their aptitude and develop confidence as a result. For example, in a science lesson comparing a camera with the human eye, more able pupils successfully described why some cameras produce blurry images while others take sharp, clear, pictures, and how this relates to the eye focusing on objects at different distances.

The inclusive curriculum is promoted further in innovative programmes throughout the school such as Rising Stars, Achievement Centre Elevate (ACE) and the Award Scheme

Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN). Pupils with EAL gain access to the local language support programme if required. This assists them quickly to develop fluency in English which in turn helps them to benefit from the curriculum. Pupils with SEND who have a wide range of needs are fully supported both in and out of the classroom and gain increasing levels of confidence and independence in school. British values permeate learning across the curriculum and all age groups to successfully prepare pupils for life in British society.

The quality of **teaching, learning and assessment** in the school is outstanding

Teachers have an excellent knowledge of their subject specialism. The many opportunities for sharing best practice ensure that they have a refined understanding of the ways that children learn. Well-planned lessons at all levels focus on the individual and are delivered with a passion that brings each subject alive. Teachers know their pupils well and meet their needs fully. They manage pupils' innate thirst for knowledge superbly to ensure that all pupils are engaged and enjoying their learning. Teachers set clear objectives and employ a range of teaching strategies and resources extremely effectively to suit the delivery of their subjects.

In the early years, a flexible approach creates opportunities to encourage creativity and the development of problem-solving skills. In the primary phase, pupils make exceptional progress to achieve well beyond age-related expectations. This is the result of teaching that challenges pupils to develop a deeper understanding and to be inquisitive in all areas of learning. In the secondary and post-16 phases, teachers deliver lessons that provide appropriate challenge for each pupil, regardless of aptitude or need. As a result, pupils throughout the school make rapid progress to achieve and very often exceed their goals. A focus on depth rather than breadth allows content to be embedded and for pupils to take control of their own learning.

The commitment to inclusion is a great strength of the school. The inclusion department ensures that all teachers are fully informed of the needs of pupils with SEND and EAL in their lessons and employ highly effective strategies to promote their integration and to enable progress in line with their peers. Learning support assistants work as equal partners to provide clear, unobtrusive support for pupils with complex needs.

Teachers and leaders use assessment data effectively to inform their planning and to ensure a smooth transition between phases. In the classroom, assessment for learning is highly developed and linked to adaptive teaching that allows pupils to move to the next higher level. In early years, children pick their challenges and assess their own progress. For example, a challenge arising from an adaptive teaching model led to a

four-year-old making their own working electric fan. For older pupils, regular 'pit-stops' allow progress to be checked and plenary quizzes assess the acquisition of knowledge and understanding at the end of the session.

Pupils' books, and the work that is stored digitally, indicate attainment and acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding well beyond age-related expectations. Pupils are adept at assessing their own learning. Pupils fully understand what they need to do to improve and this helps them take control of their learning. As a result, pupils of all abilities and with varying needs make excellent progress.

Throughout the school, attitudes to learning are outstanding. Pupils are engaged and mature, and behaviour in lessons is exemplary. Highly positive relationships exist between peers and with staff so that pupils readily take risks without fear of failure.

Older pupils are self-confident, articulate, and self-assured without a trace of arrogance. They rapidly develop independence and higher-level thinking skills to ensure that they are extremely well-prepared for the world beyond school. The cultural mix throughout the school is a real strength as it promotes harmonious understanding, mutual respect, and tolerance.

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

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils is outstanding.

KCD is a welcoming, supportive, caring and safe school. From early years to the sixth form, there is an ethos of compassion, aspiration, respect and dedication. Kindness is at the heart of the school, and well-being is built into its practices and systems. Pupils say that they are happy at KCD and do not want to be anywhere else. Pupils who have recently arrived at the school similarly express feelings of acceptance and belonging. This is reflected in data from Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) and Personal Understanding, Learning Skills and Enrichment (PULSE) surveys in the previous year.

Links with the sister school, such as the house system, indicate an appreciation of British culture and tradition. This is also reflected in the curriculum at all ages, for example in a lesson in key stage 1, where pupils dressed as chefs and used 'bossy

verbs' to instruct their peers in making marmalade sandwiches for Paddington Bear. Other examples include thoughtful poetry from the First World War, and a music lesson where all pupils sang 'London's Burning' accompanied by ukuleles. The school proudly celebrates both diversity and commonality with international days, vibrant displays, overseas links, cross-curricular references, and a respect for different cultures, languages and faiths.

Pupils move between lessons in an orderly way. Good manners, exemplary behaviour and mutual support permeate the school and pupils talk of having a responsibility to be the best that they can be. PHSE and moral education lessons, supported by a programme of assemblies, tackle social and emotional themes, such as friendships and relationships, cyber-bullying, internet safety and healthy lifestyles in addition to conflict resolution and restorative justice. Such activities help to teach those protected characteristics that the school has the responsibility to promote. Attendance procedures are robust and the school operates a variety of incentives and initiatives to promote high attendance.

In both primary and secondary parts of the school, there are colourful buckets depicting core values of resilience, kindness, creativity, courage and ambition. The school promotes these values and they are lived out by the pupils. There is a plethora of leadership roles for pupils, such as head students, prefects, school council representatives, ambassadors, mentors and sports captains. All pupils, including those with SEND, are encouraged to take on these roles. Pupils are encouraged to enter competitions, debates, Technology, Entertainment and Design (TED) talks and the Model United Nations.

The environment promotes the school's values with a wealth of displays, pastoral information, motivational messages. Prominence is given to sustainability and the environment, with projects focused on recycling, bottle banks, saving electricity and water.

A skilled pastoral team of counsellors, medics, tutors and senior teachers provides a holistic package of support to ensure no child is left behind.

The school provides an impressive range of extra-curricular activities and a large majority of pupils attend these either after school or during lunch and breaktimes. Teaching assistants will attend these to support pupils with significant needs, a sign of how well leaders aim to include all pupils. Older students deliver some of these to

younger pupils, as well as peer-to-peer mentoring programmes. Wellness corners and quiet areas allow pupils to rest, relax and wind down. Pupils feel that they are listened to and that they are encouraged to show their independence and creativity. They value the opportunities they are provided with, with pupils summing it up by saying, 'What more could we ask for!?''

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

The welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff are outstanding.

The school takes a robust approach to the safety and well-being of pupils and staff. Staff are familiar with the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' latest 2024 update. Risk assessments are rigorous and leaders review the thorough policies regularly, in particular those that relate to safeguarding, attendance, punctuality, fire, first aid and behaviour. There are also clear policies on anti-bullying, safer recruitment of staff, mental health and well-being. An external expert on risk assessment oversees policy and procedure and advises when necessary. The school complies with fire regulations for both the UK and UAE, with emergency drills and regular checks of fire equipment. The location of extinguishers, blankets and first aid boxes around the school is clearly marked.

There is support for all pupils using a dedicated 'Team Around the Child' model. This includes mentoring, mediation and buddy systems. In addition, pupils can express concerns anonymously through an online system. They know whom to turn to if they have academic, social or emotional problems. Parents appreciate the support that is available. There is little evidence of bullying but there are procedures in place, such as conflict resolution in the event of it occurring. A reward system encourages positive attitudes whilst counselling and sanctions deter any unwanted behaviours. Current attendance of 95% is higher than that typically found in the UK.

A well-qualified team of designated safeguarding leads are quick to respond when concerns are raised by staff, students or parents. The internal online system also logs behaviour, attendance and other relevant information. Pupils are given clear information around the dangers of cyber-bullying and fake identities.

There is a team of welfare and health and safety professionals who work together extremely effectively. They conduct regular site inspections to ensure safe facilities and address any detected risk quickly. Other examples of excellent practice include safety

competitions run by the design and technology department and PSHE lessons that explore anxiety, choices and responsibilities. There are several signage boards around the school that display contact details for guidance and advice.

Security guards oversee the four entrances to the school in addition to extensive closed-circuit television (CCTV). All staff wear lanyards and sign in and out of the school premises using a mobile telephone app. Buses and cars enter and leave the school premises using just one entrance that is well-controlled by guards.

During breaktimes, pupils enjoy shade from the sun in designated canopy areas. There is padding on concrete pillars to avoid injuries. The strong focus on healthy lifestyles extends to the canteen where food is carefully prepared to be nutritious. Staff encourage pupils to drink water regularly and to understand the importance of sleep, relaxation and physical exercise whilst also providing strategies to support pupils to reduce anxiety.

Part 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

A dedicated human resources (HR) team ensures that all background checks on potential employees comply with the requirements for staff working with pupils. This team is well supported by a central department at the ALDAR Education Group, providing oversight and extra regulation, but also further expertise and guidance. The recruitment process for staff is very robust. At least one of the leaders attending shortlisting and interviews has completed relevant safer recruitment training, but typically it is more than one. The majority of the teachers appointed have British teaching qualifications.

The recruitment procedures check the identity of prospective staff, their medical fitness, qualifications, police checks from the host country, and character references from their previous and current employer, in order to satisfy leaders that they are suitable to work with children. Leaders also check references verbally to provide an additional check on suitability.

The school keeps a single central record (SCR) of all staff which is securely stored within the central IT system. This ensures staff confidentiality. The principal and one of member of the board check this regularly as well as the HR director at ALDAR. Compliance checks and audits are conducted regularly.

Part 5. The premises and accommodation

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

Kent College upholds high standards for its premises, adhering to British regulations. Strict safety protocols include fire drills, CCTV and 13 evacuation chairs. In the very well-equipped science department, the chemical and flammable storage area is particularly safe, with a series of locked doors and modern extractor systems.

There is a regular maintenance programme for the lifts and these are only used by staff or pupils with a specific need. The spacious medical clinic has an isolation cubicle, two separate beds for pupils and appropriate toilet provision.

Facilities are generally excellent, with numerous water stations, lockers and appropriate acoustics and lighting. Classrooms, corridors and specialist areas are inviting, vibrant and conducive for high quality learning.

The canteen has recent hygiene and health certification. An external company provides healthy meals and received an award in the previous year for the quality of its food. Left-over food is dehydrated in a conversion machine and made into compost. Recycling is given a high priority, with different coloured refuse bins for glass, plastic, metal and general waste visible across the premises.

The covered swimming pool and changing facilities are clean and well-maintained. Only one gate is used to enter this area and it is double locked with both key and card scanner. Toilet facilities, including those for pupils with disabilities, comply with relevant standards.

The outdoor play area for early years and Year 1 is a recent addition to the school and has been well-designed following British standards. The 'Thinkerton' room is another recent initiative and includes a mini-woodwork station with scaled-down tools. The design and technology facilities, science laboratories and performance arts areas all enhance the students' experience considerably. Of the three libraries, the senior library is less attractive than those for younger pupils. Future refurbishments include upgrades to the entrance areas and the sixth-form premises which will support the expected expansion in numbers for this phase

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

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

All information required by the regulations is made available to parents through the website which includes a dedicated parental portal. A comprehensive weekly newsletter keeps parents informed of current and future events at the school. Parents are able to contact all members of staff through email and, in discussion with inspectors, praised the accessibility of staff and senior leaders.

Contact details for the principal and proprietors are provided. The school's vision and ethos are clearly shared on the website and prospective parents can gain access to previous inspection reports to make well-informed decisions before joining the school. Copies of key policies are all available to view on the school's website. These include the admissions, curriculum, safeguarding, anti-bullying, health and safety, first aid, complaints and behaviour, sanctions and rewards policies. The inclusion policy provides details of the extensive learning support offered to pupils with SEND and to pupils who speak EAL, as well as activities to challenge the most-able, gifted and talented pupils (MAGT).

Parents receive detailed reports on their child's progress that include a comprehensive annual written report, and termly grades that include effort and achievement indicators. In discussion, parents spoke highly of the detailed and personalised nature of parent and teacher consultations. Those with sons or daughters with individual education plans (IEP) praised the sensitivity of the quarterly meetings as well as the inclusion department's daily records. Parents of younger pupils value the 'seesaw' platform, and the daily informal contact with staff at pick-up and drop-off times.

Parents are extremely positive about almost all aspects of the school's provision. A very large majority of parents responding to the pre-inspection survey indicated that they would recommend this school to another parent. Parents expressed similarly high levels of satisfaction for the safe environment in the school, the high expectations for behaviour and the standard of work, and that the school is well led. Evidence gathered during inspection supports these views. A few parents stated that they would like greater clarity with respect to the curricular offer in the sixth form.

Parents feel that they are consulted and that their opinions are valued, carefully considered, and acted upon. Regular feedback is collected through surveys and in meetings with parents.

Part 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

Parents have full access to the complaints' policy through the school's website and parents' handbook. This policy is checked and updated annually and it has clear guidelines for dealing with complaints effectively.

There are three stages in dealing with a complaint. At the first stage of a complaint, most queries are dealt with informally by teachers and middle leaders, with senior staff supporting at all times if necessary. The 'open-door' culture at the school results in good access for parents to resolve the vast majority of issues.

For those complaints that reach stages two and three, parents are given information so that the expectations of all parties can be met within clearly defined timescales. The school keeps records of concerns and complaints and their resolution. In the current academic year, there has been one formal complaint. A complaints panel is formed and each member of the panel is appointed by the chair of the executive board to investigate the complaint and provide findings and recommendations in line with the policy.

Part 8. Leadership and management of the school

Leadership and management of the school are outstanding.

All those associated with the leadership and management have the highest of aspirations for their pupils. They meet their individual needs exceptionally well. The vision and values of the school are very clear, and they are lived out by pupils and staff across all phases. The principal has a very clear vision for the school, based on each pupil flourishing. In realising this vision, he is well supported by a team of talented and determined senior and middle leaders. Leaders ensure that BSO standards are consistently met.

One feature of leadership is the confidence placed in staff who are encouraged to take on responsibility and show independence. This transfers to pupils who are not afraid to make mistakes and learn, showing an ambition to succeed. This leads to a strong culture of collaboration and shared endeavour. As an example, a range of staff groups

contributes to the detailed and ambitious school development plan, which is informed by the rigorous self-evaluation process.

The school is a sister school to Kent College, Canterbury but not a franchise school. As a result, it shares a strong identity, heritage and culture whilst retaining its own specific identity. The cultural links are strengthened by students' partnerships and reciprocal visits, and this helps to enrich the British aspect of the curriculum.

An executive governance group provides the support to the school's leaders for strategic development, estates management and the overall vision and values. Since joining ALDAR Education Group, this oversight is provided on a weekly basis through meetings with the principal. Alongside this is a strategic governance group which provides a link between school leaders and its parent body and wider community. Members of the group know the school very well and assist the senior leadership team in monitoring the effectiveness of plans, as well as helping to cement core values such as the deep commitment to inclusion and ensuring that all safeguarding arrangements are effective.

All staff are part of a rigorous cycle of appraisal and this includes all teaching assistants. Such attention to training and support shows in the highly skilled support for pupils with SEND. Teaching assistants train to be teachers, showing how the school is committed to providing opportunities for staff to take on new responsibilities. The school appoints its own supply staff, again showing the school's commitment for growing its own staffing. Leaders are ambitious to develop in their roles with leadership team members currently working on national professional qualification for headship (NPQH) and the national professional qualification for executive leadership (NPQEL) qualifications.

A strong feature of leadership is the focus on well-being, both for pupils and staff. A range of support is available, including a full-time counsellor. When asked in the survey whether leaders help staff to feel motivated and respected, almost all respondents answered in the affirmative. As an example of this high level of satisfaction, some staff took it upon themselves to produce a staff charter, outlining the characteristics and expectations of being a member of KCD staff. Parents also have confidence in the leadership at the school, with a very large majority agreeing that the school is led well.

The inclusion of all pupils is a major strength of leadership, beginning with the outstanding leadership shown in the EYFS. A group of expert and passionate middle leaders and specialist teachers has created a framework around which the growing

number of pupils with SEND can flourish and thrive. It is not an add-on, but it is a strand that runs through the school's work in all that it does. It is exemplary practice.

Pupils feel safe and cared for at school. Despite the large numbers of pupils at the school, there is a family feel with pupils welcomed each morning at the door with smiles and enthusiasm. A culture of safety is in evidence in all parts of the school, supported by outstanding behaviour and attitudes. Leaders promote a culture of equal opportunity and respect for cultural diversity.

EYFS provision

The provision for pupils in the **early years foundation stage** is outstanding.

Almost all pupils end the Reception Year with a good level of development which is higher than the national average in England. They make excellent progress from their different starting points.

All settings are rich in learning. They are managed by a forward-thinking and knowledgeable leader who is well supported by an impressive team of teachers and support assistants who have an in-depth understanding of the curriculum. Staff receive timely and relevant training and work together to ensure high quality interactions and teaching. They make use of expert subject advice and link this to their planning, for example, Mathematics Advocates who work with teachers, using floor books on Fridays to review the week's learning and enhance children's mathematical vocabulary.

Phonics and mathematics are delivered in an engaging way and children respond enthusiastically to practical work. Children enjoy exploring, solving problems and sharing their learning. Teachers plan lessons that assist pupils to make links to the outside world. They encourage children to hypothesise, offering a variety of open-ended questioning and investigation, for example when finding out why chocolate has melted.

Leaders use the best research to ensure curricular adaptation and the most appropriate personalised learning. This partnering with experts from the UK, local professionals and through regular parental partnerships all contributes to a rich and stimulating environment for children.

The British nature of the settings is evident in flag displays, reading resources and links with UK educationalists, in addition to collaboration with Kent College, Canterbury. Teachers work together to observe, refine, implement, review and deliver the

curriculum. This fosters a collaborative and innovative approach to early education and children reap the dividends. As children said, 'We love coming here because it's so exciting!'

Post-16 provision

Kent College has continued to review its curriculum offer for the 108 sixth-form students in the context of the planned growth in numbers. The school is developing bespoke pathways that will allow students to explore their interests and support their aspirations for the future. Currently, A-level and AS-courses are offered in 16 subjects and a developing programme of level 3 BTEC courses is becoming established. The offer is being expanded so that the current Year 11 pupils can choose from 17 A-level subjects and 6 single or double BTEC courses with blocks arranged to support flexible choices.

The academic programmes are supplemented by a wide range of enrichment options that include performance pathways in sports or the extended project qualification (EPQ) that develops higher-level, independent research skills. The PSHE programme continues through the sixth form and develops students' independence further to prepare them for life beyond school. For example, during this inspection, Year 13 debated whether the development of artificial intelligence (AI) should be paused for five years. Sixth-form students benefit from a wide range of leadership opportunities that include the opportunity to run societies such as the Model United Nations or Arabic for Parents. They readily accept responsibility in students' councils, house activities, or as part of the senior prefect team.

The small number of entries in some subjects makes comparisons difficult but most students make at least good progress to achieve results that are in line with England and international averages. This enables students to gain places at a wide range of universities in the UAE, UK, and other countries around the world. In 2024, students achieved 100% A* to C grades in economics, psychology, design technology, art, geography, PE and English literature as well as AS-level biology, chemistry, and mathematics.

Sixth-form students receive focused and personalised advice and assistance from the careers department that helps them to navigate the application process for universities or future careers.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

Kent College, Dubai, meets all of the required standards except those that would be in breach of the host country laws. The requirements of the host country take precedence.

It cannot fully meet the standards that relate to 2(2)(d)(ii) or 5 (b)(vi). Kent College encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics of age; disability; pregnancy and maternity; race and religion or belief, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

What the school could do to improve further

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

Currently, there are relatively small numbers of students in the sixth form and the school is still in a relatively early stage of development in establishing courses and qualifications for students. Leaders should build on the good work that is already in place to further develop the consistency of provision in the sixth form so that it extends the high-quality provision already evident in other parts of the school and continues to raise academic standards

Summary of inspection judgements

Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
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The quality of education

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

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils	✓			
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Leadership and management

Overall effectiveness of leadership and management	✓			
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School Details

Name of school	Kent College, Dubai
Type of school	Independent Day School
Date school opened	August 2016
Age range of pupils	3–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	1561
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	n/a
Annual fees (day pupils)	AED 37,500 to AED 94,980
Annual fees (boarders)	N/A
Address of school	Al Abjar Street, Exit 12, Wadi Al Safa Nad Al Sheba 2, Meydan South, Meydan, Dubai.
Telephone number	04 318 0700
Email address	info@kentcollege.sch.ae
Headteacher	Timothy Hollis
Proprietor	ALDAR Education Group

GLOSSARY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Combined or Joint Visit – a BSO Inspection visit combined with an ISQM accreditation or re-accreditation visit conducted (or DSIB inspection in Dubai) at the request of the school. This will be carried out concurrently with reference to both frameworks and sets of standards. Some of the standards

against which the school will be inspected are common, but some of the BSO standards relate to the British nature of the school.

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

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

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

Leadership – Leadership at any level (for example principals/headteachers, governors, board members, team/subject leaders) involves setting direction, empowering staff to work effectively, creating a suitable environment for learning, and setting an example to others. It entails different skills from management.

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

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

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

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

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

Standards –

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

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

With 50 years' experience of delivering education services worldwide Education Development Trust's vision is a world in which all lives are transformed through excellent education. We strive to improve education for learners globally, grounding our work in research and evidence. We support leaders to raise standards, improve school performance, develop great teachers and open career pathways.

Teaching and learning are the essence of what we do and we have more than 2,500 staff around the world designing and delivering services. Education Development Trust staff support educational reform, teach, advise, research and train.

We have built a reputation for providing high quality educational support and inspection services. One of our main aims is to improve schools through high quality school inspections. We have strong values and a clear vision to deliver a world class inspection service that will directly contribute to improving the quality of teaching, learning and care of all children and young people in settings, schools and colleges.

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

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