Kings' School Al Barsha

British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

Inspection Dates: 26 to 29 January 2026

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Age Group: 3 to 18 years

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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

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

Information about the school

Kings' School, Al Barsha (KSAB) is an inclusive, co-educational, British curriculum school, located on Umm Suqeim road, Hadaeq Sk Mohammad Bin Rashid, Dubai. The school first opened in 2014. In August 2023, the school opened its new secondary building. It is one of three Kings' Education Schools in Dubai. It is larger than many other all through British schools in Dubai. The principal has been in post since August 2023.

KSAB currently educates 3,258 pupils aged three to 18 years. This includes 420 pupils in the early years, 1,451 in the primary phase, and 1,110 in secondary, and 277 in the sixth form. The school has over 94 different nationalities and British pupils form the largest group. The school admits pupils with a broad range of ability, including 210 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A further 993 pupils are identified as learners of English as an additional language (EAL) of which only 12 require additional support to gain access to the curriculum.

The curriculum in the early years follows the UK's early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework. The primary school delivers the national curriculum for England (NCfE) as well as the UAE statutory requirements. At the end of key stage 4, pupils take GCSE examinations. In the sixth form, students choose from different pathways including A levels and BTEC qualifications.

The school's mission, in line with all three Kings' schools is: 'The Best by Every Child', achieving this 'through outstanding learning, well-being and innovation, inspiring all to succeed with confidence and purpose in a changing world.'

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 105 part-lessons, across more than 20 different subjects and carried out learning walks, including extra-curricular and enrichment activities. A total of 34 lessons were jointly observed with leaders. Inspectors also attended assemblies, tutor time, and spoke to pupils informally between lessons. The team held 38 meetings with leaders, teachers, pupils, parents and members of the school'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

Kings' School Al Barsha 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 school, pupils of all abilities and starting points, including those with SEND, make outstanding progress.

Most children enter the EYFS with English language skills a little below those typical for their age. The language-rich environment and skilled teaching enable children to make outstanding progress. By the end of the Reception Year, 95% of children meet or exceed the foundation stage goals in communication and language, significantly outperforming the national average for England.

In the primary phase, pupils make rapid progress in reading and writing. Throughout Year 1, pupils continue to develop strong reading skills. In both 2024 and 2025, 82% met the expected standard in the phonics screening check by the end of Year 1, and a further 11% met it by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 2, the overwhelming majority of pupils read fluently and accurately with good comprehension and are very well prepared for the reading demands of the key stage 2 curriculum. Throughout key stage 2, pupils develop an increasingly sophisticated understanding of vocabulary and grammar and write well for a range of purposes. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards in reading and writing which are well above international averages. They enter the secondary school phase exceptionally well prepared for the demands of the English curriculum.

Pupils continue to make rapid rates of progress in the secondary phase. Attainment in GCSE English language and English literature at grades 9 to 6 is well above national and international

averages. In 2025, 67% of pupils attained the highest grades of 8 and 9 in English language and 62% in English literature.

From Year 7 onwards, pupils develop strong analytical skills, exploring how authors use form, structure and a wide range of literary devices, including symbolism. As they move up the school, pupils gain an increasingly sophisticated understanding into the importance of context in shaping meaning. For example, Year 9 pupils studying Macbeth write confidently about how the role of women in 17th century England influences Lady Macbeth's actions.

In the sixth form, A-level English literature students make outstanding progress from their GCSE grade starting points, attaining on average 1.5 grades above expectations. Their attainment is well above the average for England and international averages with 43% achieving the highest grades of A* or A in 2025. Students demonstrate mature insight when making links between the texts. They use well-developed research skills to apply a range of critical theories to their analysis. Discussions among students show a deep understanding of the complexity of character in literary texts.

Attainment and progress in **mathematics** are outstanding.

Boys achieve slightly better than girls, particularly in external benchmarking tests. The few pupils who need English language support to gain access to the curriculum, and most pupils with SEND, make strong rates of progress from their starting points because teachers and other adults provide effective in-class support and targeted specialist interventions.

Children in the early years enter with levels broadly typical for their age. Highly effective teaching ensures very rapid progress, illustrated by a Reception Year class confidently exploring number compositions to add up to 6. By the end of the Reception Year, children attain levels in number and numerical patterns that are well above England averages.

In the primary phase, pupils apply their number skills in increasingly advanced ways and develop a secure understanding of fractions and decimals by Year 6. Year 5 pupils, including those with SEND, accurately multiply three-digit by two-digit numbers. External benchmarking tests show that 90% of primary pupils reach curriculum standards, and 78% exceed them, both well above international averages. In primary mathematics, 95% make expected rates of progress and 85% exceed expected levels of progress. Pupils move into the secondary phase thoroughly prepared.

In secondary mathematics, all pupils make at least expected progress, and 86% exceed expectations. By Year 9, pupils confidently apply their skills and knowledge to algebra and data handling, including calculating means from frequency tables. In Year 10, the most able pupils take GCSE mathematics, and in Year 11 they progress to GCSE further mathematics. These top mathematicians solve trigonometric equations with confidence. Year 11 pupils preparing for GCSE mathematics in Year 11 accurately work with inverse functions. Overall, GCSE results are above England averages, with pupils achieving about half a grade higher than their predictions. Results have risen significantly over the last three years and remain above England averages, with 46% attaining grades 9 to 7 in the most recent examinations.

Year 12 students develop strong calculus skills. The most able extend their learning by taking further mathematics in Year 13, where students competently handle early work on vector

geometry. A-level mathematics results show 46% of students achieving A* or A, again above England averages, with a steady upward trend over the last three years.

Attainment and progress in **science** are outstanding.

Pupils consistently exceed England averages in external tests and examinations, sustaining this high performance over time. Boys and girls make similarly strong rates of progress and pupils with SEND make excellent progress from their starting points. The very small numbers of English language learners all make expected or better progress.

In the early years, children learn in an environment rich in exploration and hands-on investigation. Teachers weave scientific concepts naturally through play. Children explore opposites, observe sunflower growth, identify what plants need to survive, and investigate mould and bacteria by tracking changes in bread. At KSAB, 98% of children meet or exceed the expectations of the natural world core aspect, significantly above the England average of 85%. Boys' higher attainment reflects their strong engagement with investigative learning. Every child meets or exceeds their personalised goals.

In primary, science outcomes of progress tests are outstanding with 94% of pupils attaining above expectations and nearly 88% making expected or better progress. Pupils with SEND achieve highly with 82% making expected or better progress, compared with 87% across the whole cohort.

Primary science teaching focuses strongly on pupils' use of the scientific method. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils carried out a parachute drop investigation. They recorded measurements with precision, applying principles of accuracy, repetition and fair testing.

At GCSE, the three-year trend shows a slight decline in pupils' attainment of the very top grades across all separate sciences. However, outcomes remain well above international averages with more than 20% achieving grade 9 in physics and chemistry. Overall progress is very strong, with 93% of pupils exceeding expectations.

At A level, students' attainment of the top grades continues to rise, with 50% of biology students achieving A* to A. Although physics outcomes remain lower, the three-year trend shows very clear improvement. All students make expected rates of progress and 85% achieve above or well above expected levels of progress across all three sciences. Students with SEND achieve exceptionally well with 71% exceeding expectations. Thirty-six students progressed to study science at university, the majority in the UK.

Pupils' attainment and progress in a range of **other subjects** are outstanding.

Most pupils made better than expected progress in the 2025 GCSE examinations, particularly in Arabic as a second language, art, geography and statistics. Over three-quarters secured grades of 9 to 7, exceeding England averages. In the 2025 A-level examinations, students outperformed England averages in business studies, sociology, economics, history and art with over three-

quarters achieving A* to B. Across all key stages, pupils meet or exceed curriculum expectations across the range of other subjects.

Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of what they must achieve in each lesson and respond positively to teachers' guidance and feedback. Primary specialist teachers collaborate with class teachers to deliver a broad, balanced and real-world curriculum. Pupils learn with enthusiasm and take pride in improving their work. Sixth form students demonstrate high-level oral skills across subjects, explaining and justifying their views with confidence and maturity. Pupils strengthen their understanding of Britain in other subjects, for example, in key stage 3 geography, pupils explore the UK coastline and prevailing weather systems strengthening their knowledge of British geography and its wider context.

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 during 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.

Across all phases, the curriculum is coherent and well planned. It flows sequentially from the foundation stage through to the sixth form so that teachers build on pupils' prior learning and make purposeful links between subjects. The curriculum remains ambitious for every pupil, including for those with SEND and EAL pupils. It prepares pupils effectively for external assessments and examinations.

At each key stage, the school's curriculum is based on the NCfE, with adaptations for local requirements and the UAE context. Pupils value the wide range of subjects available at GCSE and A level. For pupils who face barriers in GCSE courses, the school offers the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) qualification in key stages 3 and 4. Alongside academic routes, the school offers three BTEC vocational qualifications in key stage 4 and the sixth form, ensuring that pupils can pursue pathways that match their strengths and aspirations.

Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the values enshrined in British law: respect, individual liberty, democracy and the rule of law. They link these confidently to the school's own values. Teachers introduce pupils to British culture, history and institutions in age-appropriate ways. For example, in early years, children enjoyed making a model of Big Ben and calculating how many Big Bens would fit into the Burj Khalifa. In English, pupils study literature by English authors, including Shakespeare, while older pupils explore UK institutions and current affairs. The curriculum consistently promotes mutual respect and tolerance and never undermines fundamental British values.

The school enriches the curriculum exceptionally well. Staff offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are very well attended. They organise educational visits and residential experiences in the UAE and abroad, making good use of the local environment, heritage and culture to enhance the curriculum. Pupils compete with other schools across the Middle East in areas such as art and sport. Through this wider enrichment programme, pupils raise their aspirations, develop their talents and interests, broaden their horizons and build character.

The school prepares pupils very well for the next stage in their education both academically and pastorally. Carefully planned and well-timed transition activities help Year 6 pupils to move into secondary school with confidence and enthusiasm. Sixth form students receive strong academic and pastoral preparation for life beyond school and the UAE, which is often to universities in the UK. All pupils receive up-to-date, impartial advice about option choices and future careers. Older pupils complete work experience at least twice across key stage 4 and the sixth form, gaining valuable insight into the world of work. The curriculum equips pupils well to enter or re-enter the British education system, including supporting applications to prestigious British universities.

The school delivers a well-structured programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Teachers introduce age-appropriate content from the early years onwards including healthy relationships and consent. Through PSHE and academic subjects, pupils learn to respect people with differing characteristics including age, gender, race, religion, disability, pregnancy and maternity. UAE law prevents the school from addressing gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation. The curriculum promotes respect for all other protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

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

Teachers in all subjects demonstrate strong subject knowledge appropriate for the ages and stages that they teach. They manage classrooms skilfully, creating orderly, purposeful learning environments with minimal behavioural concerns. Their teaching methods engage pupils effectively and lead to strong, sustained progress. From the foundation stage through to the sixth form, teachers' model and explicitly teach pupils to embody to the Kings' ethos of 'The Best by Every Child', which intrinsically promotes fundamental British values.

Leaders and teachers analyse assessment data rigorously at whole school, phase, subject and class levels to identify potential curriculum gaps and track pupils' achievement. This systematic, rigorous approach ensures teachers maintain an accurate and detailed understanding of each pupil's needs, including those with SEND and the most able. Teachers consistently use this information to design teaching that supports and challenges all groups of pupils.

Pupils following alternative pathways, including those on individual educational plans, ASDAN programmes, and BTEC courses, make equally strong rates of progress from their starting points. High quality teaching enables pupils to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in a steady and consistent way. Teachers provide support within main classes and through targeted interventions that actively engage pupils with SEND in dedicated 'Link' classes. Staff in these support classes demonstrate strong subject knowledge and apply specialised approaches that enhance learning for pupils with additional needs.

Teachers conduct lessons at an appropriate pace, use resources effectively, and manage time exceptionally well so that pupils consistently meet learning objectives. They adapt teaching skilfully to provide challenge at multiple levels, ensuring all groups, including the most and exceptionally able, receive appropriate stretch.

Skilled questioning, evident in most lessons, prompts pupils to think deeply about their learning. Teachers routinely insist that pupils justify their ideas with clear evidence and sound reasoning. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson on percentages, for example, the teacher's probing questions and insistence on complete explanations rapidly strengthened pupils' understanding of how to convert fractions to percentages. Feedback both during lessons and through marked work enables pupils to evaluate their understanding accurately and identify their next steps for improvement.

Pupils develop highly effective learning skills. In the early years, well-designed routines during carpet time establish the foundations for strong learning behaviours. By Year 7, pupils in English debate whether Shakespeare's Juliet holds power and control over her own life. In the sixth form, students acquire subject-specific French vocabulary to justify their viewpoints on the use of social media. This clear progression in the development of learning skills enables pupils to meet the increasing demands of the curriculum at each stage.

Relationships between teachers and pupils are exceptionally strong and characterised by mutual respect and a supportive atmosphere. Pupils consistently describe their teachers as approachable, caring and committed to their well-being. Class teachers in the early years and primary phases, and dedicated tutors in secondary, provide robust support for pupils' personal development through age-appropriate programmes. In a Year 6 well-being lesson, pupils role played de-escalating a conflict and received sensitive, constructive feedback from their peers. In a moral, social, cultural (MSC) lesson, pupils explored the qualities of a successful Year 11 pupil. These programmes help pupils stay safe and healthy while simultaneously preparing them effectively for the next stage in their education.

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

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

The standards relating to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils are met except for the standard in paragraph 5 (b)(vi). The school is unable to meet this standard because of the requirements of the host country relating to the UK Equality Act, 2010.

Curriculum planning actively promotes respect for other people and encourages pupils to explore similarities and differences across cultures and communities. Pupils learn about human rights in different societies; for example, in Year 9, pupils read 'To Kill a Mocking Bird' and discuss its themes and reflect on injustice and equality. Residential programmes deepen pupils' cultural understanding. During a recent visit to Japan, pupils compared their own lifestyles with those of Japanese families and reflected thoughtfully on cultural contrasts.

The school embraces inclusion. Pupils of all abilities receive equal respect, and equal access to resources. Leaders and teachers promote diversity consistently. In a Year 7 assembly, pupils demonstrated detailed knowledge of each other's national backgrounds when discussing significant features of different countries. In Year 10 business studies, pupils articulated informed views on the human costs and benefits of globalisation, showing strong cultural awareness.

Pupils' strong moral outlook is clearly evident in their exemplary behaviour, highly positive attitudes and excellent relationships with peers and adults. They are eager to begin work, sustain focus and behave respectfully during breaks and in extra-curricular activities. Pupils speak politely, listen attentively and show genuine interest when discussing their views or describing their daily experiences.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils to build self-esteem and take responsibility. Pupils keenly embrace roles such as play leaders, house officers, sports leaders and mentors. They act as positive role models and support the very small number of pupils engaged in restorative justice programmes, demonstrating empathy and maturity.

Pupils reflect thoughtfully on their work and recognise the value of others' contributions. In Year 12 art, students write perceptive evaluations of their own work and offer constructive feedback to peers. In drama, pupils explore a wide range of emotions and demonstrate empathy through effective role play. Pupils show a mature awareness that their actions influence the well-being of others.

Pupils express their views confidently. They contribute to lessons, house meetings and through elected school council roles. They believe staff value their opinions and cite examples of changes that resulted from their suggestions, such as improvements to the extra-curricular programme.

Pupils demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of public institutions in the UAE, the UK and internationally. They understand the role of civil defence agencies in Dubai and discuss UK institutions such as parliament, the National Health Service and the jury system with much

insight. Older pupils describe the resilience of civilians and the armed forces in the UK during the second world war, drawing on their learning in English and history.

The school promotes fundamental British values robustly. Pupils experience democracy through elections to posts of responsibility in classes and houses. Teachers promote the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs across subjects and assemblies. Staff never promote partisan political views. Teachers deliver age-appropriate content sensitively and ensure pupils understand how to treat others with dignity and respect.

Teachers also strengthen pupils' appreciation of local and global cultures. In geography and SMSC lessons, pupils discuss how Dubai's architecture influences well-being and explore human impact on the natural environment worldwide.

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

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

Leaders ensure full compliance with all relevant host-country laws and maintain written policies for health and safety, risk assessment, and fire safety. Staff implement these policies rigorously. Fire drills are regular with clearly signposted evacuation routes. Staff carry out regular maintenance checks and act immediately on any concerns, keeping the site free from hazards. Chemicals for use in science are securely stored in locked metal cabinets in one of the science preparation rooms. Extensive closed-circuit television (CCTV) coverage strengthens security further.

Leaders prioritise site security. Five controlled entry points support efficient arrival and departure for buses and private cars. Senior leaders, teachers and security staff supervise pupils at the start and end of each day. Bus supervisors maintain accurate daily registers, and ensure pupils wear seatbelts and behave appropriately. Parents follow a one-way system that improves traffic flow. All visitors, including parents, sign in and wear lanyards throughout their visit. A large number of trained first aiders are on site at all times and a team of doctors and nurses provide timely, competent medical care when needed.

Behaviour across the school is excellent. The written behaviour policy sets out clear expectations and sanctions. All pupils understand these. Pastoral staff and middle leaders keep detailed records of sanctions for serious misbehaviour, including communication with parents. Each section of the school operates an age-appropriate anti-bullying policy. Staff implement these policies effectively, and pupils report that bullying is extremely rare. These strategies promote respect and ensure pupils feel safe.

Leaders have focused strongly on improving attendance, mainly through educating parents on the importance of regular attendance and keeping them informed daily through the app. Their efforts have led to improvement this year, although attendance remains slightly below the UK average of 92.5%. Punctuality is good during the school day, and staff follow up concerns promptly.

Safeguarding sits at the heart of the school's culture. Leaders exceed statutory expectations and align their practice with UK guidance while respecting host country requirements. A dedicated well-being team coordinates safeguarding across the school. All staff and governors

are trained in safeguarding, and a high proportion of middle leaders hold level 3 qualifications. Well-developed systems to gather and act upon information ensures timely and focused interventions from the early years to the sixth form. Staff understand their responsibilities clearly and recognise that safeguarding is everyone's duty.

Well-being lessons help pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, both on-and offline. The well-being team treats cyber-safety as a priority. They work closely with external agencies and parents to tackle online risks and promote safe digital behaviour. Staff provide strong support for pupils experiencing difficulties, ensuring that no child faces challenges alone.

Pupils learn how to support others, including those new to the school. Pupils know the well-being team, but frequently state that they feel comfortable raising concerns with any adult. Parents who spoke with inspectors expressed strong confidence in the school's safeguarding procedures and felt assured that their children are safe.

Part 4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

The school has highly effective systems for staffing, recruitment and safeguarding that fully align with UK and UAE requirements. The school maintains a single central record (SCR) that records all relevant information and is available for review and inspection by the principal and the head of human resources. The SCR demonstrates that appropriate checks have been carried out before appointment, including identity verification, medical fitness, previous employment history, suitability to work with children and qualification checks. Staff recruited from the UK are required to produce an International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC). Information is securely stored in electronic individual personnel files. Checks carried out for governors are held in a separate register. School leaders carefully check references prior to employment and analyse any gaps in employment history. They apply the same rigorous approach to staff who are not directly employed by the school, including sports coaches and supply staff to confirm identity and suitability.

The SCR logs that all staff receive up-to-date safeguarding training, including enhanced training for designated safeguarding leaders (DSL) and their deputies. At least one member of staff of every interviewing panel holds safer recruitment accreditation. Leaders ensure that all staff hold appropriate qualifications for their roles and that they understand their responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection.

Part 5. The premises and accommodation

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

School leaders and staff at every level create a safe, welcoming environment for all pupils. Classrooms are spacious and well equipped and support learning well. Corridors, indoor study areas, recreation spaces and common areas are bright, clean and comfortable. High quality acoustics and lighting contribute to calm, purposeful learning. Pupils benefit from a pleasant

environment, which they treat with respect. Attractive displays, including pupils' work, enhance classrooms and shared spaces.

The premises and accommodation support learning extremely well. The physical environment and high-quality resources strengthen pupils' engagement and contribute directly to their progress. Specialist areas include science laboratories, two libraries, an auditorium and well-resourced rooms for art, music, drama and design. Pupils who excel in sport make good use of the gymnasia, extensive outdoor sports facilities and swimming pools. Staff use these facilities efficiently during physical education lessons and provide an extensive range of extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and before and after school. Outdoor play spaces have shaded areas for use in hot weather. The early years area offers a particularly rich and stimulating learning environment.

The buildings are accessible for all staff and students, including those with limited mobility. Toilet, washing and changing facilities are of a high standard and clear signage distinguishes between facilities for pupils and adults. The swimming pools include recently enhanced, separate changing areas for boys and girls.

The school has three clinics for medical examination and the short-term care and treatment for pupils who become unwell. Each clinic includes, washing facilities with hot and cold water and toilets. Drinking water stations are located throughout the school, clearly labelled and easily accessible.

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

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

Since the last inspection in 2022, leaders have significantly improved how the school communicates with parents and how effectively it provides information. Parents who spoke to inspectors expressed strong appreciation for the KSAB app which now serves as the main channel for regular, efficient communication between home and school. Parents value the ability to use the app to pay for lunches and to influence their child's healthy choices.

Parents involved in discussions with inspectors praised the increased accessibility of senior staff, particularly their visible presence at drop-off and pick-up times. They described staff as approachable and responsive as they know they can request a meeting with teachers or leaders at any time to discuss any aspect of their child's experience in school.

These changes have contributed to a significant fall in the number of parental informal complaints and a marked rise in parental attendance at school events. Parents now enthusiastically engage with awareness-raising sessions, such as those for online safety, and they take full advantage of opportunities to learn alongside their children during 'Let's Learn' sessions, which help them understand the curriculum and teaching more deeply.

Two parent governors, two full-time Parent Relations Executives (PRE), a recently invigorated Parent Association and newly appointed parental representatives for each secondary year group, all contribute to the strong communication between families and the school. These

initiatives have increased opportunities for parents to volunteer, support events and contribute to the wider school community.

Despite these wide-ranging and significant improvements, the school does not gather the views of parents in a systematic way. As a result, most parents do not influence decisions that shape important aspects of their children's education. Only a very small proportion of parents responded to the pre-inspection survey.

Parents receive detailed termly reports about their children's academic progress and how their attitudes and behaviour reflect the school's values. Parents of secondary-age pupils meet teachers online twice a year, while parents of primary-age pupils meet teachers face-to-face. Parents also gain access to their children's work through online platforms. Although some parents of secondary pupils told inspectors that these arrangements could improve, inspection evidence shows that the school provides information of sufficient quality and frequency. Parents of pupils with SEND receive particularly strong levels of support. Staff keep them well informed at every stage and involve them closely in creating and reviewing individual educational plans.

The school's website is currently undergoing an upgrade. Parents can gain access to all key policies and required information through the app.

Part 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

Parents can gain access to the concerns and complaints policy easily through the parent app under the 'parent essentials' heading. The policy aligns fully with BSO expectations and sets out clear timescales, stages, confidentiality requirements and procedures for panel hearings.

The policy outlines a well-structured escalation process where concerns are dealt with by the class teacher in the first instance and only move to senior leaders and then the principal if unresolved. The school actively encourages early, informal resolution. Senior leaders are available at the gates each morning to listen to any concerns or positive comments. Parents can also message teachers directly, which strengthens communication and reduces escalation.

Over the past three years, three complaints have reached the formal stage. In these cases, a panel of at least three individuals, none of whom were involved in the matter heard the complaint, with one independent member included as required. Parents may bring someone to accompany them. Governors share the panel's findings and any resulting actions with the complainant, the proprietor and the headteacher. They store written records confidentially.

The PRE team logs all concerns systematically, whether raised in person or by email, and directs parents to the appropriate staff member. Leaders review these logs regularly, identify trends and act promptly and transparently. Parents report that responsiveness has improved since the arrival of the new principal.

Part 8. Leadership and management of the school

Leadership and management of the school are outstanding.

Leaders provide strong strategic direction, uphold shared values and drive a culture of high expectations. The principal and heads of primary and secondary work together with confidence and cohesion in their third year as a unified team. A highly stable wider senior leadership team strengthens this further; all have earned promotion internally and many have been at the school for a decade. Their longevity reflects the school's commitment to developing outstanding leaders.

Leaders articulate a clear and ambitious vision centred on 'The Best by Every Child' and the school's 'Big Four' overarching principles: relationships, community, professional responsibility and inclusivity. They launch these principles at the start of each year and weave them through daily practice, to ensure coherence across phases. Middle leaders' development plans and appraisal processes reinforce these expectations and keep the vision at the forefront of improvement work.

The leadership team models authenticity, empathy and professionalism. Staff describe leaders as visible, approachable and grounded in the realities of school life because they have all been classroom teachers themselves. Leaders maintain an open-door culture and speak of a 'triangle of trust' that underpins relationships with staff, pupils and families. Middle leaders confirm this culture of trust and freedom because they are free to make professional judgements. Staff morale is high. Survey responses show that teachers feel listened to, supported and valued, even during organisational change. Leaders have taken deliberate steps to reduce workload, such as streamlining the school's calendar and staff appreciate these decisions. Teachers express pride in working at the school and confidence in the professional development available to them.

Self-evaluation is accurate and sharply focused. Leaders use rigorous quality assurance processes to monitor teaching, learning and attainment. They analyse trends, identify barriers and plan strategically. Improvement planning is data-driven and responsive. Leaders cite clear examples of sustained improvement, including significant gains in Arabic attainment, high parental engagement in learning workshops and the success of 'Lets Learn' events.

Professional development is a significant strength. Leaders encourage staff to pursue leadership qualifications, action research projects and well-being leadership training. Staff across all subjects share best practice regularly. Leaders ensure that performance management is robust, using the bespoke Kings' leadership standards and teacher and teaching assistant standards to set clear expectations. When underperformance arises, leaders act promptly and supportively through structured improvement cycles.

Governance is highly effective. The dual-governance model combines strategic oversight from the ownership group with meaningful parental input. Governors understand their roles clearly and respect the boundaries between governance and operational leadership. They work closely with the principal and conduct his appraisal in conjunction with the chief executive officer (CEO). Governors visit regularly, scrutinise performance and compliance, and provide both challenge and support. They invest significantly in facilities and infrastructure to enhance provision.

Leaders and governors gather stakeholders' views informally, but they do not yet collect parental views systematically to inform strategic planning. Even so, parental representatives, an active Parent Association and regular workshops strengthen community partnership. Leaders act on feedback effectively, for example, they improved the traffic system, upgraded changing rooms, refined the school's app and enhanced transition arrangements from Year 6 to Year 7. These actions have strengthened parental confidence and contributed to improved rates of retention, with Year 7 now oversubscribed. Pupils speak with pride about their school and describe it as a community with 'a place for you no matter what your interest'.

Equality, inclusion and safeguarding sit at the heart of the school's culture. Leaders and staff champion these values consistently. They respond firmly to any incidents of discrimination and celebrate the school's diverse nationalities through curriculum and community events. Safeguarding procedures meet UK expectations, and all staff understand their responsibilities. Leaders use scenario-based training as it gives staff a safe space to test their thinking and build confidence before they face real-world situations. The school works with the Safeguarding Alliance and British Schools in the Middle East (BSME) to maintain best practice.

Leaders at all levels demonstrate ambition, integrity and deep professional expertise. They inspire staff and pupils, drive continuous improvement and ensure that the school meets BSO standards consistently and securely.

Early Years Provision

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

Leaders set a clear, ambitious vision with a curriculum that blends Kings' developmental milestones with the EYFS framework and Development Matters guidance. They ensure that teachers and learning assistants work collaboratively so that children experience consistently high-quality learning. This coherent, play-based approach combines child-initiated exploration with systematic teaching, enabling children to achieve highly across all areas of learning. Teachers use exceptionally high-quality resources to promote independence, curiosity, and purposeful play. The spacious, well-designed outdoor area, with large apparatus, sand, water, and other equipment, strengthens the development of children's gross motor skills and their agility.

Children make rapid rates of progress in every area of learning, with communication and language a particular strength. Although many children enter with language skills slightly below age-related expectations, 95% meet or exceed the expected standards by the end of the Reception Year. Teachers assess children's starting points accurately and review progress at key points throughout the year, including two 'spotlight' assessments. They adapt teaching skilfully to meet individual needs, ensuring that children with SEND and those with EAL make strong rates of progress from their starting points.

Warm, positive relationships between children and adults underpin the success of the early years provision. Staff know each child well and tailor learning to their interests and developmental needs. Leaders support teachers and learning assistants effectively, resulting in highly effective collaborative working. Parents play an active role as partners in their children's education. They receive regular information about progress and personal development

through meetings, reports, and digital updates, and they value the approachability of staff. Children move into Year 1 with confidence because staff prepare them exceptionally well for the next stage of learning by building the foundations that they need for future success.

Sixth-Form Provision

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

The sixth form has grown steadily and has expanded in line with enrolment while maintaining highly effective and stable leadership. Students benefit from a dedicated sixth-form centre that gives them a strong sense of identity and purpose.

Students choose from three pathways: 74% follow A-level courses, 15% follow BTEC level 3 courses, and 10% take a combined pathway. Each pathway develops academic skills in language, science, social studies and mathematics while also focusing on students' personal development. All Year 12 students complete work experience towards the end of that year, which broadens their understanding of the workplace and strengthens their employability skills. In 2025, A-level students achieved results well above England averages, with 36% achieving A or A* across all subjects. KSAB students on BTEC programmes performed significantly better than England averages, with 73% attaining Distinction*.

Just over three-quarters of Year 11 pupils continue to the sixth form. Staff manage the introduction to the sixth form effectively and students report that they were well prepared and well advised when choosing courses. The curriculum offers a wide range of subjects, enabling almost every student to select their preferred combination. Teachers develop students' English and mathematical skills effectively across subjects.

Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and engage in annual subject-specific training to maintain high standards. Teaching and assessment in the sixth form are highly effective. Tutor periods, guidance sessions and careers advice prepare students well for when they leave school and support their welfare, health and safety. Year 13 students confirm that they feel academically prepared and equipped with the life skills that they need for their next stage of education. Approximately half of the students progress to degree courses in the UK or Ireland, a fifth remain in the UAE, and a quarter move to international destinations, mainly the USA or Canada. A small number take a gap year or begin military service.

Year 13 students act as excellent ambassadors for the school and often take on multiple leadership roles, particularly during Year 12. Attendance in the sixth form is below the school's expectations. Consequently, leaders follow up every concern thoroughly and work closely with students and their families to identify and deal with the reasons behind a student's low rate of attendance.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

Kings' School Al Barsha 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). Kings' School Al Barsha 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:

Over the previous two years leaders have significantly strengthened the frequency and quality of communication with parents through a range of highly effective and meaningful ways. Leaders do not yet routinely gather the views of parents. Leaders should seek parents' views more systematically so that they can positively influence the quality of their child's experience at school, including working with the school to improve attendance rates.

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	**Kings School Al Barsha**
Type of school	**Private**
Date school opened	**2014**
Age range of pupils	**3 to 18**
Gender of pupils	**Mixed**
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	**3,258**
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	**n/a**
Annual fees (day pupils)	**57,999 to 105,873 AED**
Annual fees (boarders)	**n/a**
Address of school	**Umm Suqeim Road, Hadaeq Sk Mohammad Bin Rashid, Dubai UAE**
Telephone number	971 04 356 6900
Email address	info@kingsalbarsha.com
Headteacher	Mr Sajid Gulzar
Proprietor	Kings' Education Hamad Tayeb Abdul Rahim Ahmed Al Baker

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 KHDA 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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