# International School of Creative Science, Muwaileh, Sharjah

## British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

Inspection Dates: 26 January to 29 January 2026

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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. Education Development Trust (EDT) 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 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 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 BSO standards are as follows:

Part 1. The quality of education provided by the school (curriculum, teaching, learning 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**

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

# Information about the school

The Bukhatir Education Advancement and Management (BEAM) group founded the International School of Creative Science (ISCS), Muwaileh, Sharjah in 2002. BEAM operates six schools across Sharjah, Dubai and Bahrain. The ISCS is an independent, multicultural day school for boys and girls aged three to 18 years.

The school accommodates 4,789 pupils on roll aged from three to 18 years, making it significantly bigger than many similar all-age schools in the region. There are 563 children in the early years provision, 2,881 in the primary school, 1,258 in the secondary school, and 87 in the sixth form.

The school is an international community with pupils from over 65 nationalities. At 58%, Arab pupils form the largest ethnic group. The school is inclusive, catering for pupils with a range of abilities and aptitudes. There are 70 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and 96% of pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL). The school is non selective and fully inclusive.

Children in the nursery follow the early years foundation stage (EYFS) curriculum. Pupils in the primary school and key stage 3 follow the national curriculum for England (NCfE). In key stage 4, pupils choose from a wide range of IGCSEs. In the sixth form, students choose from 12 A levels. A small number of subjects at IGCSE including human biology, further pure mathematics, art and design, statistics and A-level English literature, psychology, graphic communication and sociology have a low number of pupils, making generalised statistical comparison unreliable and misleading.

Over 800 new students joined in September 2025, half of whom enrolled in EYFS. The school is now operating at full capacity, with waiting lists in several key year groups. In September 2025, 25 new teachers and 33 teaching assistants joined the school. Staff turnover is 9% for 2025-26.

Around 90% of students go on to a range of universities in the UK, Canada and other parts of the world when they leave in Year 13. ISCS is a member of British Schools in the Middle East (BSME), and the Association of British Schools Overseas (AoBSO). The school is an exam centre for Cambridge and Edexcel.

# Summary of the evidence base used by the inspection team

This BSO inspection was carried out by five EDT inspectors who spent four days at the school. The BSO registration and self-review documents were completed in advance and the inspection dates were confirmed with 10 weeks' notice. Inspectors reviewed key information about the school prior to the inspection.

During the inspection, the team visited 89 part-lessons and carried out learning walks, including extra-curricular and enrichment activities. A total of 50 lessons were jointly observed with leaders. Inspectors also attended assemblies and daily school events. The team held 42 meetings with leaders, teachers, pupils, parents and members of the college's governing board.

Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and reviewed a broad selection of documentation, including assessment records, policies and strategic plans. Safeguarding arrangements were evaluated to check their compliance and effectiveness. Inspectors also considered the views of parents and staff gathered through the BSO survey, which was distributed shortly before the inspection.

# Evaluation of the school

**The International School of Creative Science School, Muwaileh, Sharjah is an outstanding school and provides an outstanding quality of education for pupils from three to eighteen 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 all phases.

In the early years, children enter with communication and language skills that are below those typical for their age, particularly as most speak English as an additional language. Teachers deliver a language-rich curriculum and promote purposeful talk, enabling children to make rapid and sustained rates of progress. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development in literacy has risen to 87% in 2025 with 62% exceeding, 17 percentage points above the England average. This reflects the school's relentless focus on early communication and language. There is no difference in the attainment rates of boys and girls. In Year 1, 75% of children met the phonics screening standard, just below the England average of 79%.

In the primary phase, attainment and progress are outstanding. Around 82% of pupils meet age-related expectations in reading and writing, with 69% working at greater depth. Girls overperform boys by nine percentage points. Pupils demonstrate confident and fluent reading skills, produce creative writing, and apply grammar and vocabulary with increasing levels of accuracy. Rigorous assessment and highly responsive teaching drive consistently strong rates of progress for 87% of pupils with SEND, with learning tailored precisely to their individual needs.

Outcomes in English at IGCSE and A level have remained securely strong over the last three years. In the secondary phase, pupils' attainment and progress in English are strong. Over the past three years, IGCSE English language outcomes have been consistently stable, with grades 9 to 4 at 98% in 2025 and grades 9 to 7 at 34%. This is well above the international average. There is no difference in the performance of girls and boys at grades 9 to 4. Girls outperform boys at grades 9 to 7 by eight percentage points. Almost 40% of all pupils score at least one grade higher than their 'if challenged' target grade. In English literature, all pupils achieve grades 9 to 4 with half achieving grades 9 to 7, which is well above the international average. There is no difference in the rates of performance between girls and boys. Almost 60% score at least one grade higher than their 'if challenged' target grade.

In the sixth form, students sustain their strong outcomes, attaining results well above international averages with 90% gaining A* to C, all achieving one grade higher than their 'if challenged' target grade. Students communicate with strong levels of depth and precision in both their written and spoken English, with many demonstrating mature, sustained analysis of complex texts. Exceptionally strong English provision develops articulate, confident communicators and prepares students extremely well for the next stage of their education.
Attainment and progress in **mathematics** are outstanding across all phases.

Throughout the school, boys and girls achieve similar levels of attainment and rates of progress. Pupils with SEND achieve results in line with their peers. Outcomes in mathematics at GCSE and A level have remained securely strong over the last three years.

In the EYFS, children learn to identify patterns and develop their problem-solving skills, mostly through practical activities. They count confidently to 20 and most understand number bonds. Assessment data indicates that attainment has improved between 2021 and 2025, with the number of children at or above expected levels rising from 75% to 94%, and the proportion exceeding expected levels from 51% to 67% in 2025.

By the end of key stage 2, 96% meet or exceed expectations, and 79% exceed expectations. These results reflect pupils' conceptual mathematical thinking habits, mental calculation skills, and their ability to solve multi-step problems. They master subject-specific vocabulary as a result of methodical teaching.

In the secondary school, 94% meet or exceed expected levels, and 83% exceed those levels. At IGCSE, 95% of candidates score grades 9 to 4, well above the world average of 69%. Almost all pupils negotiate algebra and geometry with confidence, and many make good progress in trigonometry and calculus. This is in response to effective curriculum sequencing, teachers' strong subject knowledge, and aspirational teaching. About 67% of pupils achieve at least one grade higher than their 'if challenged' target grade.

At A level, 98% of students score A* to C, compared with the England average of 78%. Students are especially successful in algebraic manipulation, logical reasoning, and the application of mathematical models to real-life contexts. Students are equally proficient in mechanics and statistics. At A level, 20% score at least one grade higher than their 'if challenged' target grade.

Attainment and progress in **science** are outstanding across all phases.

Boys and girls perform similarly, and pupils with SEND make strong rates of progress through tailored teaching and high-quality support. Over the past three years, outcomes show sustained levels of performance.

In the early years, teachers deliberately structure exploration and investigation, leading to children's confidence in prediction, observation and explanation. As a result, children develop confident scientific speech and demonstrate secure early reasoning. By the end of the EYFS, 96% children achieve at least a good level of development in Understanding the World, with 66% exceeding it.

Across the primary phase, pupils make strong rates of progress. They use increasingly ambitious scientific vocabulary accurately and apply scientific concepts with growing levels of independence. By the end of primary, pupils can reason confidently about complex biological systems, including medically framed models such as the circulatory system, often exceeding age-related expectations. By the end of primary, 95% of pupils attain curriculum standards, with 91% exceeding them.

As pupils move through key stage 3 into key stage 4, their rates of progress accelerate as they engage with increasingly demanding scientific content. Pupils work accurately with scientific data, models and evidence, demonstrating secure reasoning and strong practical understanding.

By the end of key stage 4, IGCSE outcomes significantly exceed international averages. Overall, 86% of pupils achieved grades 9 to 4, including 85% in biology, 86% in chemistry and 86% in physics. Value added is a clear strength, with 60% of pupils exceeding expectations by achieving, on average, one grade higher than their 'if challenged' target grade.

High proportions of pupils also attain at the highest grades. In physics, 69% achieved grades 9 to 7, in chemistry, 66% and in biology, 59%. These outcomes are at least 10 percentage points above international averages.

At A level, science outcomes are exceptionally strong. In biology, 45% of pupils achieved grades A* to A and 79% achieved grades A to B, exceeding international averages by 23 percentage points. In physics, 48% of pupils achieved grade A, 16 percentage points above international averages. Value added is a notable strength, with 40% of students attaining at least one grade higher than their expected outcomes in A-level biology.

Overall, science education prepares pupils exceptionally well for the next stage of their education with science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and medical careers a frequent choice.
Pupils' attainment and progress in a range of **other subjects** are outstanding.

Teachers build technology into lessons from EYFS onwards, enabling pupils across the school to develop information and communication technology (ICT) skills beyond age-related expectations. A range of specialist teachers in foundation and other subjects helps to deepen pupils' subject knowledge through the primary and secondary phases with the majority making outstanding progress in-line with core subjects. Pupils achieve results at IGCSE and A level that are well above England and worldwide averages. In 2025, the vast majority of pupils achieved grades 9 to 4 in ICT, art and design, business, economics, geography and psychology. In computer science, 98% of students achieved grades 9 to 4, placing ISCS Muwaileh among the top 10% of schools globally.

At A level, students continue the trend of outstanding progress and attainment in foundation and other subjects. In 2025, all students achieved the high grades of A* to B in computer science, economics, and business.

From EYFS onwards, secure development of skills, knowledge and understanding underpins pupils' outstanding success across other subjects. The expertise of subject specialists, combined with teachers' close knowledge of pupils' needs, ensures that progress is rapid throughout the school. In the upper years, pupils become confident independent learners who are well-equipped with the higher order skills that will enable them to thrive in the world beyond school. For example, in A level geography, students displayed sophisticated critical thinking skills when assessing the potential impact of hard and soft coastal management strategies on the UAE and UK coastlines.

# Summary of other judgements against the BSO standards:

- The quality of the curriculum provided by the school is outstanding (see Part 1 below).
- The quality of teaching, learning 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 meet 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 in January 2026, 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 broad, coherent and carefully structured from early years to the sixth form. It reflects the NCfE while appropriately contextualised to meet the requirements of the UAE. The curriculum includes a wide range of examination options with 18 IGCSEs and 12 A levels. Subject leaders provide clear, intelligent curriculum mapping, with deliberate sequencing that equips pupils with impressive knowledge, skills and understanding. It is a genuinely whole-planned curriculum where pupils understand expectations across all subjects and developmental areas.

In early years, children learn through well-planned, enquiry-based experiences, including appropriately adapted scientific exploration. The curriculum stimulates pupils exceptionally well in both indoor and outdoor environments, providing strong foundations for later learning. Across primary and secondary phases, leaders ensure continuity and coherence, with subject content aligned vertically and horizontally so that pupils deepen their understanding and apply learning with increasing levels of confidence.

The curriculum meets the needs of different groups of pupils. Planned adaptations ensure that pupils with SEND and those with EAL needs gain access to the curriculum through age-appropriate, targeted support, with high expectations maintained. This inclusive design reflects a strong commitment to equality of opportunity and high expectations. The curriculum fully satisfies the requirements of the chosen programmes of study at IGCSE and A level and is frequently planned to stretch pupils even further.

British values are woven thoughtfully through the curriculum and planned systematically across lessons. Pupils develop secure understanding of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance. Democratic approaches to the pupils' voice shape both the curriculum and enrichment provision, with leaders responding directly to pupils' interests and aspirations, including the introduction of human biology at IGCSE for pupils with medical career ambitions.

The curriculum benefits from a wide, and carefully planned programme of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities. Leaders intentionally design all opportunities as high-quality learning, rather than optional additions. The school also makes highly effective use of the immediate environment and local community. Carefully planned visits to The Green Planet and the Sharjah Science Museum enable pupils to apply classroom learning in meaningful real-world contexts, deepening their scientific and environmental understanding.

Extra-curricular provision shows impressive intent, outcomes and consistency, offering world-class opportunities such as robotics, TED-style public speaking and learning through the school farm. There are many on-site, overnight and international residential experiences. Physical education and sport are particularly strong. A well-structured sports programme enables the most talented pupils to participate in elite competitive football and swimming at under-14, under-16 and under-18 levels, including external and international competitions and school sports days. Pupils participate in national and international competitions while maintaining strong academic engagement.

Personal, social, health and relationships education forms an established and age-appropriate part of the curriculum and contributes strongly to pupils' personal development and emotional well-being. The school shares relationship education content transparently with parents in advance, enabling them to understand the provision fully and exercise withdrawal rights where permitted. The school provides up-to-date careers guidance for secondary pupils, including structured advice on subject choices, sixth-form pathways and future careers, supporting informed decision-making and successful progression.

Curriculum policies and plans promote respect for protected characteristics as outlined within the legal framework of the UAE, including age, disability, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity. Due to local legal requirements, aspects relating to marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, sex and sexual orientation are not addressed within the curriculum. However, pupils are consistently encouraged to value diversity, demonstrate mutual respect and develop tolerance and understanding of different cultures and beliefs. Overall, the curriculum prepares pupils exceptionally well for the next stage of their education and for future life.

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

Across the school, expert teaching and learning coupled with consistently precise assessment ensure that pupils make rapid and sustained rates of progress from their starting points and achieve very high levels of attainment. This high attainment applies equally to pupils with SEND and additional learning needs, who achieve exceptionally well because teaching is inclusive, ambitious and carefully designed to meet individual needs without reducing challenge.

Teachers draw on their deep subject knowledge to design lessons that are purposeful, well sequenced and ambitious. Learning builds cumulatively over time, with key concepts revisited and deepened systematically so that pupils retain and apply knowledge securely. Teachers' design and sequencing of the curriculum are exemplary and make a significant contribution to the outstanding quality of education. Teachers collaborate effectively to ensure teaching consistently builds, secures and extends pupils' knowledge, skills and vocabulary. Teachers

anticipate misconceptions, plan regular opportunities for retrieval and revisit prior learning deliberately to secure long-term retention.

Teachers are highly qualified subject specialists and engage regularly in research-informed professional development. As a result, teaching reflects a shared and secure understanding of effective practice. Teachers explain new learning clearly, model expectations precisely and maintain consistently high expectations for all pupils. Lessons move at an appropriate pace, routines are well established and pupils are routinely challenged to think deeply, reason and apply learning independently. In the early years, structured enquiry develops children's early investigative skills and acquisition of ambitious vocabulary.

Exceptional teaching develops strong transferable and subject-specific skills. Pupils demonstrate metacognition, reasoning and problem-solving, supported by high-quality questioning, modelling and well-judged scaffolding of learning that promotes independence and resilience.

Subject practice is consistently strong. In English, pupils rephrase and build on the contributions of others confidently, demonstrating strong oracy and subject-specific vocabulary. In mathematics, teachers model concepts clearly, break learning into logical steps and use precise questioning to deepen understanding. Pupils reason fluently, explain their thinking with confidence and apply mathematical knowledge to increasingly complex problems, reflecting strong conceptual understanding.

Adaptive teaching is typically strong. Group work is carefully scaffolded; questioning draws all pupils into learning and mixed-ability routines enable equitable access to demanding content. Teaching assistants work highly effectively to support learning, enabling pupils to develop confidence, independence and resilience. In a small minority of lessons, adaptive teaching is not as precisely matched to pupils' starting points. Leaders recognise this minor variability and are working to eradicate this mismatch in order to ensure consistently exceptional practice for all pupils.

Assessment practice is strong. Teachers use live assessment skilfully to identify pupils' misconceptions quickly and adapt their teaching in real time. In art lessons, peer and self-assessment have an exceptional impact. Pupils evaluate work against clear success criteria, articulate strengths through a 'what's working well' assessment and identify next steps confidently using an 'even better if' model and apply feedback immediately to refine outcomes. Consequently, pupils demonstrate rapid improvement and create increasingly sophisticated work. In secondary subjects, for example, baseline and formative assessment set effective goals and support pupils' reflection and improvement, contributing strongly to high levels of engagement and progress over time.

Overall, teaching, learning and assessment are of the highest quality, ensuring all pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

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

The standards relating to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC)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.

Pupils' behaviour is highly supportive of learning in the classroom, and in all contexts consistently sensitive to others. Pupils are highly ambitious, and they want their classmates to do well too. Kindness and mutual respect underpin relationships between pupils and between teachers and pupils.

Pupils show strong levels of self-esteem and self-confidence in their daily life. This also finds expression in special events such as technology, entertainment, design (TED) talks, or the Shark Tank, where participants are fluent and persuasive in their presentations.

The programme of activities is wide ranging and carefully planned to promote the qualities the school seeks to develop in its pupils. Pupils instigate and run many activities, from the sustainable garden to catch-up mathematics sessions, computing and robotics clubs. They also give up their time in service to the school and the wider community. For example, volunteer rangers monitor movements around the school during breaks to ensure safety and, beyond school, pupils organise and carry out beach cleans. The programme of activities develops pupils' character, confidence, cultural awareness, spiritual understanding and strong levels of social responsibility.

School leaders value pupils' opinions and conduct regular surveys to supplement the work of the students' council. As a result of pupils' feedback, the school has introduced cricket, IGCSE human biology, and expanded the Model United Nations and debating forums, strengthening pupils' confidence, leadership skills and their engagement with global, social and moral matters.

The school ensures pupils demonstrate the values of integrity, tolerance, collaboration, courage and compassion through their behaviour and in how they treat each other, seen in pupils' calm movement around the school, respectful interactions and positive peer relationships. The school gives them prominence in assemblies, in displays and notices, and pupils can cite and explain them all in an age-appropriate way. Leaders have shown how these values link to fundamental human values of democracy, individual freedom, mutual respect and tolerance, and the rule of law. Leaders have also demonstrated how these values reflect the Islamic ethos of the school, resulting in the explicit recognition of the range of cultures present in the school, representing 65 nationalities.

Pupils confirm that the school encourages respect for other people irrespective of race, beliefs, disability, age, pregnancy and maternity, or marriage. Pupils state that it falls under the umbrella

of the school's values, which are also their family's values. The school reinforces the message through age-appropriate activities such as circle time discussions in EYFS, personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons, or pupils addressing a secondary boys' assembly on integrity and winning respect. Pupils speak of the respect they feel for senior members of the school, and for those with reduced mobility or special educational needs; they help wheelchair users gain access to facilities and support other pupils with SEND through active social media groups.

Pupils develop understanding and acceptance of others from different cultural backgrounds. The school actively reinforces this through special events that celebrate festivals, food and costume, strengthening pupils' appreciation of diversity. Teachers customarily refer to the UAE context as well as international features in their teaching materials, such as the clock face of Big Ben or Mexican cooking. In this way, pupils also acquire a broad understanding of public institutions in the UK and in the UAE. Pupils develop their understanding of public institutions in the UK, such as the UK Parliament, the national health service and the justice system, through PSHE and assemblies.

Leaders demonstrate and promote democracy in action through elections to the school's council, and the rule of law through classroom routines. Pupils speak of the freedoms that they enjoy in school such as choice of tasks in lessons and activities in the wider curriculum, and in the choice of subjects to study.

Pupils are passionate about the spiritual dimension of the school. Features include collective prayer times, Qur'an recitation, and the well-attended annual Umrah pilgrimage. This underpins pupils' strong sense of right and wrong, and they leave school equipped with an effective and strong moral compass. The school is notably successful in its aim to develop socially responsible, confident, ethical global citizens whose character, behaviour and outlook reflect its ethos.

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

The **welfare, health and safety** of pupils and staff is outstanding.

The school has clear policies on health and safety, risk assessment and safeguarding, which are actively implemented and regularly reviewed. A digital safeguarding platform logs, tracks and reviews incidents systematically, ensuring timely follow-up and clear accountability.

The school's safeguarding and child protection policy clearly sets out detailed, robust roles, responsibilities and clear escalation procedures. The school is fully compliant with all safeguarding and welfare regulations of the host country and aligns itself with UK guidance. All staff understand their roles and recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff receive comprehensive induction and regular training, including three update sessions in the autumn term that focused on early help strategies. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) ensures clarity in reporting procedures. Posters around the school make the identity of members of the safeguarding team highly visible. Pupils know they can report concerns to a trusted adult, creating a strong and secure safeguarding culture that is highly successful in limiting the escalation of incidents.

Clear communication between home and school contributes to the outstanding attendance rate of 98% in 2024-25, and in the first term of 2025-26, which considerably exceeds the average for England. Pupils are punctual to school with a very low lateness rate of 1%, usually the result of traffic problems. Parents can monitor promptness to lessons through an app, and, as a result, pupils engage fully in their studies.

Leaders review behaviour and bullying policies annually and communicate clear expectations to all members of the school. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and bullying is very rare. Pupils respect their teachers and hold them in extremely high regard.

Through the BEAM Facilities and Compliance Team, the organisation maintains extremely thorough oversight at both school and corporate levels. The school actively manages pupils' safety in all areas of the school including the complex arrangements for the 86 buses that enable transport to and from school.

Robust risk assessments cover all areas of the school's operation including trips, visits, all classrooms, laboratories, swimming pools and recreational areas. The school treats risk assessments as dynamic working documents, reviewing them regularly and evaluating lessons learned in full. Electrical equipment undergoes regular testing to ensure compliance and safety.

The school has its own team of two full-time doctors and eight nurses, holding Ministry of Health licences, that operate the eight clinics in different locations around the school. In addition, around a third of staff hold current first-aid qualifications. The clinics provide short-term care for sick and injured pupils as well as a comprehensive service that includes nutrition and lifestyle advice, oral health checks, vaccination and the monitoring of chronic conditions. In cooperation with parents and pupils, the medical centres conduct health checks for all pupils and have enjoyed notable success in reducing obesity rates in the school by 3% in the previous year. The school's psychologist, counsellors, and social workers collaborate closely with pastoral and academic teams to support pupils' emotional well-being.

Pupils understand the clear and well-communicated fire safety procedures. The school clearly displays evacuation plans across the site and regularly involves staff and pupils in evacuation drills. Fire-fighting equipment is regularly tested and compliant with safety regulations.

# Part 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

The school has a dedicated human resources (HR) team of six, led by one HR manager who conducts all necessary background checks to meet the required safeguarding standards for staff working with pupils.

The school upholds exemplary safeguarding standards by comprehensively recording details for all staff in a rigorously maintained single central record (SCR), including individuals not directly employed by the school such as drivers, maintenance staff, the canteen staff, and cleaners.

The SCR covers checks on start dates, identity verification, medical fitness, the right to work in the host country, qualifications, criminal record checks, and references. The SCR register of checks is securely accessible only to the HR manager, the DSL and the principal.

The principal conducts a weekly, monthly, and termly audit check on the SCR. The safeguarding governor does so termly. BEAM ensures full compliance and confidentiality through a rigorous one-day annual audit.

The school implements a robust safer-recruitment policy, ensuring a rigorous selection process that prioritises the safety and well-being of all pupils. Seventeen senior and middle leaders have completed safer-recruitment training to maintain the highest standards in recruitment and deployment of staff.

# Part 5. The premises and accommodation

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

The large, purpose-built campus comprises eight buildings, each accommodating pupils in a year group or phase of the school. The early years building has well-appointed outdoor space in addition to secure spaces outside each classroom. There are over 200 well-equipped classrooms, as well as purpose-built facilities for science, computing, art and technology. Multiple specialist science laboratories with secure attached preparation rooms create a professional and safe environment for practical enquiry. The school has two swimming pools, four indoor sports halls, and extensive indoor and outdoor play areas. The school recently added a number of cricket nets following dialogue with the students' council. Recreational spaces have extensive shaded areas for protection in the hotter months. Well-equipped ICT suites serve all phases in the school to facilitate the rapid rise in digital literacy. The school purposefully partitions many learning areas to enable flexible use.

The school has designed the premises with accessibility in mind, including ramps, lifts and stair-friendly evacuation wheelchairs. The modern purpose-built accommodation provides suitable lighting, shade, natural light and air conditioning to match the use of each space. With the support of pupils, the school incorporates sustainability in its operations through recycling facilities, reduced use of single-use plastics and light sensors that cut energy consumption. Premises are deep cleaned each night to the highest standards, and as required throughout the day.

A large number of appropriately segregated toilet, washing and changing facilities in each area of the campus adequately meets the needs of the school. Clearly marked drinking-water stations are accessible on all corridors and key locations around the school. There are eight fully equipped clinics.

The facilities management team maintains the campus to an exceptionally high standard and responds swiftly to concerns raised through the quick response (QR) code reporting system. The welfare of pupils, staff and visitors is further enhanced by helpful and supportive corridor supervisors, traffic managers, and perimeter security personnel.

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

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

The school's website is comprehensive, well organised and easy to navigate, providing clear and transparent information about all aspects of the school. It communicates the school's vision, mission and values effectively and includes up-to-date inspection reports, clear contact details, including those of the proprietor, and information about admissions, examination outcomes, key events and news. A full range of statutory policies is readily accessible, including safeguarding, curriculum, inclusion, behaviour, health and safety, first aid and medicines, and complaints.

Information is comprehensive, highly accessible and supports strong parental engagement with pupils' learning, progress and their well-being. Parents receive information through a range of well-established communication systems that operate coherently and consistently across the school. Communication extends beyond statutory expectations through timely academic information and prompt operational updates that support parental reassurance, engagement and trust.

Parents receive information through the school's website, secure online learning platforms, a shared communication space and a confidential online complaints route. Inspectors found these systems to be clearly organised, easy to navigate and effective in supporting parents' understanding of the school's work, expectations and procedures. Leaders use the shared communication space effectively to publish curriculum information in advance, including the contents of relationship education, enabling parents to understand provision fully and exercise opt-out rights where appropriate.

Parents use the secure platforms to gain access to attendance information, assessment outcomes, curriculum guidance and written reports on pupils' progress and attainment. Parents confirmed that reports are clear, informative and provide a strong overview of their child's learning and achievement. Teachers share detailed learning plans in advance each term, supporting parents' understanding of curriculum coverage and assessment expectations. Inspectors found that staff use these systems consistently and effectively across all phases.

The school strengthens its reporting systems through automated short messaging service (SMS) messages to parents regarding their child's absence or lateness to lessons. Parents reported that this immediate communication supports high expectations for attendance and engagement,

promoting shared responsibility between home and school. Communication with parents is regular, structured and purposeful. Weekly updates from section leaders provide advance information about learning, events and activities. Leaders share calendar information well in advance, enabling families to plan effectively. Parents also had very positive views on the bus-tracking app, which offers reassurance by providing real-time information about bus location, boarding and arrival times.

The school gathered parents' views through the BSO parent survey, completed by approximately 1,250 parents. Survey responses indicate very high levels of parental confidence. Just over 90% of parents reported that their children enjoy school, 97% reported that their children feel safe, and 83% confirmed that the school has high expectations for their children and makes the expected standards of behaviour clear. These views align closely with inspectors' findings. Overall, leaders provide highly effective information for parents, securing strong levels of parental confidence in the school's leadership and its provision.

# Part 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints

The school meets  the requirements of this standard.

The school has a written complaints policy to which parents have access through the school's website.

The first stage of the policy sets out an informal approach to resolving complaints. School leaders at all levels ensure that they are readily available to parents at the beginning and end of each day, as well as by electronic means. As a result, they quickly become aware of any concerns that parents wish to raise with them and which they quickly resolve. This approach builds confidence among parents that the school responds to concerns promptly and with the appropriate level of rigour.

If the complaint remains unresolved, parents submit the complaint in writing and the school moves it to a formal stage. The school keeps a written confidential record of all complaints made. At the formal stage, parents normally address the complaint to the proprietor, who then notifies the principal. School leaders systematically record all formal complaints on a detailed tracker, ensuring clarity around the nature of the complaint, responsibility, communication, timelines and resolution. School leaders adopt a proactive approach to identifying patterns in complaints and particular areas of concern as part of their agenda of continuous improvement.

A parent may take a complaint forward to the third stage, a panel hearing, although none has reached this stage since the previous inspection. The panel consists of three members who have had no part in the process until that point, one of whom is independent of the school. Parents may attend the hearing and bring someone with them if they wish. The panel agrees written findings and recommendations, shared with all parties, and made available for inspection by the

principal and proprietor. The school treats all complaint-related correspondence and documentation as confidential, unless local legal frameworks require disclosure.

# Part 8. Leadership and management of the school

**Leadership and management** of the school are outstanding.

Leadership at all levels is highly skilled, strategically focused and consistently effective in securing excellent outcomes for pupils and staff. Leaders articulate and enact a clear vision, 'Lighting the way to excellence rooted in faith', which shapes strategic decision-making, organisational culture and daily practice across the school. A defining feature of leadership is the precision and clarity of the organisational structure. Roles, responsibilities and accountability are exceptionally well understood across academic, pastoral and operational leadership. Distributed leadership is highly effective, with vice principals, heads of section, and subject leaders working cohesively to secure consistency and improvement across 173 classrooms with 311 teachers. Heads of department in core subjects are deliberately deployed without regular teaching timetables, allowing them to ensure curriculum quality, coach staff and manage performance across primary and secondary phases.

The school demonstrates an exceptional capacity for sustained improvement. Senior and middle leaders have not only secured improvement over time but have maintained momentum at scale. This is reflected in inspection outcomes, examination results, staff retention and a school that has a waiting list. The development of leadership capacity is exemplary. There are currently 11 middle and senior leaders enrolled on national professional qualifications, supported by well-defined leadership pathways, internal promotion and leadership shadowing, ensuring effective succession planning and long-term leadership capacity.

Financial policies are clear and governors provide appropriate challenge and support, ensuring that the school operates legally, sustainably and in the best interests of pupils and staff.

Governors have an in-depth and accurate understanding of the school's work through regular visits, scrutiny of data and engagement with staff and pupils. The board provides strategic oversight while empowering the principal to lead the school. Performance targets for the principal are clearly defined, time-bound, and reviewed using evidence from the school's performance data and stakeholders' feedback.

Middle leadership is a significant strength and a key driver of the school's outstanding performance. Middle leaders demonstrate strong ownership and confidence, describing themselves as 'decision-makers, not messengers'. They can clearly explain how leadership actions lead to improved outcomes. All staff articulate a shared moral purpose, describing a daily mindset of how they can make a positive difference to the lives of the pupils in their care.

Leaders actively seek and respond to stakeholder voice. Almost all staff say that they are proud to be a member of staff and enjoy working at the school. Staff value the open-door leadership

approach, clear systems and the active promotion of well-being through reviewed marking practices, protected time and reduced end-of-day meetings. Staff describe their professional growth as 'purposeful, not generic', and are clear about its positive impact on classroom practice. Expertise is shared regularly across BEAM schools through initiatives such as 'Bright Ideas'.

Parental engagement is exceptionally strong. Leaders respond decisively to consultations, including changes to the school's start time and moving parents' meetings to weekends. Parents describe leadership as 'accessible, responsive and genuinely open to feedback'. Pupils' feedback led directly to strengthened structures in the students' council.

Leaders promote equality and tackle discrimination with conviction and consistency. Diversity is embedded in daily school life, and pupils confidently articulate the school's values. Leaders promote equity and diversity in leadership through transparent recruitment processes, prioritising internal progression where appropriate before external appointment to ensure fair access, continuity and representation.

Safeguarding is exemplary. Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of procedures and responsibilities, and pupils show strong awareness of safeguarding and well-being. Staff are unequivocal, stating that 'safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, all of the time'.

Leaders' self-evaluation is rigorous, accurate and sharply focused on positive impact. The school's self-evaluation form (SEF) is underpinned by the detailed school's improvement plan and an ambitious five-year strategic plan, ensuring clear alignment between evaluation, strategic priorities and sustained improvement over time.

An extensive and systematic programme of learning walks reflects a strong culture of professional dialogue, reflection and continuous improvement. Middle leaders define this process as: 'We don't just do things: we are always asked, what difference did it make in classrooms?'

The school operates with confidence, coherence and purpose, ensuring that strategic intent is translated consistently into practice, creating the conditions for sustained excellence, where pupils thrive and staff feel valued, placing the school exceptionally well for continued success.

# Early Years Provision

The quality of **early years'** provision is outstanding.

Children make rapid and sustained progress from their individual starting points, reflecting highly effective teaching and expertly tailored learning activities. Leaders use precise baseline assessments to identify needs and strengths, enabling learning to be sharply targeted and consistently impactful. Children enter with diverse experiences, including many with developing English language skills, and planning ensures that all children achieve their full potential. Strong partnerships with parents and external professionals further enhance children's learning and

well-being, securing continuity between home and school and timely, well-coordinated support where needed.

Leaders have designed a highly ambitious and coherently sequenced curriculum that fully reflects the statutory EYFS framework and is meticulously adapted to the school's context. The curriculum places exceptional emphasis on communication and language, early reading and early mathematics. As a result, outcomes are very strong. By the end of the Reception Year, 96% of children achieved a good level of development in 2024-25, which is 16 percentage points above the England average. Furthermore, 67% exceeded the expected standard, reflecting children's depth of learning.

Teaching is consistently outstanding. Practitioners demonstrate expert knowledge of child development, using skilful questioning, modelling and high-quality dialogue to extend children's thinking and vocabulary. Systematic phonics teaching underpins early reading success. The proportion of children working at expected and above in literacy has risen significantly from 73% in 2021-22 to 87% in 2024-25, with 61% exceeding expectations, which is above the England average. Adult-led activities are carefully balanced with purposeful, high-quality play, including an exceptional outdoor learning environment with a farm and planting areas that enable children to investigate and apply learning independently.

The learning environment is highly stimulating, well organised and responsive to children's interests, promoting independence, curiosity and sustained levels of engagement. Assessment is incisive and embedded, ensuring interventions are precisely targeted. Leadership of the EYFS is exemplary. Transition into Year 1 is meticulously planned, and children demonstrate outstanding personal development, high levels of self-regulation and strong communication and collaborative skills.

# Sixth-Form Provision

The quality of **sixth-form** provision is outstanding.

The school continues to adapt and broaden its sixth-form curriculum to provide bespoke pathways for its students. The sixth form currently has 87 students and has doubled in size since the last inspection. The school has strategically expanded its A-level offer to include sociology, accounting, English literature and ICT, alongside a strong and well-established focus on mathematics, computer studies and the sciences. Currently, Year 11 students can choose from 12 A-level courses, but this is subject to annual review, and the school is receptive to the views of students and parents when modifying the curriculum. As a result, the timetabling process supports flexible choices, and the opportunity to study an additional subject such as further mathematics. Students make consistently high rates of progress to achieve results that are significantly above England and worldwide averages.

A wide range of enrichment opportunities, including a life skills programme, strengthens the curriculum and prepares students well for life after they have left school. Units such as personal finance, healthy lifestyle, alongside professional skills such as writing a curriculum vitae, or making a presentation, develop their independence further. During the inspection, sixth-form mentors presented a well-received subject option session for younger pupils to discuss the content of their A-level courses.

In 2025, the proportion of students achieving grades A* to C was consistently high across the curriculum with almost all students meeting or exceeding their targets. Students in mathematics, physics, biology, chemistry, computer science, English literature, economics and business studies recorded in excess of 89% at grades A* to C which is significantly above the England and worldwide averages.

Sixth-form students receive focused and personalised careers advice and assistance from departmental staff that helps them to navigate successfully the application processes for universities across the world. Pupils speak highly of the individual support and guidance that they receive, including the opportunity to enjoy work experience and internships that help to refine their ambitions. The school has many productive links with UAE universities, and the BEAM Centre of Excellence which allows students to explore higher education and work opportunities further.

The very large majority of students gain places at their first choice of university or higher-education institutions with about 50% studying in the UAE, and the remainder obtaining places in the UK, United States or Canada, and increasingly, in many parts of Europe. Students are highly successful in obtaining places on competitive STEM-related courses such as medicine and engineering. However, the range of courses is diversifying with recent leavers choosing to study culinary arts, media, journalism and forensics.

In conversation, students expressed their gratitude for the support they receive, and their delight in the opportunities provided during their sixth-form experience. Students stated: ‘The ease of bringing your ideas to life to is what makes the school special’.

# Compliance with regulatory requirements

The International School of Creative Science 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). The International School of Creative Science 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 for development:

While adaptive teaching is a clear strength across the school, in a small number of lessons it is not yet consistently and precisely aligned to pupils' starting points. Leaders should further strengthen consistency in the use of adaptive practice across all phases so that teaching routinely reflects pupils' differing starting points and learning needs. As a result, all pupils will experience consistently well-matched challenge and support, enabling accelerated progress from their individual starting points.

# Summary of inspection judgements

**The quality of education**

| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overall quality of education | x | | | |
| How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils | x | | | |
| How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs | x | | | |
| How well pupils make progress in their learning | x | | | |

**Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | x | | | |
| The behaviour of pupils | x | | | |

**Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils | x | | | |

**Leadership and management**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overall effectiveness of leadership and management | x | | | |

# School Details

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name of school** | **International School of Creative Science, Muwaileh, Sharjah** |
| **Type of school** | **Private** |
| **Date school opened** | **2002** |
| **Age range of pupils** | **3 to 18 years** |
| **Gender of pupils** | **Mixed** |
| **Number on roll (full-time pupils)** | **4,789** |
| **Number on roll (part-time pupils)** | **N/A** |
| **Annual fees (day pupils)** | **AED 22,240 to AED 43,390** |
| **Annual fees (boarders)** | **N/A** |
| **Address of school** | **Muwaileh, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates** |
| **Telephone number** | **+97165344444** |
| **Email address** | **principal@iscs.sch.ae** |
| **Headteacher** | **Samar Khalid Murad** |
| **Proprietor** | **Bukhatir Education Advancement and Management International (BEAM)** |

# 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 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.

**Knowledge and Human Development Authority** (KHDA) – Private schools in Dubai are required by the to be inspected. A joint KHDA/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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