

# Royal Grammar School Guildford Dubai

## British Schools Overseas Inspection Report

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Age Group: 2 to 14  
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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection report follows the English Department for Education (DfE) schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas. The inspection was carried out by four 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 (BSO) must have an inspection report which shows that its performance against all the standards is at least satisfactory. This reflects the standards required for continuing registration as a school in England. Schools meeting the standards will have their inspection reports published on the Department's website and will be added to the register, 'Get information about schools'.**

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

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

The British Schools Overseas standards are as follows:

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

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

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

The purposes of BSO inspections are to:

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

### Key for inspection grades

<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 Royal Grammar School Guildford Dubai (RGSGD) is a preparatory (prep) and senior school that follows the national curriculum for England (NCfE). It is located in Tilal Al Ghaf, Dubai. The school opened on its current site in August 2021. The principal has been in post since 2024. The school is part of Cognita, which oversees strategic planning, finance and operational standards. A regional executive team oversees curriculum development, safeguarding, and the recruitment of staff.

There are 1,609 pupils on roll aged three to 14 years. In four years' time, it is intended that the school will have a full complement of pupils aged three to 18, from the early years foundation stage (EYFS) to Year 13. The current Year 9 will move into Year 10 next year. About one quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), all of whom have access to the full curriculum. There are 198 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and have additional or special provision. Sixty nationalities are represented in the school's population.

The school's mission is: 'To equip pupils with the inner confidence, self-belief and personal resilience to thrive in the classroom and beyond'. The school embodies the ethos and values of its partner school in the UK, The Royal Grammar School Guildford. These, combined with a spirit of innovation and development, prepare pupils for the challenges of the twenty-first and twenty-second centuries.

Children in the early years follow the EYFS curriculum. In key stages 1 to 3, pupils follow the NCfE.

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

Four Education Development Trust inspectors carried out this BSO inspection. Inspectors had access to information about the school before the inspection. The school completed the BSO registration and self-review documents and inspection dates were agreed with the school.

Inspectors visited 77 lessons, 10 of which were jointly observed by an inspector and a senior member of staff. Inspectors observed a range of extra-curricular activities. There were 23 meetings with leaders, teachers, pupils, parents and members of the school's governing board. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work. They analysed

documents relating to assessment, policies and strategic planning. They examined the school's safeguarding arrangements. Inspectors also considered the responses of parents and staff to the BSO survey, which parents and teachers were invited to complete before the inspection

## Evaluation of the school

**The Royal Grammar School Guildford Dubai is an outstanding school and provides an outstanding quality of education for pupils from three to 14 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.**

Pupils' attainment and progress in **English** are outstanding across the school. Pupils with SEND, those with EAL, and girls and boys, all make excellent progress in speaking, reading and writing in relation to their starting points. The most able and gifted pupils achieve very high standards.

Teachers' incisive assessments and skilled teaching ensure that children of all abilities in the EYFS make very strong progress. The proportion of children who reach a Good Level of Development in communication and language, reading and writing is consistently well above the England average.

Pupils continue to make excellent progress in reading and writing in the prep school. In Year 1, a well-structured phonics programme enables children to achieve well above the England average. By the end of Year 6, most pupils exceed England averages in reading and writing. Pupils read challenging texts for different purposes, fluently and with enjoyment. They write capably in a range of genres using ambitious and sophisticated language.

Pupils' outstanding progress continues in key stage 3. In Years 7 and 8, they achieve at least the expected age-related standards. The majority exceed these expectations. Year 9 pupils demonstrate very high levels of ability in their written work, reading comprehension and speaking skills. They complete complex interpretations of texts, for example, analysing language and authors' techniques in Gothic literature and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. When writing creatively, pupils evoke atmosphere using

different sentence types, well-chosen vocabulary and techniques such as fore-shadowing, personification, time shifts and symbolism. For example, they draw the reader in with intriguing openings, such as, 'Beneath the rousing skies lay a manor, stolen from its brilliance, now shadowed in malevolence and despair'.

Pupils' attainment in **mathematics** is outstanding, with all pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, making outstanding rates of progress. There is minimal difference in the rates of progress between boys and girls. High expectations, expert teaching, a challenging curriculum, well-deployed teaching assistants, and rigorous assessment processes ensure all pupils excel.

In the EYFS, children enter with a varied range of pre-school experiences and make rapid progress. Provision is highly personalised, engaging, and responsive to the needs of individual children. The learning environment is stimulating, both indoors and outdoors, encouraging reasoning through patterns and manipulatives. For example, FS 1 children match dots to numbers and find corresponding objects around the room.

By Year 6, 94% of pupils attain at or above curriculum standards, compared to 81% in England. They enjoy problem-solving and mathematical investigations. High-quality interventions ensure SEND and EAL pupils achieve results comparable to those of their peers. Lessons emphasise the application of skills through stimulating activities, including artificial intelligence (AI) driven digital learning. Teachers systematically promote problem-solving methods, and questioning promotes pupils' higher-order thinking. Year 6 pupils remarked, "We can suggest a different strategy to explain that." Most pupils confidently compare, order, and manipulate percentages, decimals, and fractions.

Rapid progress continues in the senior school. By Year 9, most pupils handle multi-step problems, applying for example, percentage calculations in various contexts. Consistent recall, independent and group work develop pupils' critical thinking, enabling all pupils to succeed. This is often in response to effective questioning, inviting speculation, such as: "If this doesn't work, can you suggest another way?" Pupils are now entering mathematics Olympiads with success.

Pupils' attainment and progress in **Science** in EYFS, prep and senior phases are outstanding. Pupils in tests and external examinations attain standards above England averages in all sections of the school. This is confirmed by observations of lessons and the scrutiny of pupils' work.

All groups of pupils make exceptionally good progress from their starting points. This is because teachers have secure knowledge of their subjects and know how their pupils learn most effectively. They plan their lessons to ensure individual pupils have sufficient challenge and support.

In the EYFS, a scientific enquiry approach enhances learning as children explore their world. Well-planned teaching and diverse resources promote children's rapid progress, and by the end of FS2, 83% achieve a Good Level of Development. Children study seeds and plant life cycles and are encouraged to develop leadership skills. A member of the class, acting as a teacher, explained, for example, how to grow cress and then questioned classmates to check their understanding.

In the prep school, the innovative science curriculum provides opportunities for investigations with high-quality resources. Integrated interactive technology, digital devices, and AI enhance scientific knowledge develop pupils' critical thinking and independent learning skills.

Pupils consistently use scientific terms correctly. In Year 4, pupils distinguish accurately between predictions and hypotheses and identify variables for fair tests. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils explored animal adaptations and evolutionary changes for survival, such as the chameleon's camouflage. By Year 6, nearly all pupils score significantly above England averages in assessments.

In the senior school, pupils surpass expected standards, deepening their scientific knowledge. In Year 9, pupils understand the digestive system and the small intestine's role in food absorption. Pupils excel in international competitions, with one group reaching the UAE Space Olympiad final and winning third place.

In **other subjects**, pupils make strong progress in line with the core subjects. In creative arts, they show enterprise and initiative in improvising scenes updating *Romeo and Juliet*, or building bridges based on sound engineering principles as well as their experience and their imagination. They attain good standards in French and Arabic, and develop their curiosity in moral, social and cultural (MSC) lessons, enquiry sessions, and in the library. Physical education (PE) and swimming lessons reinforce the school's athletic ambitions effectively, with elite performers receiving individual coaching. Pupils also rehearse and develop their digital skills, beginning with the youngest children in computer studies lessons.



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

## Part 1. The quality of education provided by the school

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

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

The school's curriculum is outstanding, carefully designed to reflect the school's clearly stated and shared values of integrity, inclusivity, respect, and kindness. It is regularly reviewed to adapt to the evolving needs of pupils and aligns closely with the NCfE. In the early years, the curriculum is closely matched to the EYFS curriculum,



with adaptations, ensuring that pupils receive a personalised experience, and that they are fully prepared to enter or re-enter the UK education system at any stage.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, blending academic study with opportunities to develop essential social skills and creative and physical experiences. The instrumental music programme, for example, ensures that all pupils engage with a musical instrument. The curriculum meets the requirements of both the EYFS framework, covering the seven key areas of learning and development, and the NCfE.

Additionally, the curriculum explicitly incorporates social skills and British values such as democracy and respect. The MSC curriculum, for example, explores topics such as the British monarchy. The school actively promotes respect for individuals with protected characteristics, addressing topics such as the consequences of anti-social behaviour, including racism, in both prep and senior schools.

Carefully structured long-term plans, comprehensive schemes of work, and detailed lesson plans ensure that the curriculum meets the required standards. It promotes essential learning skills, including independence, creativity, and critical thinking, which are seen across the school. Teachers not only develop pupils' academic abilities but also systematically encourage them to articulate their progress and reflect on their learning. Strategic decisions, taken during the school's growing phase, ensure that appropriate IGCSE choices can be made by pupils as they embark on key stage 4 in the following year.

As pupils advance through the school, they become reflective, critical thinkers who collaborate effectively in teams. They are confident, resilient learners who thoroughly enjoy learning. As the school grows, careers guidance assumes greater importance and pupils have opportunities to take part in a careers fair and work experience. The Russell Group, Oxbridge, Scholarship, Employment (ROSE) project particularly focuses on supporting pupils through milestone moments on their journey towards life after RGS GD.

The curriculum is highly personalised, tailored to each pupil's abilities and interests. Pupils with SEND and/or EAL receive outstanding support from an experienced inclusion team, enabling them to make excellent progress. The most gifted and talented pupils benefit from curriculum modifications that stretch and challenge them.

The school offers a wide range of high-quality extra-curricular activities suitable for all age groups. These include fitness and sporting activities, and creative and academic enrichment. The 'Earlybird' club begins at 7.00am and activities continue

after school until 4.30pm. Activities are either by invitation, by selection or are open to all. Approximately 80% of pupils take advantage of the programme; many do more than one activity.

Throughout the curriculum, pupils gain an understanding of Britain and British identity. They experience democracy by participating in elections for the pupils' council, delivering campaign speeches, and engaging in debates. High-quality displays around the school further reinforce British cultural and societal experiences.

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

Leaders have created a positive learning culture where pupils thrive. Learning habits expressed as: 'Aspiration, Reflection, Imagination, Perseverance, Engagement and Organisation', are promoted in all lessons and equip pupils to excel as learners. Pupils aim high and become critical thinkers who are confident, self-motivated and knowledgeable.

Teachers deliver the ambitious curriculum with skill. They have excellent subject knowledge and teach topics in depth, often exceeding the age-related expectations of the NCfE. Teachers collaborate to share ideas, develop best practice and create inspiring learning activities and resources. Knowledgeable learning support staff and teaching assistants make highly valued contributions to teaching in class and in additional support programmes.

Teachers craft lessons skilfully to provide pupils with opportunities to recall, embed and build on their knowledge and skills. Lessons are orderly and productive, motivating pupils through stimulating activities. Teachers are adept at explaining and exemplifying new learning. They ask probing questions, which deepen pupils' understanding, expand pupils' vocabulary and develop their speaking skills from the earliest stage. As a result, pupils express themselves clearly, using ambitious language and accurate subject-specific vocabulary.

Teachers have cultivated constructive, respectful relationships with pupils. They know how their pupils learn most effectively. Teaching is therefore highly personalised, based on teachers' detailed knowledge of their pupils' aptitudes, and prior knowledge. Teachers constantly assess pupils' skills and understanding throughout lessons. They add challenge where appropriate and immediately resolve any misconceptions. Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and modify their teaching to take account of information obtained through assessment. They ensure all pupils receive the right amount of challenge or support to achieve the best of their abilities.

Teaching uses technology imaginatively to extend and deepen learning across the whole curriculum. Teachers use smartboards interactively to demonstrate, illustrate and inform pupils. They use AI to stimulate research and enhance pupils' understanding. In Year 6, for example, pupils evaluated who was most culpable for the sinking of the Titanic using AI-generated images of crew members, and in Year 5 pupils 'interviewed' an image of 'Alfred the Great'. Pupils use their laptops proficiently to complete work and for independent research. They check their work using AI and they revisit lessons online in their own time to reinforce learning.

Pupils make the most of the opportunities that they have and have excellent attitudes to learning. They persevere with challenging tasks, make the most of classroom time, and present their work with care. Teachers rarely have to manage off-task behaviour because pupils are highly motivated. In the rare cases where they do need to manage behaviour in lessons, they do so skilfully with minimum disruption to teaching.

Teachers encourage pupils of all ages to take responsibility for learning and develop independence. Pupils become adept at research and are confident in presenting their findings to their peers. For example, pupils are encouraged to become 'mini teachers' to teach the class about their areas of interest.

As a result of highly effective teaching and incisive assessment, all pupils make very strong progress, achieve high academic standards and develop the personal qualities to succeed in school and beyond. Pupils with SEND and those who speak EAL make excellent progress from their starting points because teaching meets their needs precisely. Pupils who are able, gifted and talented make excellent advances in their knowledge and skills as they apply themselves to challenging and thought-provoking tasks.

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

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

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

The school promotes respect, good relationships, tolerance, and equality through assembly planning, the MSC lessons, and through the application of an effective behaviour policy,

Pupils are kind, welcoming, and cooperative, seeing learning as a shared journey. Attendance is good with pupils valuing their education and working diligently. They are curious, engaged, and committed to success, respecting their teachers and appreciating their role in their learning.

Pupils are highly involved in school life, eagerly participating in the broad range of extra-curricular activities. Currently, leadership roles are sought after, with many pupils applying for a variety of roles, such as year ambassadors, house captains and sports captains. The recently introduced house system is yet to play a large part in the life of the school. An enhanced house system will enable pupils to benefit from further opportunities for leadership, competition in cultural pursuits, performing arts, community service and games. To complement the work of heads of year, pupils will benefit from better continuity of pastoral care as they move through the school.

Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong, leading to minimal rule-breaking and a culture of restorative intervention in preference to sanctions. Taking responsibility for one's own behaviour begins in the EYFS and continues throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to think about the impact that their behavioural choices have on others and on themselves and take actions to make amends if necessary. Pupils recognise the need for rules and so begin to understand the concept of the rule of law.

Pupils embrace democracy, as is shown when submitting applications for the coveted leadership positions, culminating in a form of hustings. Their voice influences school developments, as seen in their request for diversity champions in Year 9.

Pupils take pride in their harmonious school community, valuing diversity and celebrating different cultures. On World Cultures Day, they thoroughly enjoyed seeing each other's national costumes, hearing about each other's heritage and customs, and sharing their food. Pupils' attitudes are underpinned by a strong acceptance of other members of the community from different backgrounds.

They support peers with SEND and EAL sensitively, ensuring that they and their contributions are valued. Their community spirit is evident in initiatives such as Global 'Be Well' Day. Pupils contribute to the Sparkle Foundation, which provides support for a school in Malawi. Ramadan fridges, owing to families' generosity, permit local workers to enjoy a welcoming and nutritious Iftar meal.

Pupils see themselves as members of the global community and are keen to learn about aspects of life in other countries, including the UK. They know about key aspects of British society, including the British parliament and the monarchy. They understand that the UK is made up of four nations. They have a very good understanding of British values of tolerance, the rule of law, mutual respect, democracy and individual liberty.

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

The school's arrangements for the **welfare, health and safety** of pupils are outstanding. The school meets the requirements of this standard and is fully compliant with all the safeguarding and welfare regulations of the host country.

The campus offers a safe and nurturing environment in which respectful relationships between pupils and staff flourish. Pupils are welcomed into a friendly and diverse international community that diligently ensures that they have a healthy and secure place to learn. All joining families participate in welcome events before the start of term to familiarise their child with the school and to meet their teachers. From the outset, the school communicates its high expectations for all pupils and explains how parents can support this. This well-established link between the school and home nurtures a strong relationship, contributing to an attendance rate of 94% which is above the England average of 93%. The views of parents are highly valued, and questionnaires and surveys are used to gather their opinions. Similarly, pupils are encouraged to share their thoughts on matters of school policy and practice.

The school systematically reviews the policies on pupils' welfare and health and safety. All aspects of school life including extra-curricular activities, class outings, and residential experiences, are subject to robust risk assessment. The school has a suitable fire safety policy which it implements rigorously. External agencies check that all equipment is well maintained, and evacuation procedures are regularly rehearsed and evaluated. The school's trained first aiders are known to everyone, and assistance is promptly provided when needed. The school's policies on behaviour place great emphasis on respect and tolerance for others. Consequently, incidents of bullying are rare. Teachers have a profound understanding of pupils' academic and well-being needs. The well-established pastoral care system reflects the school's philosophy that if pupils are happy, they will thrive.

Pupils are fully informed about the school's safeguarding procedures and the designated staff members who provide support. They value the assistance of the full-

time counsellor, therapy dog, and friendship ambassadors, who offer informal support. All pupils are encouraged to develop leadership skills, and older pupils enhance the caring ethos of the school by supporting younger children. Pupils feel cared for and safe at school.

Policies and staff training for child protection are robust. In addition to initial training, weekly safeguarding meetings and regular bulletins inform staff of best practice in child protection. All staff understand that keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. At assemblies and in MSC lessons, pupils learn of the importance of keeping safe, including online. Parents are fully informed about the school's safeguarding procedures and express confidence that their child is kept safe at school by vigilant and caring staff.

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

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

The school, through Cognita, has effective measures in place to ensure that all those who work there are suitable to work with children. It conducts thorough checks on all staff, in whatever role they are appointed: secretarial, maintenance, technical or teaching. It applies the same standards to volunteers, governors, part-time staff and peripatetic coaches. Contractors who are on site at the same time as pupils are never unaccompanied. All such visitors to the school are required to wear lanyards to indicate their status.

Cognita keeps an accurate and detailed record of these checks on a single central register. These include the dates on which staff began their employment, their identity, and qualifications. Staff are required to declare that they are medically fit. The school, through its overarching body, conducts police checks for all countries where an applicant has worked. An internet search on candidates for employment at the school is a standard procedure. Cognita takes up at least two references from the principals of schools and verifies their status.

Cognita ensures that all those involved in the appointments process, including heads of department and senior leaders, have undergone appropriate safer recruitment training.



## Part 5. The premises and accommodation

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

The **premises and accommodation** offer an outstanding learning environment for pupils. The energy-efficient main building features a central atrium with native plants. Solar power supplies a third of the energy needs, while recycled water supports irrigation. Air quality is continually monitored to maintain a pollutant-free environment. The school ensures accessibility with ramps and lifts and separate washrooms for staff and pupils. The school makes suitable arrangements to meet the needs of members of the community with restricted mobility. The medical base has a full-time doctor, nursing staff, treatment and isolation rooms, and recovery areas. There are appropriate arrangements for the safe storage of medicines. Drinking water is supplied and suitably labelled. The school's dining facilities serve healthy food for pupils and staff. The coffee shop provides a welcoming space for parents and visitors, who are checked in and required to wear a suitable lanyard to identify them.

Classrooms offer exceptional learning environments. They are spacious, well-lit, and equipped with abundant resources, interactive technology, and excellent Wi-Fi. Throughout the campus, attractive displays celebrate pupils' achievements. In the EYFS, classrooms provide indoor and outdoor spaces for active learning that develop children's motor skills and social interaction through play. In both the prep and the senior schools, high-quality resources provide challenge and stimulation across all core and specialist subjects. For example, science laboratories support the development of scientific enquiry skills. Design technology spaces have equipment which enables pupils to research, design, and create effectively. Pupils cultivate their musical talents in the creative and performing arts, and the frequently used rehearsal spaces lead to highly successful performances, such as the musical *Matilda*.

The well-stocked library offers borrowing and reference texts in various languages, with seating for all ages, study areas, and online resources. The auditorium is a spacious multifunction area with excellent sound, light, and projection facilities, used for assemblies, celebrations, and performances. Outstanding indoor and outdoor PE facilities promote pupils' physical and mental well-being. The games hall and large outdoor pitch accommodate team and individual sports, while the temperature-controlled outdoor swimming pool meets competition standards. The PE building has separate wet and dry changing areas and showers.



The onsite facilities team ensure the highest standard of cleanliness. The security team oversees effectively the safe and orderly arrival and departure of pupils and staff and maintain a high level of vigilance throughout the day.

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

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

The school's website includes all essential policies, which can be easily accessed by parents or obtained from the school upon request. All policies are clearly written, reviewed annually, and outline the appropriate contact person based on the points they wish to discuss. The website features a wide range of school information, including term dates and timetables, as well as a link to "Friends of RGS", the vibrant parent community group. Through the website, the school makes key policies available to parents, including those relating to child protection, admissions, provision for SEND, curriculum, behaviour and health and safety.

Parents describe RGS GD as 'exceptional' and view the communication between home and school as outstanding. They cherish this strong partnership and report being well informed about their child's academic progress and overall well-being. Parents consider pastoral support to be a significant strength of the school, and any issues raised are addressed promptly. They appreciate the formal parent and teacher meetings, where they discuss termly reports and observe their child's progress. Parents in discussion confirmed that teachers know their child well and are committed to helping them reach their full potential.

In the prep and senior schools, parents receive regular updates on their child's progress, covering both academic and pastoral aspects. In the EYFS, weekly digital updates are provided, featuring visual records of activities. Parents of pupils with SEND express high regard for the commitment and insight of the teachers in ensuring their child receives the necessary support. They indicate that their involvement in this process enhances their understanding of their child and how they can collaborate effectively with the school.

Senior leaders actively seek parents' views and gather them from a variety of sources, both formal and informal. This includes class and year group chat groups, questionnaires, face-to-face meetings, and workshops. Frequent sessions are held to explain teaching pedagogy to parents, helping them to better understand the school's methodology. Parents describe the school as a supportive and very welcoming

community. New parents express their appreciation for the efforts made to help their children settle into the school.

Nearly all parents who participated in the BSO survey stated that their child enjoys being at school, feels safe, and comment that "teachers genuinely care." Parents of older children appreciate the opportunity for their child to continue their education at RGS as the school expands to include key stages 4 and 5.

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

The school meets the requirements of this standard.

School leaders are readily available to parents and so they are usually able to resolve minor concerns promptly and effectively.

In the rare cases when it is needed, the school has a written complaints policy which contains all the required elements and therefore meets the requirements of the standard. It is published on the school's website and is available to parents. It sets out a three-stage process, which provides for a complaint to be resolved at the informal stage. Where this proves not to be possible, a formal complaint may be made. If it is not resolved at this stage, a complaint may be taken forward to a panel hearing. Leaders take appropriate steps to review their procedures as required in response to the complaint, whether or not it is upheld. The school keeps a written record of all complaints made, which are kept confidential, unless access is permitted by local law.

## Part 8. Leadership and management of the school

The quality of **leadership and management** is outstanding.

Senior leaders ensure that the school consistently meets the requirements of the BSO standards. To that end, the specialist support that they receive from the proprietors is highly effective and valuable, for example, in areas such as safer recruitment and child protection.

Leaders at all levels in the school regard their first duty as promoting and safeguarding the welfare of all pupils and keeping them from any risk of harm. They have developed a suitable policy which they implement effectively. They have established a culture in which all members of the community understand their responsibility for their own well-being and that of others, and they know how to act

with that in mind. Leaders promote equality, and challenge discrimination where it arises.

The leadership team actively seeks to drive improvement through a thorough knowledge of every aspect of the school's provision. Examples include responding to a relative weakness in the science curriculum in EYFS and lower prep school, using the skills and knowledge of the middle leadership team, or allocating funding to improve the lighting in the drama studio. Leadership of the EYFS is highly knowledgeable, responsive and effective.

Teaching staff readily explain how they feel inspired by the school to be ambitious in every aspect of their teaching. They are aspirational for their pupils beyond the classroom, for example, in creative arts or team games. Staff are unanimously positive in both surveys and in informal discussions about their relationship with the school. Leaders plan and operate a strong programme of professional development for staff. They feel engaged and supported, and retention rates are exceptionally high. They are proud to work at the school.

School leaders are excellent role models for staff and pupils, with a calm, authoritative and purposeful air. They are also available for any pupil, parent or colleague who wants to speak with them, on duty in the dining room, or as parents drop their children off, for example. Their presence around the school has helped to create a culture of kindness and respect among pupils. Expectations of behaviour in the senior school, for example, have been made explicit and are now widely accepted, with a charter published in common areas of the school.

School leaders have identified the challenges of a school which continues to grow rapidly and have taken effective steps to meet them. Forward planning leaves nothing to chance in matters of admissions policy, curriculum decisions over GCSE and A-level courses, and how best to use the space available as numbers grow to over 2,000. The school's improvement planning embraces all aspects of the school. Current priorities have brought about the establishment of a holistic education committee, a review of the responsibilities of leaders at all levels, and the development of a revised communications strategy.

The school's proprietors have an established annual pattern of surveys to gauge opinions of pupils, parents and staff. School leaders hear those opinions and respond in a thoughtful and timely way. The principal, for example, held meetings for those

parents who expressed concern about class sizes as the school grows. Parents and pupils alike express high levels of satisfaction, trust and confidence.

Board members are knowledgeable and supportive, with expertise in EYFS provision, health and safety, and safeguarding. They act effectively to support leaders and hold them to account, with each undertaking a specific area of responsibility as part of their role. One representative, for example, checks safeguarding records periodically and is available for discussion with school leaders as required.

## EYFS provision

**The Early Years** provision is outstanding.

The leadership of the EYFS inspires a team of professionals, who have excellent knowledge of the curriculum and detailed understanding of how young children learn. Teachers and teaching assistants work together to give children memorable learning experiences. They ensure that they make the best possible progress in their learning and overall development.

The EYFS environment is inspirational and captivating. Children relish the opportunities and experiences that they are given. They develop confidence as they play, construct, create and work together. Staff carefully monitor children's welfare and ensure all children are safe, healthy and well looked after. Children make excellent progress in their personal development and their behaviour is outstanding.

The curriculum exceeds the ambitions of the EYFS. It is well sequenced to enable children to systematically build on their knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of learning. Leaders have introduced a language development programme, which successfully promotes accelerated progress in children's language skills.

Teaching is highly effective. Staff devise exciting activities that capture children's curiosity and encourage them to explore and solve problems. For example, children investigated various ways to melt ice after 'evil pea' captured 'carrot' and 'parsnip' in blocks of ice. Learning flows seamlessly between classrooms to shared and outdoor areas which are equipped with high-quality resources.

Teaching staff know the children extremely well. They personalise teaching to precisely meet the developmental needs of each child. All staff are skilled at providing timely intervention, to build children's vocabulary, enlighten, encourage and motivate

children as they learn. Staff work closely with parents to make sure children thrive in all areas of learning. They constantly assess, track and record children's achievements and share them with parents.

Children make rapid and secure progress from their starting points, as a result of the ambitious curriculum and personalised teaching. The proportion of children who reach a Good Level of Development is well above the England average. All children reach age expectations in each of the early learning goals and the majority exceed them. Children are exceptionally well prepared for the curriculum in Year 1.

## SEND provision

Leadership of the SEND provision is highly effective. Leaders have clear oversight of the quality of provision and have written detailed plans to continually enhance it. The inclusion team is well qualified to provide specialist support. They provide training so that all teachers know that high-quality SEND provision is everyone's responsibility.

Inclusion leaders monitor pupils' profiles and individual education plans (IEP) and ensure learning targets are ambitious, and that teaching strategies fully meet each pupil's specific learning needs. Leaders work closely with external specialists and therapists to provide additional expertise where needed.

High-quality teaching and positive relationships ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are met in mainstream lessons. Teachers make suitable adaptations to their teaching, the curriculum and resources, taking account of pupils' IEP, specific learning needs and targets. Teaching assistants make valuable contributions to planning and teaching in class groups.

Pupils who need further support receive well-targeted interventions in language, reading, writing and mathematics from the early years onwards. Learning support assistants are highly trained and provide targeted specialist teaching in additional interventions. Pupils receive further support in all subjects that is closely linked to the content that they cover in lessons. This helps them to catch up and keep up with their peers.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are a high priority. Pupils with SEND are given every opportunity to participate in enrichment activities. The Inclusion Ambassadors in the preparatory school and the Diversity Captains in the senior school

make an excellent contribution to promote an understanding of diversity and learning differences.

Pupils with SEND make consistently outstanding progress in response to personalised, highly effective teaching within an ambitious curriculum. Pupils with SEND and those who speak EAL make accelerated progress as a result of additional targeted interventions for speech and language, reading and writing. These interventions help pupils to fill gaps in their language and learning so that they can succeed. The large majority of pupils with SEND make better than expected progress from their varied starting points. Their high attendance rates reflect their love of school.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The Royal Grammar School Guildford Dubai meets all of the required standards except those that would be in breach of the host country laws. The requirements of the host country take precedence.

It cannot fully meet the standards that relate to 2(2)(d)(ii) or 5(b)(vi). The school fosters respect for all people, particularly regarding age, disability, race, religion, maternity and pregnancy 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:

The school does not yet use the house system to its full potential to support pupils' personal development. As the school grows, leaders should consider ways to strengthen the role of the house system. As a result, pupils will benefit from more opportunities for leadership, competition in cultural pursuits, performing arts, community service and games as well as enhanced continuity of pastoral care.

## Summary of inspection judgements

Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
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### The quality of education

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			
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### Leadership and management

Overall effectiveness of leadership and management	x			
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## School Details

<b>Name of school</b>	The Royal Grammar School Guildford Dubai
<b>Type of school</b>	Prep and senior, day, mixed
<b>Date school opened</b>	August 2021
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	mixed
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	1609
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	n/a
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	FS1 AED 76950 FS2 AED 82080 Years 1-4 AED 93366 Years 5-8 AED 99522 Year 9 AED 110808
<b>Annual fees (boarders)</b>	n/a
<b>Address of school</b>	Tilal Al Ghaf
<b>Telephone number</b>	+971 44 464 333
<b>Email address</b>	Francesca.balderson@rgsgd.com
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Scott Bryan
<b>Proprietor</b>	Cognita

## GLOSSARY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Standards** –

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

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

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

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

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

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

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