

# The International School of Creative Science, Nad Al Sheba

## British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

Inspection Dates: 30 January to 2 February 2023

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Team: Mike Hewlett, Liz Kelly

Age Group: 3 -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 (BSO). The inspection was carried out by three inspectors from Education Development Trust who spent four days at the school. Education Development Trust is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas and quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

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

**To be recognised by the Department for Education, a British School Overseas 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 BSO standards. These were updated with effect from September 2017. 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 issued a policy update in October 2018. The Department confirmed that 'our policy is now to accredit schools in countries where to meet certain standards would be in breach of the host country's laws, as long as there is evidence to substantiate this and all other standards are met'.**

The standards are as follows:

1. The quality of education provided by the school (Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment)
2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff
5. The premises and accommodation
6. The provision of information
7. The manner in which complaints are handled
8. The leadership and management of the school
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 the wider public of the quality of British schools overseas by placing reports in the public domain.

### Key for inspection grades

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>

### Proportions used in the report

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

## Information about the school

The International School of Creative Science (ISCS) is an independent day school for boys and girls aged three to 18 years, located in the area of Nad Al Sheba, Dubai. It is part of the Bukhatir Education Advancement and Management (BEAM) group, which has five schools across Sharjah and Dubai. BEAM is the governing body.

The school opened in September 2016 with 258 pupils. There are now 1,507 pupils with 1,411 pupils aged three to 14 years. In key stages 4 and 5, there are 96 pupils. The school follows the English early years foundation stage (EYFS) curriculum and the English national curriculum, alongside the UAE national curriculum for Arabic, Islamic and Social Studies. The first Year 11 pupils completed their IGCSE examinations in 2022. The school opened Year 12 this year, offering a range of A-level and vocational options.

Pupils are from 44 different nationalities. Emirati nationals make up 46% of the pupil population. Other pupils are mostly from Pakistan, India, the UK and other Arab speaking countries in the region. The school caters for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There are 103 pupils, approximately 7% of the school population, who have recognised SEND.

The principal and many of the senior leadership team and subject leaders have been in post for at least three years. The very large majority (85%) of teachers who teach the English national curriculum have qualified-teacher status.

## Summary of the evidence base used by the inspection team

This BSO inspection was carried out by three Education Development Trust inspectors who visited the school for four days. The BSO registration and self-review documents were completed in November 2022 and the final inspection dates were confirmed on receipt of this information. This provided 10 weeks' notice of the start date of the inspection. Inspectors had access to information about the school six weeks before the inspection.

Inspectors visited 75 lessons. An inspector and a senior member of staff conducted many observations jointly. There were 35 meetings which took place with leaders, teachers, pupils, parents and carers and members of the school's governing body.

Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in books and produced digitally and observed younger pupils reading. They analysed a wide range of documents relating to assessment, policies and operational and strategic plans. The school's safeguarding arrangements were inspected. Inspectors considered the views of parents, pupils and staff.

## Evaluation of the school

The International School of Creative Science is a good and improving school. It provides a good quality of education for pupils from three to 18 years. Aspects of the school's work are outstanding and it has outstanding capacity to improve.

The school meets all the BSO standards except those which it is precluded from meeting because of legislation in the United Arab Emirates. 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.

Pupils' progress and attainment in **English** are good across the school for pupils of all abilities. Children enter the EYFS with English language skills below those typical for their age. They make at least good progress from their varied starting points. The language-rich environment and skilled teaching enable children to develop English vocabulary and early reading skills rapidly. When they leave the EYFS children are very well prepared for further learning within the English national curriculum.

Pupils' good progress continues in the primary phase. A sizeable number of pupils join the school in Year 1 with limited experience of English language. They too make good progress. The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is close to the England average. In Year 2 pupils read age-appropriate books with understanding. Their writing is more variable, largely due to missed schooling during the pandemic lockdowns. However, it is improving with practice and targeted teaching. By Year 6, most pupils can write extended pieces, showing a good understanding of language and structural features, in line with English national curriculum expectations. They read a range of books for research, information and pleasure. The vast majority of pupils reach standards that are above those typically found in England in reading and spelling.

Pupils deepen their knowledge and skills in the secondary phase. They understand and use a variety of linguistic devices. For example, they use figurative language, allusion and hyperbole in their narrative writing. In key stage 4 pupils read widely and analyse texts in depth. The first small cohort of Year 11 pupils attained standards in English language IGCSE above England averages and broadly in line with international averages, except at the higher grades. The cohort taking English literature was too small to make meaningful comparisons. The sixth form does not yet offer English language or literature A levels.

Pupils' attainment and progress in **mathematics** are good throughout the school. Children arrive at the Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills in mathematics that are below those that might be expected for their age. As a result of the exciting and engaging EYFS curriculum, they make good progress and are ready to take on the challenge for the English national curriculum when they join Year 1. This upward trajectory continues so that by the time pupils reach the end of the primary phase (Year 6) they are achieving results that are above those expected for their age in England. Pupils in Year 2 can write simple fractions and recognise equivalence. They use the correct mathematical vocabulary and competently halve and double increasingly large numbers. They build on this in Year 4 making accurate predictions of shape, weight and measure. For example, when making comparisons in height between Burj Al Arab and Big Ben and working out the best way to measure them both.

By the time pupils reach Year 6, they are fluent in calculations and gaining competence in reasoning mathematically and problem solving. For example, most can use the inverse proportion to identify the correct function. They recognise for instance that as the speed of a car increases, the time to cover certain distance decreases.

As pupils move through the secondary phase, they demonstrate an increasing maturity and love of mathematics that result in good progress and attainment. Many develop into successful and confident mathematicians. Only a small number of pupils took IGCSE mathematics in 2022 and so comparisons with UK and international averages are difficult. It is too soon to identify long-term trends in examination results. Nevertheless, pupils make good progress from their starting points and this continues with the small group in Year 12 who have started their A-level course in mathematics.

Pupils' progress and attainment in **science** are good. Children enter the EYFS with knowledge and understanding of the world which are below what is typical for their

age. They make good progress and leave the EYFS with attainment in line with that seen in England. As a result, they enter Year 1 with the skills and knowledge that they need to make a flying start to national curriculum science. Progress in science across key stages 1 and 2 is outstanding. Pupils leave Year 6 with levels of attainment above England averages.

Some pupils start key stages 3 and 4 without having followed the school's high-quality early years and primary curriculum. As a result, a significant number begin their science courses with gaps in scientific knowledge and understanding. The science curriculum and arrangements for how pupils are grouped according to the syllabus that they are following have recently been reviewed. These changes, alongside skilful teaching by well-qualified specialists and booster classes, ensure that, sometimes from low starting points, pupils make good progress.

Scrutiny of pupils' work and observation of teaching and learning across key stages 3 and 4 show that attainment is broadly in line with that seen in England. For the small number of pupils who took IGCSEs last year, results were above England averages and broadly in line with international averages. In year twelve, students start their A-level courses with varying experiences of learning in science. Some have followed very different curriculums, including with little or no experience of investigation. Accurate baseline testing and well-targeted teaching ensure that from these varying starting points students are making good progress through the A-level course but with variable attainment in relation to England averages.

From the early years onwards, pupils successfully learn the skills of investigation, experimentation and prediction. They effectively record and analyse their findings, often applying their learning in science to real-life scenarios. Pupils' progress and understanding of scientific concepts, especially in the early years and key stage 1, are enhanced by frequent opportunities to start learning with hands-on exploration of real objects.

Progress and attainment in **ICT and computing** are good from early years to key stage 3 and outstanding at key stage 4. For the small number of pupils who took IGCSE in 2022 progress and attainment were outstanding, especially given that a significant number of pupils had not previously followed the English national curriculum at this school. From the early years through to Year 12, pupils use their own and the school's devices confidently to enhance learning in all subjects. They use information technology with ease to complete tasks and assessments and conduct research. Two



device-free days per week ensure that pupils understand where technology is used to best effect and when it can be replaced. As they move up the school pupils use more and more sophisticated programmes to solve real-life problems. In Year 4 pupils make 3-dimensional designs using sequencing, selection and repetition. Year 7 pupils can use a program to send a model car ferry across a river. In Year 11, pupils create webpages using templates which they have designed themselves. A-level students write algorithms, for example when programming robots. At all key stages, pupils use technology safely and respectfully.

In response to requests from pupils and staff, the school is offering a wider range of **other subjects** as options at IGCSE and A level. These now include design and technology, vocational pathways, business studies, food technology, graphic design, psychology and accounting. These courses are popular with pupils as they offer the possibility of different career pathways. They are making good progress in each of these areas. External examination results for the first cohort of pupils studying A levels will only be available in Summer 2023.

Pupils with SEND are included fully in the school's rich curriculum and extra-curricular activities. They are welcomed into school and respected by staff and pupils. The inclusion team consists of well-qualified, highly effective leaders, experienced social workers, specialist SEND teachers and skilled learning-support assistants. They form a 'team around the child' providing good-quality holistic support for pupils and families. As well as teaching and supporting pupils directly, the inclusion team provides training to ensure that all staff can meet the precise needs of SEND pupils in their care. They work productively with outside agencies to provide additional specialist support where appropriate.

Detailed diagnostic assessment ensures that pupils' specific needs are identified. All pupils with SEND have good-quality personalised learning, education and/or behaviour plans which identify barriers to learning, positive teaching strategies and precise targets. Pupils benefit from good class teaching and targeted support in class. Pupils who need additional help with their academic and social and emotional development receive therapy and nurture sessions and small-group and individual tutoring. Good-quality teaching, effective curriculum adaptation and comprehensive provision for pupils' personal development enable pupils with SEND to make at least good progress from their starting points in all subjects and key stages. Their welfare is paramount and they make excellent gains in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.



**Summary of other judgements against the BSO standards:**

- The quality of the curriculum provided by the school is good (see Standard 1 below).
- The quality of teaching and assessment is good overall (see Standard 1 below).
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding (see Standard 2 below).
- The welfare, health and safety of the pupils are outstanding (see Standard 3 below).
- The standard for the suitability of the proprietor and staff is met (see Standard 4 below).
- The premises and accommodation meet the requirements of the standard (see Standard 5 below).
- The provision of information for parents meets the requirements of this standard (see Standard 6 below).
- The school's procedures for handling complaints meet the requirements of the standard (see Standard 7 below).
- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding (see Standard 8 below).

**As a result of this inspection, undertaken during February 2023 the school has demonstrated that it meets the BSO Standards (2017 updated) except for those standards that cannot be achieved legally in the United Arab Emirates. The school's provision prepares pupils well to enter or re-enter the UK independent school system. This judgement is endorsed by the British Government, quality assured by Ofsted and is valid for a period of three years.**

## Standard 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. This is explained in detail within Standard 2 (SMSC) below.

**The quality of the curriculum is good.** The English curriculum is underpinned by the school's 'virtues' curriculum and delivered alongside Arabic, Quran and Islamic studies. As well as promoting good academic standards, the curriculum gives pupils deep understanding of British and UAE cultures and the Islamic faith. The 'virtues' curriculum instils in pupils a sense of awe, values and insights to help them develop as well-adjusted, responsible citizens of the world.

The English curriculum builds on pupils' learning sequentially, so pupils are prepared well for each next stage in their education. In the early years children follow the English EYFS framework. They think and learn through creative play, exploration and active learning. The curriculum in key stages 1, 2 and 3 matches the breadth and ambition of the English national curriculum. Links are made across the curriculum, helping pupils to transfer and build on their knowledge in different subjects. At key stage 4 and in the recently opened sixth form, the range of IGCSE and A-level courses provides students with access to further education opportunities in the UK and other international settings. Britishness permeates the curriculum at all stages. Pupils learn about British values, culture, history, influential people and institutions such as parliament and monarchy and current affairs. They are prepared well for potential experiences of life in British culture.

The curriculum is broad and rich for all groups of pupils, including those with SEND and those who are at early stages of learning English. It is continually reviewed to take account of pupils' changing interests and language and learning needs. Gaps in attainment are closing as a result of skilful curriculum adaptations.

The school makes the most of resources and opportunities in the local community. Partnerships with local businesses enhance pupils' understanding of the workplace and develop their enterprise skills. Pupils undertake fund-raising projects and charity appeals in partnership with Emirates Red Crescent. Extra-curricular activities, school

trips and learning outside the classroom further enrich pupils' experiences. There is a high rate of participation in the wide variety of after-school and lunch-time clubs, which includes sports, academic subjects, games, drama, STEM and art. Curriculum enhancements such as bazaars, fairs, special days, art shows, sports and academic competitions deepen pupils' learning. Pupils greatly enjoyed World Cities' Day, for example, in which they learned about different cultures.

Broad-ranging careers education is included in the secondary curriculum and the school's careers counsellor gives well-informed advice to each pupil from Year 7 onwards. Pupils receive good advice on careers pathways when they consider their IGCSE options and work experience deepens their understanding of the world of work. Pupils are informed about higher education options by visits from and to international universities.

Leaders continually review the curriculum to ensure that it meets pupils' learning needs. They have recently made changes to the primary mathematics curriculum and key stages 3 and 4 science curriculums in order to promote greater depth in learning. The school's 'pathways to success' curriculum at key stage 4 is being extended to include further IGCSE and BTEC options to take account of students' career aspirations and progression to post 16. Options and pathways are being extended in the newly opened sixth form to facilitate students' progression to university and the world of work. These curriculum initiatives are at early stages of development and some are not yet fully embedded. It is too soon to evaluate the full impact of these changes on pupils' attainment and progress.

**Teaching, learning and assessment are good.** Teachers have good subject knowledge and use effective teaching approaches. These are developed and enhanced with high-quality training and coaching. Leaders monitor teaching and learning and secure improvement using a range of professional-development activities. They promote a common approach to lesson structure, which has been developed through good practice studies. This helps teachers to plan effective lessons, while providing them with scope to adapt resources and approaches to meet pupils' specific needs. As a result, pupils of all abilities make good progress.

Teachers use methods and resources that engage pupils' interest and promote their full participation in lessons. Lessons are orderly and productive. In the early years and primary phases, teachers successfully use concrete and pictorial approaches alongside developing pupils' ability to think critically. In mathematics, teachers

promote fluency and mastery of mathematical concepts, using a range of apparatus and visual stimuli. The emphasis on collaborative working develops pupils' academic achievement while also developing their social and leadership skills. In science, teachers' strong emphasis on practical investigative approaches develops pupils' sensory perceptions and enables them to work together to design effective experiments and record results. In English the focus on talking aloud before writing helps primary-aged pupils to develop expressive language and write down their ideas accurately.

In secondary school, in line with school policies, teachers structure lessons around clear learning objectives that are promoted by relevant, motivating activities. The focus on enquiry-led learning continues to be effective, as pupils grapple with more abstract and complex ideas. Teachers explain and exemplify new learning effectively. They question pupils skilfully to probe and deepen their understanding. This was seen, for example, in English in key stage 4, where the teacher used a model text to help pupils fully understand linguistic devices and structural features of persuasive text. The retrieval of previously taught knowledge at the start of lessons helps pupils to embed and apply knowledge. In science, teachers help pupils to predict the outcomes of investigations based on their prior learning. Teachers skilfully relate learning to real life and link learning across the curriculum. For example, in Year 7 lessons on probability, pupils applied their understanding of mathematical probability to their knowledge of the natural world.

Teachers make good use of technology to enhance teaching and learning. Pupils become proficient in using their devices for research and recording from early primary years onwards. Teachers use technology effectively to provide high-quality visual and auditory resources to enhance learning.

Teachers assess pupils' knowledge and progress effectively. They give verbal feedback to pupils during lessons and provide opportunities for them to assess their own understanding and offer constructive feedback to their peers. Written feedback on half-termly assessments in each subject, to which pupils also contribute, helps them to understand their strengths and identify the next steps in their learning.

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

The standards relating to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils are met except for the standard in paragraph 5 (b) (vi). This is not met because of the requirements of the host country relating to the UK Equality Act 2010. The school's provision promotes respect for all people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics of age, disability, race, religion or belief and pregnancy and maternity. Those characteristics which UAE law precludes the school from addressing are marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, sex and sexual orientation.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding. The BEAM 'Virtues Tree' emphasises leaders' commitment to 'nurturing students with strong foundations, upright character and spiritual excellence'. The school's ethical values of respect, civility, courage, compassion, gratitude and humility are evident in all aspects of school life including everyday interactions across the whole school community.

The school is inclusive. Staff and pupils from many nations are warmly welcomed and valued. Pupils and staff embrace and celebrate difference, including in race and culture. Leaders have developed an ethos of compassion and care. Staff and pupils are careful to give pupils with SEND the help that they need to participate fully in all aspects of school life. Staff generate very positive relationships with pupils based on the enjoyment of learning, mutual respect and shared values.

British values are evident in school displays, assemblies and lessons. Pupils understand them and link them to the values of the Islamic faith. They value the opportunity to put democracy into practice by electing their class representatives and making their views known to the school's leaders, for example when participating in pupil-voice surveys. From the early years pupils experience respectful collaboration in learning. Staff patiently teach children to listen to others, share and take turns. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and understand the importance of laws and good citizenship. They have a strong sense of responsibility to those less fortunate than themselves. They initiate and manage events in aid of global and local charities such as the Red Crescent.

Behaviour in lessons and at social times is exemplary. There are clear expectations and well-established routines with regular positive reinforcement, often communicated to parents. Pupils listen to teachers' explanations and follow instructions. From the early

years staff teach children to reflect on and manage their actions. On the very rare occasions when a pupil is distracted, teachers skilfully and successfully use the school's well-devised rewards system to return them quickly to learning. Many pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities which contribute to their self-esteem, confidence and cultural development. There are many opportunities for pupils to enter competitions, often successfully, including in sport, science and computing. All Year 12 pupils undertake the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, which involves helping in the community, improving fitness, developing new skills and planning, training for and completing an expedition. Pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibility. This starts in the early years when, for example, children can become school councillors or recycling leaders. Older pupils develop leadership skills including by becoming digital or sports leaders and being responsible for school newsletters.

Teachers link subject content to Britain and give pupils opportunities to watch news from around the world. This contributes to their strong knowledge of Britain and British institutions such as the monarchy and parliament.

The Islamic faith is the basis for pupils' spiritual development. From Year 5 pupils pray in congregation. In sacred spaces with views of the natural world, pupils can take the time to focus on mindfulness and connection to God. The Virtues curriculum develops curiosity and reflection. It contributes to pupils' sense of awe in relation to learning about the wonders of the world around them.

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

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

The school is an extremely vigilant community in which pupils feel and are very safe. Policies and procedures meet and often exceed UK and UAE requirements. Inspection surveys of parents and discussions with them indicate that they have full confidence in the school's policy and practice in keeping their children safe from physical and emotional harm. In academic subjects, personal, social and health education and assemblies, staff teach pupils to keep themselves safe, including when online.

Staff are well trained in spotting if a pupil is at risk. Systems for reporting concerns are highly efficient and effective and well known by pupils and staff alike. Reporting by very



visible QR codes around the school emphasises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Those staff teams with particular responsibility for safeguarding, including the health and safety team, medical teams, social workers and designated safeguarding leads and deputy leads work closely together, forming a 'team around the child' to share information and plan a coherent support strategy so that no pupil is left at risk. The school's doctor and nurses contribute to developing pupils' physical and mental health. They teach pupils how to eat healthily and the importance of physical fitness.

The management of the health and safety of the school environment is exemplary and led by highly qualified and experienced staff. All staff know their respective roles in maintaining the safety of the premises. Incidents are efficiently recorded by QR code and well logged and actioned. Staff implement the risk-assessment policy efficiently and effectively in relation to school buildings and the activities which pupils undertake.

Staff supervise pupils very well at all times both inside and outside the school premises, including with the aid of the school's well-monitored CCTV system. In line with best UK and UAE practice, the school has robust systems and procedures in place for emergencies such as fire and earthquake. All aspects of health and safety are regularly monitored by school staff and external agencies.

Leaders prioritise the well-being of pupils and staff and take them into account when making decisions. Pupils learn to be aware of their own emotional health and skilled staff give help to those pupils struggling with mental health.

Pupils new to the school, including the significant number who arrive at other than the usual times of year, are helped to settle in well by class teachers, form tutors, supervisors, social workers and their classmates. The staff, pupils and parents who spoke to inspectors and/or completed the inspection questionnaire are not aware of any bullying in the school. They said that they are confident that if it did occur, staff would deal with it quickly and well. Pupils' attendance is in line with UK averages. The vast majority of pupils arrive at school and at lessons on time.

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

The school meets the requirements of the standard.

Arrangements to ensure the suitability of all staff are robust. All required checks on current and new staff members are carried out to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.

The school has its own on-site human resources personnel who liaise with BEAM central office. They provide a wide range of support services for the school within the group. Staff diligently maintain a single central record for all teaching staff, board members and administrative staff. The school keeps a comprehensive record of all staff working in the school including which checks have been made on them. These include a range of additional information and evidence required by the UAE authorities. No staff are allowed to start work in the school until all the relevant checks have been completed.

Visitors to the school wear identity badges and are escorted when on the school premises. All aspects of staff recruitment and vetting are led by a highly qualified and effective team in the school. These are subject to quality-assurance checks by senior staff and audits conducted by the board.

Many teachers have British teaching qualifications. All are well qualified and have subject or phase specialisms. Staff benefit from high-quality training and professional development in school. They also have access to a wide range of external courses to build on their knowledge and skills and to gain further qualifications. The principal and senior leaders have undertaken safer recruitment training. This is updated annually. All interview panels have at least one member who is trained in safer recruitment

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

The requirements of this standard are met. The school has all the required certificates to demonstrate that it operates safely and legally.

Major improvements have been made to the school campus since the last inspection. New buildings are impressive and tailored to meet the needs of pupils of all ages. The school's accommodation has been developed in a thoughtful and imaginative way. It has an excellent range of specialist areas which are conducive to teaching and learning. For example, additional specialist teaching rooms have been added for subjects such as STEM, science, design and technology, art and vocational training. This has raised the profile of these subjects at a time that the school is widening its curriculum offer. The school makes effective use of flexible spaces through remodelling and partitions. The good-quality indoor and outdoor sports facilities and resources

enhance pupils' participation in a good range of sports and physical-education activities.

The bright attractive, airy classrooms are well equipped with exciting resources. Younger pupils remain in the original building, which has been extensively renovated and improved. The early years, primary and secondary areas of the school are carefully designed to meet the needs of the different age groups. Attractive and well-used libraries are well stocked with fiction and non-fiction books in each key stage. Learning is enhanced by the ready availability of technology from hand-held computers to interactive boards.

Access to these improved facilities develops pupils as independent and social learners and prepares them very well for post-school education. 'I can't believe just how much everything continues to improve in our school' is typical of comments made by pupils about their new building and specialist classrooms.

Throughout the school, there are ramps and lifts allowing wheelchair users access to higher levels in the school. In all three buildings there is a well-equipped medical area. Each is staffed by well-qualified medical practitioners with a doctor readily available. Office space is plentiful and there are numerous areas for meetings, private discussions and guidance.

All suitable hygiene arrangements for the preparation, serving and consumption of food are in place in the school kitchens. Staff provide a good range of high-quality food including healthy options.

The school has many eco-friendly and sustainable features with pupils actively involved in these initiatives. For example, light sensors installed in the classrooms save electricity and pupils discourage single-use plastic water bottles.

A highly professional, efficient and skilled facilities-management team ensures that the school's premises remain of exceptional quality. A deep clean is undertaken each evening and cleaners work unobtrusively throughout the school day. Pupils are proud of their school and do their best to keep it clean and tidy.

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

The school meets the requirements of the standard.

Parents are very happy with the quality of information provided. They appreciate the ready access parents have to the school's staff and leadership through regular face-to-face meetings, email, other electronic communication and extensive weekly newsletters. The 'Happy Meet' sessions arranged termly give parents direct access to leaders in the different phases and are described by parents as 'invaluable' for working parents.

These meetings complement the high quality of information on the school website. This is readily accessible and includes information from safeguarding, welfare and education policies to detailed curriculum information. There are regular updates from the principal and staff which are always translated.

The high quality of information for parents starts from the rigorous induction programme for all children, pupils and students at whatever stage they join. This continues as pupils move through the school. For example, transition meetings are held to smooth the way as children move between classes and phases.

The school offers numerous workshops and training sessions so that parents are fully informed about the curriculum their children are experiencing. These include sessions on the teaching of phonics and e-safety and the carrying out of sustainability projects.

Parents have access to an informative, personalised virtual-learning platform. Following their own logins, parents have access to their child's termly reports, assessments, pre-learning information and revision packs before the examinations. Pupils' reports are shared termly. They provide sharply focused information on the pupils' efforts and attitudes as well as their academic achievements.

Parents of pupils with SEND are very well informed at every stage of their development. They comment that the school not only supports the child, but also provides very positive information and guidance for parents. The school also works closely with parents of children who are affected by emotional, behavioural or social changes in their lives to reduce any barriers to effective learning. Social workers and counsellors are readily available to provide skilled support where necessary.

The school collects and responds to the views of parents effectively. Parents are very positive about the school's response to any matters raised. In both the inspection surveys and in their meetings with inspectors, they were confident that the school would promptly address any concerns. They shared many examples of where this has happened.

The overwhelming majority of parents believe that the open and accessible nature of the school is one of its many strengths. The parents' views reflect the findings of the inspection.

## **Standard 7. The school's procedures for handling complaints**

The school meets the requirements of this BSO standard.

The policy sets out a clear, staged process for parents on how to resolve any concerns or complaints within the school's provision. The policy is readily available on the website and parents know about it. It confirms how the school will deal with a complaint and the time expected for this to be resolved. Members of the parents' group confirmed that any matters raised are dealt with swiftly by the appropriate member of staff and school leadership. They say they have ready access to school leaders who will intervene and resolve matters if required. Since the last inspection no complaints have reached stage 2 of the formal procedure.

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

The school meets the requirements of the standard. Leaders ensure that the BSO standards are consistently met.

Leadership and management of this rapidly improving school are outstanding. Key to its success is the inspirational leadership demonstrated by the principal, board of governors and leadership team. While overseeing the growth of the school, they ensure that its core mission of 'excellence rooted in values' is achieved in practice. Only the best will do in this school where pupils are encouraged to become valued global citizens.

Many of the senior leaders have been at the school for some time, bringing the stability and confidence needed to take on new challenges. A large number of the senior leaders have been promoted from within. The policy of 'growing its own leaders' is having the desired impact. There is an impressive team of senior leaders bringing about the school's continuous improvement, complemented by some excellent appointments from outside. Devolved leadership enables leaders to take decisions that directly affect the staff and pupils they work with. Leadership is outstanding across the school, including in the early years.

High expectations are the hallmark of this school with no stone left unturned as it strives to improve. Since the last BSO inspection, leaders have tackled the weaknesses identified in the report. As a result, provision and outcomes have improved significantly in both early years and English in the intervening period. This demonstrates the excellent capacity of leaders to make further improvements.

The school continues to grow, with additional teachers appointed successfully to teach the increasing numbers of pupils in the secondary phase. Despite these changes and additional numbers, the school's vision remains crystal clear at the heart of the school and non-negotiable. Teamwork is strong and staff, pupils and parents unite around this vision. It is impressive that following a period of such change, the new arrivals in the school are fully integrated and seen as valued members of a vibrant school community.

The school justifiably describes itself as lighting the way to 'excellence rooted in faith'. Pupils confidently explain how their understanding of and adherence to British values complements their religious faith. Relationships and partnerships are based on mutual respect and tolerance.

Regular appraisal and peer support, combined with high-quality professional development, mean that the well-qualified staff feel well supported. Bespoke performance indicators are set for school leaders with provision for pupils at the heart of their targets.

Newly arrived staff undertake an intensive induction programme that caters for both their professional and personal needs. For example, they are helped with accommodation, transport and the challenges of becoming established in a new country. As a result, they are well prepared and settled when they start working with pupils. 'I couldn't have wished for more support when I arrived here at ISCS. My initial



nerves soon disappeared as I was welcomed into this great team' is typical of how new members of staff described their recent experiences.

Staff at all levels say how much they enjoy working in the school and feel proud of its achievements. This is confirmed in their overwhelmingly positive responses to the inspection staff survey and in their meetings with inspectors.

The school's self-evaluation form provides an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It celebrates the school's successes and is targeted on those areas where improvements are needed most. It is succinct and evidence based with clear success criteria so that leaders can check whether they have been successful. Reducing the number of priorities and ensuring that they are all 'student focused' makes it an even stronger document. As a working document it is made available for all staff to comment on.

The board of governors is a highly effective, talented and able group with a diverse range of appropriate experiences and skills. It has a wide representation from parents and staff as well as the owner's representative and school leaders. This wide cross section of the school community helps set an ambitious, strategic vision for the whole school. The separate responsibilities of the board and the school's leaders are clearly understood and the board provides appropriate challenge. The board listens to its stakeholders and takes immediate action when necessary. There is no sense of complacency in any part of the school and the board's approach typifies the relentless quest for further improvement. Financial management of the school is robust. The board takes an active role in providing the necessary checks and balances. It ensures that the school operates legally. Governors play an important role in ensuring that safeguarding and child protection policies are given the highest priority throughout the school. Safeguarding is outstanding. While valuing pupils' academic success, board members do not lose sight of the importance of their well-being and all-round development.

## EYFS provision

Children enter the Reception class with varied pre-school experiences. Those who have attended the school's Nursery class get off to a flying start as they have already developed some key skills across the EYFS curriculum. All children, including those with SEND and those at early stages of learning English, make good progress from their

starting points. Most children meet, and some exceed, English expectations for their age across all areas of learning. They are very well prepared for their move into Year 1.

The early years leader provides outstanding leadership. She motivates staff and skilfully leads continuing improvement. She has ensured that the new premises provide a stimulating environment for children's all-round development. The well-designed curriculum recognises the uniqueness of each child and takes account of their individual needs and interests.

Children benefit from good teaching from an enthusiastic and able staff team. Staff assess children through close observation and plan experiences that motivate them. They develop children's early reading and language skills very effectively, using a systematic phonics programme integrated into a language-rich curriculum. They use high-quality children's literature to promote learning across all areas. The hands-on, enquiry-based approach and use of concrete, real-life materials help broaden children's experiences and bring learning to life. In science for example, children investigate texture using natural materials and explore changes when they mix ingredients in baking.

Children develop their knowledge and skills in a secure environment underpinned by positive relationships with adults. Provision for children's personal and SMSC development and their welfare, health and safety are outstanding. Children grow in confidence and are happy and safe. They learn to collaborate with each other, make positive choices and are considerate in their play.

Parents are well informed. They receive daily feedback on their child's learning and activities and contribute to assessments. They are enthusiastic about the workshops that are provided to help them support their children at home, particularly with reading. The Stay and Play session, for parents of children who are not yet school age, is a valued resource and very well attended.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The International School of Creative Science, Nad Al Sheba, meets all of the required standards except those that would be in breach of the host country laws.

It cannot fully meet the standards set out below that relate to the UK Equality Act 2010.

2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation as set out in the Equality Act 2010;

5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

## What the school could do to improve further

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

1. Leaders have undertaken significant and appropriate curriculum development in this expanding school. Some of the resultant changes are at an early stage of development. Leaders should make sure that staff fully embed the reviewed curriculum so that it has the intended positive impact on pupils' progress and attainment.

## Summary of inspection judgements

Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
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### The quality of education

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

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

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

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils	√			
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### Leadership and management

Overall effectiveness of leadership and management	√			
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## School Details

<b>Name of school</b>	The International School of Creative Science, Nad Al Sheba
<b>Type of school</b>	Private
<b>Date school opened</b>	September 2016
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	1507
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	26,800 AED – 57,600 AED
<b>Annual fees (boarders)</b>	N/A
<b>Address of school</b>	Nad Al Sheba 3, Dubai
<b>Telephone number</b>	+97145107000
<b>Email address</b>	info@nas.iscs.sch.ae
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Ataullah Parkar
<b>Proprietor</b>	Educational Investments International L.L.C

## GLOSSARY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Ofsted** – The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills is the non-ministerial government department of Her 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 40 years' experience of delivering education services worldwide Education Development Trust exists solely to provide education for public benefit.

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. As one of the top 30 charities in the UK, we work for and with individuals and communities in order to help them reach their potential.

Education Development Trust has built a reputation for providing high-quality educational support and inspection services to national organisations such as Ofsted, the Teacher Training Agency and to schools in the north of England. Our main aim 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 carried out 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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