



**British School  
Overseas**  
Inspected by Penta International

## **Inspection report**

# **GEMS Metropole School Al Waha (MTW)**

**Dubai  
United Arab Emirates**

Date  
Inspection number

**5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025**  
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## 1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education (DfE) has put in place a voluntary scheme for the inspection of British schools overseas (BSO), whereby schools are inspected against a common set of standards that BSO can choose to adopt.

The inspection and this report follow the DfE schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas.

The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's management on the overall effectiveness of the school, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent schools in the United Kingdom.

The inspection and report will cover the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation; the school's complaints procedures; and leadership and management. If appropriate, there is a separate section on the quality of boarding provision. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for pupils and pupils' achievements.

This inspection was completed by Penta International. Penta International is approved by the British government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the DfE on the extent to which schools meet the standards for BSO.

During the inspection visit, 77 lesson observations took place. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Pupils' workbooks were seen in lessons, and discussions were held with the staff, parents and informally with students. The inspection took place over three days.

The lead inspector was Ciprian Ghisa. The team members were Sven Carrington, Jessie Joubert, Glyn Kilsby and Naomi Sautter.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection, the school has shown that it meets the standards for British Schools Overseas, except for those that cannot be achieved legally in the host country. These pertain to aspects of the UK Equality Act 2010. The relevant standards are:

Part 1 – ‘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;’

and

Part 2 – ‘5(b)(vi)- encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

The school actively promotes tolerance and a respect for all human differences, within the confines of the law. This is embedded in the culture and ethos of the school.

This judgement is endorsed by the British government and is valid for three years. The inspection process is quality assured by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

### 3. Overall effectiveness of the school

The GEMS Metropole School Al Waha (MTW) offers high quality education to the students in a dynamic, innovative and rapidly developing learning environment. The educational provision currently offers the possibility of progression from the Early Years level to Year 9, but the school will develop the high-school programme from Year 10 to Year 13 in the following years.

#### 3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths at the school, including the following:

- The very positive relationships between the students and staff, in a caring, and safe environment;
- The safeguarding, health and safety systems are very rigorous across all areas of the school;
- The Inclusion team ensures that the needs of all individual students are met, while offering solid support to the teaching staff across the school;
- The GEMS oversight ensures excellent support, guidance and sharing of good practice and resources;
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent;
- Teaching across the school overall is very strong, using skilful learning strategies that result in good and often excellent outcomes.
- Teachers have strong, caring relationships with their students. High levels of respect are underpinned by high expectations and a clear commitment to planning and delivering lessons that are engaging and ignite learning.
- Leadership is strategic, collaborative, and reflective, with well-established systems for staff development, safeguarding, and the use of both academic and wellbeing data to drive improvement.
- The excellent induction and continuous professional development (CPD) provision support teachers' constant development and ensures the achievement of the school's strategic goals.
- The senior leadership team (SLT) leads a school culture of safe, explorative and happy learning based on tolerance and respect.
- The school reception area provides a warm, purposeful and attentive gateway to the wider school. Security, reception and coffee shop staff engage with students, families and visitors meaningfully and with ease, reflecting the school's commitment to 'creating a cohesive community where all stakeholders play an active role as partners.

## 3.2 Points for improvement

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

- i. To continue to refine challenge and feedback for the most able learners, ensuring timely questioning and extension tasks maintain pace and ambition throughout lessons.
- ii. To continue to systematically and sustainably deliver and embed the 'Visible Learning' whole school pedagogy.
- iii. To continue to develop a whole school education technology strategy that reflects the use of advancing technology including artificial intelligence.

## 4. The context of the school

Full name of school	GEMS Metropole School Al Waha (MTW)				
Address	GEMS Metropole School Al Waha P.O. Box 453346 Al Waha Dubai				
Telephone number/s	+971 45266555				
Website address	<a href="http://www.gemsmetropoleschool-alwaha.com">www.gemsmetropoleschool-alwaha.com</a>				
Key email address	<a href="mailto:principal_mtw@gemsedu.com">principal_mtw@gemsedu.com</a>				
Headteacher/ principal	Jeremy Hallum				
Chair of board/proprietor	Naveed Iqbal				
Age range	FS1-Year 9 at present growing annually until FS1-Year 13				
Total number of pupils	<b>1,594</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>770</b>
Numbers by age	<i>0-2 years</i>	0	<i>12-16 years</i>	347	
	<i>3-5 years</i>	311	<i>17-18 years</i>	0	
	<i>6-11 years</i>	936	<i>18+ years</i>	0	
Total number of part-time children	0				

GEMS Metropole School Al Waha (MTW) is a British International School located in Dubai, beside the communities of Sustainability City, Serena, Al Waha and Arabian Ranches, in a rapidly growing new residential areas. MTW became the first post-covid GEMS school to open in September 2023, welcoming 700 students to the new school campus. The current student body comprises almost 1600 students from Foundation Stage (FS) 1 to Year 9, with a Key Stage (KS) 4 programme opening in September 2025. The school is both multicultural and diverse, with 90 different student nationalities: the largest ethnic group of students in the school are British (13%), other notable groups include those from India (9,6%) and Egypt (8,8%). MTW is an inclusive school, with 12% of the students being on the special education needs and disabilities (SEND) register.

The school follows the national curriculum of England and fully aligns with the UAE Ministry of Education Arabic, Islamic and moral and social education requirements. MTW is a 'Professional Learning Community', active inside its cluster of eight schools and within the GEMS network.

The school has a strong focus on the wellbeing and inclusion of all its community members, which is illustrated by MTW's achievement of the wellbeing award and the SENDIA award from *Optimus Education*.

This was the school's first BSO inspection.

## 4.1 British nature of the school

MTW has a strong British feel and ethos:

- The school follows the national curriculum of England and the language of provision is English across all areas, with the exception of Arabic-medium subjects.
- The school is organised in a typically British way, both academically and pastorally.
- British practice is evident in approaches to performance management, staff target setting and annual review meetings.
- Most of the teachers within the school are British qualified and trained. Regular CPD ensures approaches to teaching and learning are informed by best practice.
- The educational resources and platforms are offered by UK based companies, e.g. *White Rose Maths*, *Big Cat* reading scheme and the *Collins* online platform.
- The school delivers a variety of extracurricular activities, aligning with British cultural values. The 'Mavericks' programme is an example of best practice.
- The school implements a house system.
- The school uniform reflects the British ethos of the school.
- The school offers a large variety of opportunities for student leadership roles.



## 5. Standard 1

### The quality of education provided by the school

The school has met the standard and the quality of education at the school is outstanding.

#### 5.1 Curriculum

The school meets the standards for curriculum which is outstanding.

The school offers a broad, balanced, innovative and coherently structured curriculum, based on the national curriculum for England but enriched with local and international relevance. The school provides the EYFS curriculum, Junior Duke Programme, NCfE for KS1 to 3. In September 2025, IBTEC, IGCSE, ASDAN and Duke of Edinburgh will formally be introduced, with A-Level programmes being initiated in future years.

The school's 'Honeycomb' curriculum nurtures curiosity (framework for EYFS up to Year 2), confidence (framework for Year 3 to Year 6), and creativity (framework for Year 7 to Year 9), ensuring the students are ready for their progression in high-school. The curriculum fosters balanced development for the students by integrating physical education, wellbeing and entrepreneurship, equipping students with skills for personal growth. The focus on entrepreneurship supports the specificity and individuality of the provision.

Students in the foundation stage follow the 'nurturing curiosity' curriculum which focuses on the development of early literacy, numeracy and communication skills. The thematic curriculum is mapped across the school year to ensure progression towards the early learning goals by the time students reach the end of FS2. Weekly "little questions" support students to answer the theme's "big question" every six weeks. The "disruptive questions" promote critical thinking skills amongst the school's youngest learners. Planning documents are personalised to the needs and interests of the students, ensuring appropriate levels of challenge and support. The curriculum enables students to be immersed in nature and outdoor activities in the forest, farm and bio cube, encouraging hands-on learning and environmental awareness. The teaching of phonics is effective and progress is tracked through *Little Wandle* letters and sounds. The curriculum in FS is broad and balanced, including specialist Arabic, physical education and farm lessons.

For Key Stages 1 and 2, students engage with an inquiry-led approach centred on half-termly 'Big Questions'. A key component is the 'curiosity' curriculum, designed to promote 21<sup>st</sup> century skills like communication, critical thinking, and collaboration. This cross-curricular approach ensures a swift transition from EYFS to KS1, where students still have access to outdoor learning, to the forest school, farm, and biosphere. In KS1, lessons are highly differentiated with "challenge yourself" and

"push it" questions. Phonics is taught sequentially, and the reading scheme seamlessly integrates with it. The curriculum fosters academic and personal growth, emphasizing empathy, integrity, and resilience. Curriculum maps ensure cumulative progression, with strong cross-curricular links, especially between reading and writing. Moral, social, and cultural education is delivered through a well-being curriculum and values-based assemblies, while entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and leadership are embedded throughout. Specialist subjects like Arabic and Islamic Studies are carefully aligned with UK curriculum subjects. Creative arts, IT and technology skills are developed in a cross-curricular and interdisciplinary way. The school should ensure greater clarity and visibility of progression in these non-core areas.

In the first three years of secondary, the school aims to nurture creativity through embedding the golden threads of leadership, sports and performing arts throughout the curriculum. This will be followed, over the next few years by the senior or future school that will focus on careers success and opportunities. The curriculum is built around a combination of subjects and cross-curricula themes. These themes focus on sporting pathways, performing arts, preparation for GCSEs, entrepreneurship and leadership. The curriculum is broad and all lessons are taught by subject specialists. Students who represent the school in sport or who are playing at a high level join the school's sports squad, the 'Mavericks'.

Planning documents show that cross-curricular links are built into the curriculum structure. There is a focus on a range of themes, including Britishness, UAE culture, entrepreneurship and leadership. Throughout the curriculum there is an emphasis on reading and writing, and this is supported by reading activities in lessons and by 'form time reader' activities.

The curriculum is regularly reviewed and adapted to meet the needs of different groups of students. The most able, gifted and talented students are identified through CAT4 assessments and are provided with 'challenge plans' to help them reach their full potential. Less able students and those with additional learning needs are supported through modification of the curriculum and, in many cases, detailed individual learning plans.

Students in Year 9 have been guided through a careers and subject options process in preparation for GCSE and BTEC courses in Year 10. In addition to traditional GCSE courses the school is offering GCSEs in drama, economics, sociology and psychology. Students are also able to choose IBTEC courses in engineering or construction.

The curriculum is enriched with an extensive extra-curricular programme on offer from FS1 to Year 9, with activities scheduled before, during and after school, led by school staff and external providers. The 'Mavericks' programme is a strength of the school, promoting excellence, values and community spirit.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

The school meets the BSO standards on the quality of teaching and assessment and are outstanding.

In the foundation stage, teachers create highly stimulating learning environments which provide a variety of rich and imaginative experiences. Relationships between students and teachers are excellent and students show high levels of engagement in their learning. High quality resourcing of continuous and enhanced provision provides children with opportunities to develop their skills and to challenge themselves to extend and embed their learning. The learning environments promote student independence and creativity. In the best lessons, students are consistently engaged in high-quality interactions, with teachers using rich vocabulary, extending conversations, and developing students' understanding through skilful open-ended questioning.

Teacher observations in foundation stage are recorded on arc pathways. This data is used effectively to identify personal targets and ensure both adult-led sessions and enhanced provision are adapted to meet the needs of individual students.

Across primary, teaching is consistently well-planned, underpinned by high expectations and informed by a robust quality assurance (QA) system. The QA cycle includes lesson observations, book looks, learning walks and student voice, with outcomes systematically recorded on a centralised platform accessible to senior leaders. This facilitates transparency, moderation, and responsive professional development. Pedagogy is grounded in evidence-based practice, including a three-year 'Visible Learning' strategy that promotes critical thinking, metacognition, and challenge. Staff are trained in effective questioning techniques and phase-specific progression maps support alignment across year groups. Assessment is used purposefully, with formative and summative data uploaded to *Go4Schools* platform. Teachers use question-level analysis from *White Rose* assessments and *New Group Reading Test (NGRT)* reading tests to adapt planning. Internal data is triangulated with parental feedback and external benchmarks. Diagnostic tools such as *PASS* and *Komodo* further support targeted intervention and curriculum adaptation. Phonics provision, based on the *Little Wandle* scheme, is a particular strength and supports strong early literacy outcomes.

The large majority of lessons in the secondary section are well structured, innovative and stimulating. The quality of teaching is high and relationships between teachers and students are respectful and strong. Lessons are interesting and motivating and this leads to notable levels of student engagement. In the best lessons students are actively involved in discussion, exploration of ideas and critical thinking. Almost all lessons have good pace and a notable variety of learning tasks.

Students from Years 7 to 9 approach their learning with impressive maturity and they are keen to learn. Both students and teachers use time effectively, and lessons are productive from beginning to end. Students are supportive of each other although, in some lessons, their skills of collaboration are still developing. Technology is used confidently and seamlessly during lessons to support learning, and a good balance has been achieved, carefully avoiding the overuse of digital devices.

Lessons are planned carefully and student data is used to set tasks that are well matched to their ability. Particular care is taken to support those students who have additional learning needs and, where required, support teachers are used effectively within lessons.

Teachers use questioning skilfully to check understanding and encourage critical thinking. Self-assessment is used well in many lessons and students know how to do this with the use of their 'purple pens'. Most books are marked carefully, with feedback sheets used to help students understand how well they are doing, and what they need to do to improve.

Arabic lessons across the school are creative and highly engaging. As a result, the majority of students make excellent progress.

## 5.3 Standards achieved by pupils

Standards achieved by students are good with some outstanding features.

In those aspects of this standard where comprehensive data is available, such as behaviour and attendance, standards are outstanding. Internal assessment data indicates that progress over time is strong, including for those students who have additional learning needs and for the most able. The school has not yet been open long enough to use external assessments as a reliable measure of consistent student progress over time. This situation will be very soon overcome, as the school has put in practice clear and comprehensive systems of baseline, internal and external assessments which will provide a wealth of data. Digital tools such as *Go4Schools* are well used by staff and school leaders, students' progress is carefully tracked, and intervention is in place when needed.

Internal attainment data in the foundation stage indicates that a large percentage of students achieve expected and above expected standards. The school exceeds UK national averages in the foundation stage with 71% of students achieving a good level of development (GLD) in 2024, compared to the UK average of 68%. The school exceeded UK averages in word reading, mathematics, and number, indicating strong early achievement. Girls (82%) significantly outperformed boys (67%) and 30% of SEND students achieved GLD, 10% above the UK average. The pass rate of the Year 1 phonics screening check was 82% in 2024 which exceeds the UK average of 80%.

Student outcomes in the primary phase are strong and improving. Academic standards mapped against UK expectations in English and mathematics, with internal tracking indicating consistent progress across cohorts. *GL* assessment data shows that a significant proportion of students attain at or above age-related expectations in the *Progress Test in English* (PTE) and PTM (mathematics), with value-added gains evident for students across the ability spectrum. *NGRT* outcomes show upward trajectories in reading comprehension. CAT4 data is used diagnostically to ensure that students' potential is recognised and appropriate stretch is provided. The school analyses attainment and progress by subgroup, including gender, EAL, SEND, and those new to the school, and this informs both classroom strategies and whole-school planning. Moderation cycles and standardisation across the cluster strengthen the accuracy of judgements. Student-led conferences, personalised targets, and active student voice contribute to a culture of high expectations and achievement. Standards are monitored and reviewed in conjunction with cluster schools and external benchmarking, ensuring continued improvement and aspirational outcomes.

In the secondary section of the school there is a detailed and comprehensive plan for internal and external assessment. Attainment in English, mathematics and science are measured towards the end of each year using *GL* progress tests. Students entered these assessments for the first time at the end of the last academic

year. Results indicate that the majority of students meet or exceed UK curriculum expectations. Subsequent *GL* progress tests will then be used as a reliable measure of progress over time.

Internal assessments are based on the taught curriculum and are taken at the end of each term. For the core subjects of English, mathematics and science tests are moderated with colleagues from GEMS Metropole Motor City. This helps ensure the reliability and validity of the assessments. This internal data indicates that a large majority of students make progress that meets or exceeds expectations. For Year 8 students the percentage who at least meet expectations are; English 89%, mathematics 93% and science 91%. The results are analysed for different groups of students, where girls do slightly better than boys in all three subjects. English language learners, the most able and students with additional learning needs all make strong progress.

Reading in English is measured using the *NGRT* tests where, at the end of Year 8, 80% of students meet or exceed average UK expectations. In this Year 8 reading assessment, girls (95%) significantly outperform boys (71%).

In Arabic and Islamic Studies, the school is part of a local cluster of GEMS schools who enter a common end-of-year assessment. This will help the school gain an accurate measure of attainment and progress in these subjects. Students enjoy learning and show an impressive maturity in their approach to study. Learning skills are excellent and many show a level of self-motivation and confidence that exceeds their age.

The school will have to continue the use and analysis of external assessment data to measure progress over time for each cohort and different groups of students within the school, so that teachers could personalise learning for all students even more.

As the school continues its accelerated growth, and considering the opening of the high-school, the career guidance provision may be further extended to meet the needs of this next phase. The use of meaningful data will ensure that students are appropriately supported to make the right curriculum and higher education option choices.

## 6. *Standard 2* Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school meets the standard: the provision is outstanding.

MTW provides a comprehensive education, deeply integrating development with robust career readiness. In the FS, children are encouraged to question, while career days adopt a 'Ted Talk-style' approach, exemplified by pupil-led discussions on future aspirations. This cultivates early confidence and creativity, preparing pupils for later careers guidance. Gifted and talented (G&T) pupils receive early guidance from Year 7, with a strong emphasis on entrepreneurship to prepare them for the future. Secondary guidance is specific, building confidence and organisational skills for university and job applications through dedicated careers days, counsellor support, and PSHE drop-down days for practical skills like CV writing. A 'marketplace' event with sister schools fosters excellent pupil agency as pupils discuss subject choices. Crucially, SEN pupils gain valuable work experience with partners like *Spinneys*, complemented by external support and sports leader programmes.

Spiritual and cultural understanding is woven throughout the curriculum, with wellbeing sessions and exploration of healthy lifestyles. Kindness and respect are core values, and diverse cultures are celebrated through a pre-planned calendar of intercultural events, utilising agencies like *Heritage Heroes*. PSHE in Key Stage 3 aligns with the UK curriculum, focusing on relationship building. *Komodo* monitors pupil happiness, and the school is responsive to pupil needs, such as increasing fitness lessons when body image concerns arose.

The school boasts an impressive extra-curricular activity (ECA) provision, with 45 sports options and 9 external partners, demonstrating significant pupil uptake and strong pupil agency. An enrichment block in primary ensures every child accesses ECAs. Pupil council involvement in decisions, like sports captains organising the 'La Liga' trip, highlights active pupil participation. Rich enrichment opportunities include poetry, residential, and cultural trips, with inclusion pupils actively participating in the *Unified Games*.

The school prioritises pupil wellbeing, utilising *Zones of Regulation* (ZOR) in EYFS and KS1 and *Komodo* in KS2 and 3. Data from *PASS* and *Leuven Scale* is triangulated for interventions, resulting in a 5% increase in *Komodo* implementation. Two pupil counsellors provide support, with resources available in 'The Hive,' and mental health first aiders contribute significantly.

MTW is a 'people's place,' valuing relationships and positive attitudes. Core values underpin all aspects, with rewards based on these principles. 'My Heritage, My World' initiatives foster a strong sense of belonging. Staff CPD aligns with the principal's vision, emphasising relationships, expectations, and reading.

A staff wellbeing committee promotes a trust-based culture and personalised coaching. New staff are seamlessly integrated, quickly embracing the school's vision and values of respect, kindness, and tolerance.

'Britishness' and values are explicitly considered in planning, and democracy is practised in all classes. The *Junior Dukes* programme promotes independence, and restorative practice guides behaviour conversations. PE is a driving force, reinforced by the school's ethos. A strong community feel and family partnerships, coupled with a positive behaviour policy, ensure pupils make sound choices. Transitions for new pupils are exceptionally strong.



## 7. Standard 3

### The welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The school meets the standards for welfare, health and safety: provision is outstanding.

The school meets the regulatory requirements of the UAE. The school has successfully completed the rigorous health and safety inspections from Dubai Municipality, Civil Defence, Dubai Health Authority and Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA). The welfare, health and safety of students is a priority for the leadership, teaching and support staff. Systems related to these are clear and visible throughout the school.

Safeguarding and child protection are embedded into the daily operational and pastoral practices at the school. MTW meets the expectations of the BSO framework and operates within the safeguarding requirements of the United Arab Emirates, aligning closely with UK standards in all applicable areas. A strong culture of vigilance, proactive intervention, and student-centred care is evident across all phases of the school. Safeguarding is on the agenda of weekly meetings with the principal and all senior leadership meetings. There are also further termly and twice termly safeguarding meetings with school governors and the local cluster of schools. Accurate records are maintained and the system allows for quick and effective responses.

A robust and up-to-date suite of safeguarding policies is in place, including those relating to child protection, safer recruitment, e-safety and acceptable use, health and safety, behaviour, anti-bullying, and risk assessment. These are accessible to all staff and referenced during induction and training. All safeguarding records, including visitor logs, incident forms, risk assessments and health and safety documentation, are securely maintained.

The school uses GEMS' corporate safeguarding platform, *Guard*, to log and monitor concerns. Reporting reflects a strong culture of trust, transparency, and safeguarding awareness.

All staff complete mandatory Level 1 training through the GEMS platform, with weekly sessions available for new staff and refreshers. All designated safeguarding leads (DSL) and deputy DSLs are Level 3 trained, and certificates are tracked at cluster level. Training for staff is comprehensive and covers all categories of abuse, confidentiality, safer working practices, allegations against adults and children, and specific protocols such as the lanyard and restroom policies. Staff involved in recruitment are trained in safer recruitment procedures.

The school's safeguarding team is highly visible and accessible, with DSLs clearly identified via lanyards, posters, and weekly communications. Students feel cared for and know who to speak to if they have a concern.

Student health is supported through the school's personal and social curriculum and by participation in the 'Maverick's sports teams programme. Students are aware of the importance of a healthy diet and are encouraged to make healthy choices. Healthy eating is promoted by the school's catering provider, Slices, and across the curriculum. The catering department has received an 'A' award from Dubai Municipality for hygiene and food safety.

The school has a well-staffed clinic that has a full-time doctor and three nurses. More than 30 staff are first aid trained and their names are shown clearly on notices throughout the school.

Standards of behaviour are exemplary, and nearly all students are considerate and respectful, towards staff, visitors and each other. Expectations regarding behaviour are high and are supported by clear behaviour and reward policies, with a strong emphasis on rewarding positive behaviour. The five-stage policy for unacceptable behaviour is clear, fair and understood by students and staff. Records are kept for any more serious incidents and cases of repeated events are infrequent. The positive school environment means that bullying is extremely rare and students report that it is dealt with promptly and fairly.

Site security is excellent, with all unlocked access points supervised by trained staff. A system of coloured lanyards, ID checking and sign-in books is used to ensure that access to the site is safe. There is a strong staff presence at the beginning and end of each school, and students' movement around the site is safe, calm and orderly. 24 buses are used and each of these has a bus guardian, in addition to the driver. All students have designated seats and a student RFID system is used to check students on and off the buses. All areas of the school have access controlled doors to keep students safe.

Attendance and punctuality are monitored at the start of each day and, in secondary, in each lesson. *Go4Schools* is used to record attendance and as an app to inform parents. Parents are contacted on the morning on the first day of absence, with further follow-up on the next two days, if the absence has not been authorised. After the school's official start time only one entrance is open and any late student have to sign in at reception.

Fire safety systems are excellent, with safety equipment and signage clear and prominent throughout the school. Termly fire drills take place and an annual drill is completed with Dubai Civil Defence on site. There is also an annual lockdown drill, and the systems for this are displayed clearly around the school.

The school's two swimming pools are in a locked and secure area that cannot be accessed by unauthorised members of the school. The pools are well maintained and all swim coaching and teaching staff have the appropriate training and life-saving qualifications.

Risk assessments are completed and recorded for all potentially hazardous in or out of school activities. In the science department, chemicals are stored safely, safety equipment is in place in laboratories and any hazardous or expired materials are disposed of through Dubai Municipality.

There is a strong sense of pride and attention to detail with regards to the quality and safety of equipment, buildings and resources throughout the school. Doors all have protected openings and hinges and the corners of walls are protected with soft edges. Standards of maintenance and safety are high, with online systems in place to ensure that any concerns are recorded and dealt with promptly. The school fully complies with all local regulatory

requirements. Maintenance and safety checks are completed daily, weekly and monthly, throughout the school.

Students are taught how to stay safe through a well-planned digital safety and personal development curriculum. Strategies implemented through PSHE lessons, assemblies, form time, and focus weeks support tolerance and mutual respect. These cover topics such as online safety, respectful relationships, body image, mental health and emotional regulation. The school employs mobile device management software to restrict access and block cameras, reinforcing a secure digital environment. Parent engagement in these themes is promoted through dedicated information sessions.

Anti-bullying procedures are clear, consistently applied, and well understood by students and parents. Parents express confidence in the school's systems for managing concerns. A commitment to inclusion, diversity and equity is evident across the school.

The school demonstrates strong inter-agency awareness, with referrals channelled through GEMS' central safeguarding office and liaison with external agencies where appropriate. Pastoral teams use data from *Komodo*, behaviour logs, and the school clinic to identify trends, such as sleep deprivation or anxiety, and implement responsive wellbeing interventions. Counsellors are trained to Level 2 to support understanding and facilitate an openness to student communication.

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

The suitability of the proprietor and staff meets the standard for BSO.

As part of the GEMS network, the school follows the standard of policies and the procedures applied at the group level, making sure that all the safety, care and guidance requirements for all students and staff are met with full respect for the local standards as well. GEMS Corporate has a very important role in monitoring all the processes related to staffing and recruitment, and the school benefitted from the direct support of its cluster.

All the standards for safe recruitment are respected. The HR department and school management make sure that all the national legal requirements regarding the employment of the staff are met, for both local and international employees.

The HR procedures are well organized, and the processes are well monitored. The school ensures that all required checks are carried out on all staff. Prior to the confirmation of staff appointments, appropriate checks, including police checks in the country of origin, are carried out to confirm their identity, medical fitness, right to work in the UAE and their previous employment activity. The majority of the teachers employed by GEMS are British, with all having experience in British schools.

The school maintains detailed and updated records of all staff. The Single Central Record is in place and meets the requirements of the BSO. It is clear, registering the required information on each category of staff: teaching, administrative, international, or local.

A solid CPD programme is in place in order to support the rapid induction of the new teachers. The school is a supportive environment, helping new staff integrate rapidly in the school community – Buddy systems, regular check-ins, and peer support play a vital role in easing the transition and offering emotional support. Extensive focus has been given to the training on Visible Learning and enquiry based learning, as the fundamental framework of the pedagogical philosophy of the school.

All teachers and support staff undertake rigorous performance management reviews, which are recorded on the *BlueSky* platform. These reviews track performance, development and progress against targets, to ensure all staff are continuously improving their practice.

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

The school meets the standard for the premises and accommodation and is considered to be outstanding.

The school building and premises are very well-designed, purpose-built and provide extensive educational opportunities for all students. Classrooms across the school are a good size and are very well resourced. Students in the foundation stage (FS) have access to high-quality provision. The forest provides students in FS and key stage 1 with a stimulating environment, immersing them in nature. Displays in the school are of a very high standard and celebrate students' learning, showcasing their work and celebrating their achievements. The school's vision, values and ethos are also displayed throughout the school.

The bio cube and farm are innovative facilities supporting hands-on science learning and developing students' curiosity. There are excellent facilities to promote physical education, and both indoor and outdoor sports facilities are well designed. Purpose built spaces such as the strength and conditioning suite, cricket nets, swimming pools, football astro turf pitch and dance studio meet the curricular and extra-curricular needs of students. Facilities such as the recording studio and black box drama studio promote creativity amongst students. The auditorium has acoustic panelling and professional lighting to allow for high quality performances. The library is used regularly by classes and has a range of age-appropriate books for students across the school, including levelled reading books.

The premises are in excellent condition and there are high standards of cooling, ventilation and lighting throughout the buildings. Water dispensers are placed throughout the school to ensure adequate access to drinking water. The school operations team maintains the premises to a high standard, ensuring that the safety and welfare of students is a priority. Maintenance logs are recorded daily and any maintenance concerns raised by staff are addressed promptly. Thorough cleaning schedules ensure there are high levels of hygiene standards. The school is responsive to student needs and has recently increased the number of bicycle racks available to students.

The clinic is well-resourced and is available for students to seek short-term medical care for illness and injuries. The school facilities are accessible for all, with ramps, evacuation chairs, adjustable tables and toilets for students of determination. The sensory room is used regularly by students and provides opportunities for regulation. The wellbeing hive is also a dedicated area where students are able to seek support.

As the school prepares for students in KS4 and KS5, there are clear plans in place to continue to develop the school's premises, such as the sixth form building. State of the art facilities have been prepared, including a BTEC engineering and construction suite.

## 10. Standard 6

### The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information provided by the school to parents, carers and others is outstanding.

The school is committed to ensuring that parents, carers, and other stakeholders have access to clear, timely, and comprehensive information about the school's policies, curriculum, and student progress. The school utilises and maintains open and transparent communication strategies that facilitates effective engagement between the school, parents and carers and the wider community.

Parents have access to live student data through *Go4Schools*, which keeps them informed about their child's progress. The school sends out parent newsletters, including primary newsletters with snapshots of upcoming events, and form teacher emails in secondary with weekly synopses. The weekly newsletter also offers updates on key issues such as E-safety, or wellbeing. The principal also shares a vlog. All parents and carers receive regular communications through the GEMS parent portal. The *Ark Pathway* app is used in FS, *Class Dojo* in primary school, and *MS Teams* in secondary supporting the direct communication with the parents.

The school's website serves as a central hub of information, providing details about admissions, academic programmes, and key policies, including safeguarding, behaviour, and health and safety. Additionally, all statutory policies required under BSO guidelines are available online or can be requested in print.

The school has a highly visible and accessible team that builds a community relationship with parents, with the parent relationship executive and the team as the first point of contact. Parents and carers have direct access to school leadership through a dedicated email for the principal. All parents can meet teachers at drop off and pick up when all staff are present to welcome students into classrooms. The parent relationship executive is responsible for issuing welcome packs to new parents, informing them about all available channels of communication. Present in the centre of the large reception area, the parent relationship executive has a key role in the development of a true community spirit. The reception area has become a hub for the community, where parents can spend time to discuss, to meet, but also to use a specific school facility to work for their own projects.

The 'Friends of MTW' parent group enhance school communications. They organise events, encouraging parent engagement in their child's education. The school holds parent workshops (both school-led and parent-led), assemblies linked to themes, curriculum information sessions, and reactive sessions planned in response to parent concerns. There are opportunities for both online (webinars) and in-person meetings, including parent-teacher meetings and student-led conferences. Regular reports are given to parents on students' progress, detailing academic achievement, attitude to learning and specific areas for improvement.

## 11. Standard 7

### The school's procedure for handling complaints

The school's procedure for handling complaints meets the standard for BSO.

The complaints policy clearly outlines the process for making a complaint, including the different stages. The policy is accessible to parents through the parent portal and is also available publicly on the school's website.

Parents are able to contact staff through *Class Dojo*, email and in person. Any concerns can also be shared with reception staff and the parent relations executive, who directs these to the correct member of staff if they are unable to resolve them. There is a clear escalation process and if a complaint is not resolved at the informal stage, the policy details the formal procedure which includes a clear timeframe. Most complaints are resolved at an early stage within the school.

Complaints are logged, monitored and tracked effectively, detailing action taken. All complaints and outcomes are stored confidentially. Senior leadership effectively monitor trends in complaints, discussing any general themes at weekly communication meetings. Any concerns identified are addressed proactively.

Regular parent feedback, through termly surveys, is used to identify what is working well and any areas for improvement. Following the surveys, parent feedback newsletters are created to share positive feedback and any actions taken with the school community.



## 12. Standard 8

### Leadership and management of the school

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding.

Leadership at all levels is strategic, reflective, and strongly aligned with the school's vision to nurture confident, resilient, and academically successful learners. Leaders demonstrate high levels of visibility, particularly in relation to behaviour for learning, safeguarding oversight, and the promotion of British values and inclusive practice.

The school principal is charismatic, his vision and his attention to detail are evident in all aspects of the school, creating high expectations and a dynamic learning culture. The expertise of leadership has facilitated rapid growth and the creation of a school atmosphere that well exceeds its years. The principal and the members of the SLT have a great previous experience in the process of building and developing new schools, majority of them having worked also in Metropole as well as in GEMS schools. This has proven a key strength in the rapid development of the school, and in the consistent implementation of practices and procedures across the school, with respect of the group standard.

The school benefits from the strategic oversight, innovation, and shared resources of the GEMS group, enabling access to high-level training, safeguarding systems, digital platforms, and professional networks that enhance school performance and resilience. As part of the GEMS and Metropole family of schools, MTW raises up to the high expectations of quality, while maintaining its own individuality.

Senior and middle leaders actively promote a culture of collaboration and professional growth, with staff describing the school as supportive, aspirational, and having an open-door ethos. Leaders are data-informed and responsive, using academic and wellbeing data—including *GL assessments*, *Go4Schools*, *Komodo* and *PASS*—to track trends and inform decision-making. Curriculum leadership is strong, with evidence of cross-phase collaboration, consistent use of progression frameworks, and a shared commitment to embedding visible learning and values-based education.

The well-considered recruitment and early identification and internal promotion of staff is well managed leading to a cohesive and supportive school community. The induction of new staff is a clear strength, with early onboarding, digital engagement, and tailored coaching contributing to high levels of retention and staff satisfaction. The quality assurance cycle is well-established and transparent, enabling leaders to monitor teaching and learning effectively and provide timely, personalised professional development.

The SLT is well supported by an energetic team of middle leaders. They contributed to an atmosphere that combines energy and an excitement to learn, with stability, high expectations and well embedded systems. The middle leaders meet regularly, providing a forum for coordinating academic and pastoral development. The members of these leadership groups are all highly visible around the school and willingly provide support for



other staff and students. Middle leaders report that they find senior staff approachable and supportive. They feel that they have an important role to play in the strategic development of the school and that their voice is listened to and respected. As the school will continue its rapid growth, the school will have to further develop middle leadership structures at all levels thus ensuring the consistency of teaching, learning and assessment processes across all divisions of the school.

The school runs smoothly with a clear focus given to the well-being and security of staff and students.