

**The Quality Assurance Visit Report  
Repton Abu Dhabi (Rose Campus)  
March 2019)**

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**Introduction**

The Quality Assurance Visit (QAV) team spent three days on the Rose Campus from Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March through to the close of the school day on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> 2019. The team comprised four senior school leaders with the appropriate specialisms. This was the fifth annual QAV to Repton Abu Dhabi. The QAV alternates annually between the two sites; this year it was the turn of the Rose campus. ADEK inspected the Rose campus in 2018 and rated two of their six criteria as outstanding:

- the quality of the students' personal development and
- the overall quality of the provision for the care, protection, guidance and support of students.

The remaining four categories were graded as very good, which was also the overall school rating.

**Executive summary**

**General**

- The school is a happy, purposeful and productive educational environment.
- The pupils are a credit to the school. They are engaging, purposeful and enthusiastic. The pupils are happy, safe, well-adjusted and are confident learners; they have an enthusiasm and an appetite for learning. This is one of the primary strengths of the school.

- Members of staff have a detailed understanding of the pupil's personal and emotional needs; the pupils express their feelings, ideas, views and personal opinions with confidence.
- All members of staff both teaching and non-teaching are welcoming, friendly and supportive and are seen as being so by the pupils and the parents.
- The school's ambition remains, *to provide for a 21<sup>st</sup> century learner* and ensure *the best for every child*. The vision for the school is to inspire, empower and equip the pupils to learn, collaborate and innovate, ready to successfully engage in our ever more digital world. The mission is:
  - To ensure that Repton learners gain the highest levels of digital literacy and academic achievement at school and beyond.
  - To maintain a strong identity with the values and ethos of Repton UK.
  - To establish a unified and continuous educational plan for all children from 3 through to 18.
- The vision and mission statements are underpinned by the core values of tolerance, respect, integrity, empathy, resilience, honesty and care. There are constant reminders of the values of the school on displays boards etc. Opportunities are taken where appropriate to enforce these values in discussion with the pupils. These are understood by all, shared in the community and embedded in a curriculum that emphasises value-based learning.
- The previous QAV team was impressed with the quality of the parental engagement; this assessment is equally secure in 2019. Parents were effusive in their praise for the school's communication system. Unanimously and unprompted they highlighted their contentment with their child's positive engagement with the school. In addition they highlighted the positive effect the school's ethos was having on their child's behaviour at home, which had a positive ripple effect. The parents felt very much part of the educational experience. The Friends of RAD is an effective and supportive parental group. During the QAV the Chair met with the team, which was constructive and helpful. It is a recommendation that such meetings should be integral to the QAV process. The parents felt welcomed and valued. As with the previous visit they continued to feel engaged in their child's educational journey and they praised the school for making it equally exciting for them.
- Parent support groups offer advice on many issues for example moving and adjusting to a new country, routines, screen time, mental health awareness, EAL and the British Council.

### **Leadership and management**

- The governing board (the Board) is an effective body. It has a structure that allows it to understand the significant school issues, be able to set effective strategy and hold the executive to account. Recently the Head of Repton Dubai has joined the Board with specific responsibility for inclusion and

safeguarding. The leadership of the school felt the Board is supportive and acted effectively as a “critical” friend.

- The previous QAV report rated the leadership of the school as a particular strength. It is the firm opinion of the team that leadership remains one of the school’s key strengths, which is all the more impressive given the current post holders are either new to the school or new in post. The team is seen as approachable and dynamic; they set high standards, promote the aims of the school, prioritise the pupils’ best interests and have an obvious determination to make Repton one of the leading schools in the region. Clear lines of command exist, and it is evident that all staff feel supported by the leadership structure. Considerable thought has been given to the most effective management structure, particularly after the relocation of the Year 2 group to the Fry campus earlier in the year. Transparent lines of communication and structured management meetings facilitate the implementation of coherent decisions. The quality of management is impressive. The staff feel engaged in the process.
- The distributed leadership model commented on in the last report has matured and developed. It is primarily an outcome-based process, which allows leadership opportunities for all staff, even those at the start of their teaching career. International Day was cited as a particularly good example of this. It continues to breed an atmosphere of inclusive staff development.

### **Teaching and learning**

- Teachers are passionate, dedicated, committed and knowledgeable; they provide an effective provision for the pupils in their care.
- The pupils are determined to achieve; they emphasise ‘resilience’ as a characteristic for effective learning. In lessons their attitudes to learning are positive; they concentrate and work hard.
- The Teaching Assistants (TAs) are a considerable strength to the school.
- Child-initiated “in the moment” opportunities are being implemented by teachers.
- The Curriculum reflects the EYFS objectives: it was evident that the teachers understand the characteristics of learning.
- Classroom displays, with photographic evidence, have much improved since the previous visit.
- The school is one of a small group of Apple Distinguished Schools in the UAE. It remains rightly proud of the fact that it was the first school to be awarded this status in the UAE. As one might therefore expect there is effective and appropriate use of IT. As an Apple Distinguished School both the teachers and pupils have many opportunities to enhance and personalise their learning. The school is continuously developing its IT strategy as befits the schools mission and vision.

- The school provides a comprehensive and well-rounded academic education, with the majority of pupils reaching attainment levels ahead of their peers in the UK and ahead of ADEK benchmarks. The pupils make strong progress, are well assessed and consequently reach high levels of attainment. Members of staff know their pupils well; indeed the bond between the teachers and pupils is particularly noteworthy. The parent group specifically commented on this aspect. The teachers are very good indeed.
- The newly implemented tracking and monitoring IT programme has caused some complexities and frustrations for the school, mostly outside their control; this is being addressed.
- Whilst the planning and learning process is robust and detailed, to the benefit of the pupils, the team felt that the school could strengthen both the planning process and the classroom approach to differentiation.
- At the time of the last visit the team concluded that the school should continue to develop a more detailed approach to the SEN children; the team's opinion is that this is now a noted strength. It was impressed by the care and attention given to pupils of determination.
- The rich and varied curriculum clearly enthuses children at all age levels. The opportunities to pursue a variety of interesting approaches to learning was impressive, whether this was in the coding classes, the STEAM garden or the swimming pool. The team was most impressed with the PE department.
- There is a shared vision among the EYFS team; they have a strong understanding of the best practice. They provide an environment for effective child-initiated learning.
- The benchmark systems enable a consistent approach to be taken; it provides for an individualised learning programme.
- The staff in the EYFS know their children well; they plan effectively and use the appropriate techniques and processes to draw out the best in their pupils.
- There is a culture of constant staff review, reflection, adaptation, self-improvement and flexibility.
- The team was impressed with the action research projects; these added breadth and depth to key areas e.g. the progress of Emirati pupils a project which was being led by Heads of English, Arabic and French.
- The introduction of the pupil progress meetings has significantly enhanced the teachers' understanding of the pupil journey.
- The school has worked hard to instil child-led learning in the EY; one in four weeks the class itself chooses the topic.
- The new Head of Inclusion is having a very positive impact. A more coherent approach to the More Able Gifted and Talented (MAG&T) pupils is now incorporated into the Inclusion policy. The Inclusion department has built a good relationship with the counsellor, working together on Social Skills. The team was impressed with forthcoming initiatives e.g. the parent inclusion network

## Pastoral

- The pastoral care arrangements are impressive; they create an inclusive atmosphere that enhances learning and ensures the children reach their individual potential.
- Teacher-pupil relationships are positive and respectful. The teachers' approach to behavioural management is exemplary; the procedures for encouraging excellent pupil behaviour are highly effective.
- Pupils demonstrate high standards of mutual respect in their social interactions and in their academic peer engagement.
- The extra-curricular programme is also a considerable strength of the school. The past year, in particular, has been particularly trying for the school given the construction projects in immediate proximity. The leadership team though has been proactive and creative with the timetable and whilst it is still not ideal much of the inconvenience from the building works has been minimalized. The outdoor physical space remains constraining, although the school is increasingly making good use of a recently landscaped local park. The extra-curricular activities programme is varied and extensive with almost seventy school-led activities offered. The involvement of Gulf Star as an external provider is a positive enhancement to the activities on offer.
- The children are encouraged to be independent. They are able to organise themselves and make decisions about what they need throughout the day.
- The new behaviour policy has had a positive impact across the school and has been well received by the staff. It is a comprehensive document that promotes good conduct by reinforcing good behaviour, rather than dwelling on the negatives. The involvement of the school Counsellor in this process is welcomed. In the classrooms there is a consistent approach to behaviour management. Systems are clear and well organized.
- Community activities are promoted effectively, and the children understand the value of their participation. Their involvement in an art project at the local park has added to their sense of community involvement. Trips to local places such as the Louvre or the theatre also bring the curriculum to life.
- The school play areas make the most of the space available and promote happy and creative play. The routines of looking after the equipment are established and help in play. The supervision is at the appropriate level and duty staff engage positively with the children. Small conflicts are resolved calmly through discussion.
- The policies covering child protection and health and safety have been reviewed and updated. They promote the safety of the child. All teaching staff are first aid trained and can administer basic first aid to pupils. Details are then communicated efficiently to the parents via the Seesaw app. Health and safety is well provided for in all school systems (i.e. badges on bus for educational trips and comprehensive risk assessments for trips).

- There is a palpable sense of the “pupil voice”, which is evidenced around the school and particularly through the pupil council.
- The policies covering child protection and provision for fire and evacuation are very good.
- The school counsellor is easily accessible and active, as is the school nurse whose clinic is friendly, secure, effective and efficient.
- There is a comprehensive Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme in place. A coaching and mentoring approach has been adopted towards ‘professional learning’, with a clear structure of operation in place. There is a detailed programme of formal and informal training.
- It was evident in the classrooms that the UAE culture was celebrated.

## Recommendations from the last QAV

### Leadership and Governance

- **Recommendation:** members of the governing board should visit the school termly, where possible. **Response:** *there has been an increased presence from the governors. In addition to the existing termly governors’ Education Committee meeting, chaired by a governor, there are bi monthly meeting with governors responsible for the operational aspects of the school. The senior leadership team appreciates these. In addition the Headmaster from Repton Dubai has joined the Board taking on the specific responsibility for safeguarding and inclusion. This move has brought more education expertise to the Board.*
- **Recommendation:** As the structure of the school becomes more complex further regular Board training should be considered. **Response:** *in addition to the appointment of the Headmaster of Repton Dubai the Board has started the process of directing resources towards a more structured framework.*
- **Recommendation:** Detailed thought should be given to the leadership structure of the school when the challenges of the larger school arise. **Response:** *this process is now near its conclusion because the new campus is now operational. The Year 2 group has moved from the Rose campus to the Fry campus, which has necessitated a thorough evaluation of the leadership structure. A proposed two stage phased roll out is imminent, which will ensure an appropriate, coherent and robust leadership and management system*
- **Recommendation:** the school should appoint a governor with specific responsibility for the Early Years Foundation Stage. **Response:** *this, as yet has not been implemented.*

## Assessment

- **Recommendation:** The school should introduce an electronic monitoring and tracking system so that a child not making the appropriate progress is identified for individualised intervention. **Response:** *Classroom Monitor was introduced in the aftermath of the last QAV. Staff have been trained in its use in-house and also through the use of webinars. This project though has required significant investment of leadership time. Further analysis can be found within the main body of the text.*
- **Recommendation:** Differentiation between underachieving pupils and SEN children needs a greater degree of sophistication. **Response:** *this has undoubtedly improved although there is more scope for development.*

## SEN / G&T

- **Recommendation:** Although good systems are already in place, further thought should be given to intellectually and academically develop those identified as gifted and talented. **Response:** *MAG&T policy has been updated, widened and added to the inclusion policy. Further systems have been augmented and enhanced throughout the school.*
- **Recommendation** The inclusion team should be expanded to include a specialized TA to support the SENCo. **Response:** *this remains a recommendation from the QAV team.*
- **Recommendation:** The SEN & MAGT policy should be widened to one of Inclusion. **Response:** *this has been actioned. There are clear criteria for the identification of MAG&T in each subject. This is set out in the Inclusion Policy, which was revised in December 2018*
- **Recommendation:** Consideration should be given to the introduction of Pupil Progress Meetings, thus enabling each teacher to discuss with the SENCo and subject leaders the progress of *all* children and any subsequent interventions. **Response:** *these meetings have been introduced to good effect. Pupil Progress Meetings are used throughout the school and these allow opportunity for focused discussion between the teaching staff and the Head of Inclusion.*
- **Recommendation:** The school should develop standardised baseline criteria to assess the MAG&T in areas of the curriculum that use standardized NFER tests. **Response:** *this recommendation has been implemented to good effect.*

## Early Years Foundation Stage

- **Recommendation** In the EYFS the curriculum content should focus on the three prime areas: Communication and Language Development, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. **Response:** *This was evident in the classes observed.*

- **Recommendation** Specialist teachers should use the EYFS framework for their planning. **Response:** *There was evidence that this is now a stronger area, although at the margin some subjects should be more focussed.*
- **Recommendation:** There should be a provision for the EYFS staff to have a greater degree of flexibility to deliver lessons in a more individualised way so that children can explore and extend their own learning within a more fluid time frame. **Response:** *this was more in evidence during this QAV.*
- **Recommendation:** Consideration should be given to shorter paced sessions rather than longer whole class carpet sessions thus enabling more accelerated progress especially for the more able. **Response:** *again this was in evidence.*
- **Recommendation:** Cut away groups from the carpet sessions should be introduced thus enabling a more targeted approach to meeting the wide range of needs, particularly the more able. **Response:** *This was evident in some classes. Circle time and 'My Identity' time is allocated and used as the teachers think best.*
- **Recommendation:** As Physical Development is a prime area within the Early Years curriculum, consideration should be given to the introduction of daily opportunities for Physical Development, especially the use of outdoor large equipment to develop gross motor skills. **Response:** *there has been limited improvements but given the physical constraints of the building this is not easy. The new park, which has opened opposite the school, will provide further opportunities here.*
- **Recommendation** Introduction of child-led planning is important so that lessons are based on the children's interests. **Response:** *This needs continuing development as a matter of priority.*
- **Recommendation** The school should establish an evidence base for the children's skill development. Classroom displays, should be used with personalized annotations next to photographs highlighting the skill achieved rather than the outcome. A two-term transition schedule from Early Years into Y1 should be introduced to ensure best practice play based learning is evidenced. **Response:** *Evidence of improvement was noted here, although in the opinion of the team the school should reassess its policy towards displays.*

### **Pastoral Care**

- **Recommendation:** A unified Code of Conduct should be introduced to include the school rules, iPad rules, the ADEK Student Competence Framework, the discipline policy, the attendance policy and the core values. **Response:** *this recommendation has been implemented.*

### **Recommendations from 2019 QAV team**

- It is the opinion of the team that the school uniform rules should be more rigorously enforced.

- Differentiation through effective planning needs to be reviewed. The school is encouraged to employ a variety of strategies to promote differentiation within independent activities.
- We recommend that the school should review its policy with regard to the pupils' use of their exercise books.
- Parents would like an opportunity to make suggestions with regard to parent workshops.
- The team strongly recommends the school enforce a healthy eating policy.
- The Inclusion department would benefit from the addition of Learning Support Assistants; this was a recommendation from the previous QAV; this will enhance the provision for those pupils who are on the SEN register and help to embed strategies throughout teaching and learning.
- The drop off and pick up routines need to be reviewed. Presently cars are parking along the central reservation of the dual carriageway outside the school in order to drop children at the school.
- Having a Head of Year present during Pupil Performance Meetings (PPMs) will help support teachers and children.
- The school should continue to build on the electronic data monitoring and tracking system introduced in the previous year. The resultant data will add a degree of sophistication with regard to planning, PPMs, the monitoring of attainment and progress, the help of SEN and better inform class observations.
- Planning needs refining at all stages of the school. A simple weekly plan is needed for teachers to personalise and mould to their own children's needs. Teachers working with EYFS children should be involved in planning and should work with both Heads of Department and Head of Early Years to ensure all EYFS objectives are met with particular emphasis on the link between relevant topics and key language.
- The school should improve the balance between careful planning and child led "In the moment planning" needs development. EYFS staff should have a greater degree of flexibility to deliver lessons in a more individualised way so that children can explore and extend their own learning within a more fluid time frame.
- The team recommends that there should be a review of the timetable for Read Write Inc classroom activities, because longer periods of time are needed to teach the ditties e.g. 1 hour lessons 2/3 times a week. The team recommends balancing groups of children in RWInc and provide more sets with fewer children.
- A review of the extra curricular expectations of the children in the Early Years might be beneficial.
- The department requires an additional experienced EYFS teacher to ensure curriculum continuity between the two EY groups.

- As matter of good practice the SLT should compare data with UK schools and annually prepare a report to share with staff and with the Repton schools in Dubai.
- The school should give further thought to establishing a stronger link between Early Years leaders and the relevant Heads of Year across the other Repton schools.
- The learning environment should be developed further to enable children of all abilities to be challenged; for example independent choice tables would give the children the opportunity to independently draw and label their own pictures and write about their picture rather than use colouring sheets.
- It would also be a good idea if the senior leaders strengthened the links between all EYFS departments by sharing not only daily plans but also the medium and long term plans which will embed an integrated approach to the EYFS. The SLT should moderate planning thus ensuring it is given priority and also establishing a higher level of homogeneity.
- There is scope to develop teachers and children's understanding of the essential elements of critical thinking and innovation.
- Continuing professional development opportunities would be welcomed by the teachers in the following areas; improving child centred planning for both the environment and curriculum; scribing the child that used their voice to share the idea; in the moment planning; learning walks. The best classrooms were those that were inspired by the children's imagination. Teachers could present a problem to develop enquiry and critical thinking skills.
- An outside play area to enable children to build their core strength, which is vital for them to write effectively, would be a most welcomed addition. But the team recognises that the school is constrained by space. Internally the addition of balancing beams, climbing apparatus, monkey bars, climbing walls would add challenge to the children. In addition, all classrooms would benefit from finger gym tables, plant sprays, easels, and chalk boards to encourage children's movement, thus supporting all children especially encouraging those of concern to the teacher.
- Academic leaders might consider more frequent learning walks focussed on specific themes e.g. the learning environment.
- Reviewing Leadership within the EYFS department. A Head of Teaching and Learning would ensure continuity between the three year groups, and also with the Year 2 groups at the Fry Campus. They would bring knowledge of the EYFS assessment data to support and guide teachers. They would work collaboratively with the heads of Year and Heads of Department.

### **The characteristics of the school**

Repton School, Abu Dhabi, was founded in September 2013 by a partnership between Evolve Knowledge Investments (EKI), the owners, and Repton

International Schools Ltd (RISL) a wholly owned subsidiary of Repton School, UK. Both organisations have representatives on the board of governors. In addition RISL provides the Chair of the governors' Education Committee and it provides a team to carry out an annual Quality Assurance Visit (QAV); the purpose of which is to assure the quality of the school and to make recommendations for improvement. A written QAV report is provided for the Board at Repton in the UK, the Headmaster and governors of Repton School Abu Dhabi and EKI.

During the course of the visit the team observed lessons, conducted meetings with teachers, administrators, school leaders, parents and pupils. Break times, assembly, the beginnings and ends of the day were also observed. Policies, relevant paperwork, previous ADEK inspection reports were reviewed.

Repton School, Abu Dhabi, is a British curriculum international school, situated in purpose-built accommodation on Al Reem Island, an area undergoing rapid development close to the centre of Abu Dhabi. The building extends to three floors and is designed to accommodate pupils from Foundation Stage to Y1.

The school benefits from an indoor swimming pool, library and two multi-purpose halls that can be used for sports, events, concerts and assemblies. Specialist rooms are provided for music, Arabic and Islamic Studies, French, Art and science. Shaded play space is provided around the school on the ground floor and on rooftop play areas accessible from the first floor. The second floor includes a Dance Studio and STEAM Garden (Science Technology Engineering, Art and Maths). Classrooms are spacious and well equipped. Provision for storage is generous and staff are well supported by a large and pleasant staffroom and office space.

### **What Repton says about itself**

Repton is a school where there are many blends:

- A blend of the pursuit of excellence with a broadening of the mind
- A blend in the fulfilment of succeeding as an individual with the pleasure of working as part of a team
- A blend between the investment in self-discovery with an awareness of others  
This is the 'wholeness' that personifies a Repton education

What does a Repton education stand for? A truly holistic approach to education. With high aspirations, we develop the love of learning in every child, and help them to succeed by becoming adaptable and flexible thinkers. Students learn in an atmosphere that fosters life-long learning, collaboration and trust. We teach 21st century skills, inspiring innovation and equipping our children for an exciting future.

### **The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management**

The governing body and Evolve Knowledge Investments (EKI), the proprietor, provide effective oversight of the school in line with their aims; they effectively discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources. The governors are actively engaged in the school. The governing body meets three times per year and delegates authority appropriately through its committee system, which comprises the Education Committee, the Facilities and Estates Committee and the Finance Committee; an appropriately qualified individual chairs each committee. This structure allows for the detailed examination of the school's executive and their performance.

A former UK independent school headmaster chairs the Education Committee; the committee meets three times per year and considers relevant reports from members of the leadership teams. These reports consider all aspects of the educational provision; they are informative and allow for in depth scrutiny and review. The executive team meets regularly with individual governors including the chair of the Board. The senior leaders report that individually and collectively the Board is supportive and well informed. A recommendation of the team is that an additional parent governor should be invited to join the Board. It remains a recommendation of the team that a member of the board should be responsible for the Early Years. The Board has been strengthened by the addition of the Headmaster from Repton Dubai, who has taken responsibility for safeguarding and inclusion. This has added a breadth of experience and local understanding. A further recommendation of the committee is that a member of the Board should annually meet with the parents through the conduit of the Friends of Repton Abu Dhabi.

The executive team is a particular strength of the school; the previous report highlighted this as strength. At all levels of responsibility, collectively the leadership team is effective in discharging its delegated responsibilities, particularly those for policy implementation and the safeguarding of pupils. The school leadership team comprises the Headmaster, the Deputy Head and the appropriate Section Heads. As a team it meets weekly to discuss the operational and strategic issues which affect the workings of the school. The meetings work from an agenda and are minuted, thus ensuring effective follow-up. This is a feature of all levels of management in the school.

The senior team is new to post and it is a mark of the strength of the leadership structure and the continuity provided by the Board, that this team has been able to build on previous successes. The current team is seen as approachable and engaged in the life of the school. Parents were keen to comment on the openness of the leadership team; they appreciated the extensive communication, which gives them a good understanding of the main issues the school faces, and more importantly their child's educational journey.

There is a clear and coherent reporting structure. Individual teachers are invited to

take part in the distributive leadership structure. This gives all staff the ability to develop leadership skills. It is well coordinated and focussed on the key objectives highlighted in the school development plan. In addition it is flexible enough to allow staff to organise specific projects. There is a clear leadership structure throughout the school. Staff feel appreciated and valued. They understand the school's priorities and are keen to engage with decision-making processes. It is evident that the leadership team's priorities are effectively integrated into the school, for example the behaviour policy is uniformly implemented to good effect. The approach to teaching the curriculum is homogenous and consistent. The leadership team also demonstrates good strategic planning particularly with regard to the growth of the Fry campus and the effect it will have on the pupils in the Rose campus. The team is aware of the need to communicate effectively as the overall school increases in size.

There is a good professional learning process that provides a mechanism for the leadership to hold staff to account, praise their performance and work with the staff to enhance their professional development. The team has suggested enhancements to this process, which will allow for a more sophisticated approach to continuing professional development. The team would recommend an adaptation of the process, first to aggregate the strengths and weaknesses of the staff, which emerges from the collective annual reviews. We would also recommend a more coherent approach to ensuring that members of staff know how to become outstanding teachers. In the opinion of a team the process could be strengthened to ensure continuity of recommendation from year to year. The performance management system is due to move on-line in the near future, which will ensure greater continuity.

The QAV team met with a representative parent group, the group had children in each year group and also some also had children at the Fry campus. Unanimously they believed they were fully engaged in their children's educational journey. It was evident that the communication with the school was a particular strength. They praised Seesaw and other related communication mechanisms. They were also keen to highlight the effectiveness of the individual discussions with the classroom teachers and the leadership team. They were also keen to highlight that their children were very happy and engaged at the school. Some expressed a concern about the transition to the Fry campus but these concerns were allayed within the group by reassurance from other parents. Parental engagement is a particular strength of the school. The group highlighted how they appreciated the parental workshops organised by the school, which explained educational developments.

### **The quality of academic and other achievements**

Repton Abu Dhabi (Rose Campus) provides an inclusive and comprehensive education, which is in line with the aims of the school. Education is based on the Repton values and skills, which are evident around the school and are integral to

discussions with pupils and parents. The pupils have a good understanding of the skills they are using and generally understand their importance. Skills for the week are introduced in assemblies and are displayed prominently in classrooms to further raise awareness. The ADEK Student Competence Framework is referred to in planning and throughout lessons. Parents are also informed of the focus each week so that it can be promoted at home. This is something that parents highlighted as a strength of the school. The children were able to tell us about the SCF Skills, although there was some confusion as to the focus of this week.

The pupils demonstrate high levels of all-round achievement and suitable levels of knowledge, understanding and skill, which allows them to learn effectively. The education of the pupils is enriched by many curricular and extra-curricular activities on offer. For example, during the QAV FS2 went to see 'Dear Zoo' at a local theatre, Year 1 visited the Louvre Abu Dhabi and planning was well underway for a forthcoming 'International Day'.

Pupils across the school achieve very well. Attainment of most students is in line with UK Independent school standards. Where pupils have been identified with SEN or are MAG&T, systems and procedures are in place to allow them to reach their potential through the effective Inclusion policy. Attainment in core curriculum subjects was strong, which is particularly impressive given a significant number of pupils enter the school with English as an Additional Language (EAL) requirement; these pupils make very good progress as a result of effective teaching and an innovative and rich curriculum.

The progress of pupils in the school is very good as a result of the developing systems and effective teaching. The team scrutinised work, analysed data and observed many lessons and it concluded that the large majority of pupils make at least expected progress in subjects across the curriculum over time, with particularly strong progress evident in English, Maths and Computing. The school monitors the progress of individual pupils and the regular pupil progress meetings augment this process, although the team has highlighted that the method used for the tracking of pupil progress needs a greater degree of sophistication; nevertheless it provides an effective framework from which information can inform planning. The tracking of students requires further development in order to ensure more detailed and effective analysis of progress can be made; thus aiding teachers to become more independent in evaluating the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. Once the system for tracking attainment and progress has become more refined, the staff in general and leaders specifically, will be better placed to identify the strengths of the curriculum and consequently the areas that require improvement. The resulting curriculum adjustments can then become an integral part of lesson planning. This will enhance the culture of continuous improvement in planning which will impact positively on pupil progress.

Pupil attitudes to learning are very positive indeed across the school. This is a particular strength of the school. They are enthusiastic and active learners, who work hard, support each other and strive to meet the expectations of their teachers. Skills for learning are developed coherently throughout, and pupils are active participators in this process. Their energy and appetite for learning is a real strength.

### **The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision**

The curriculum at Repton Abu Dhabi (Rose Campus) is rich, varied and enhanced by specialist resources such as the Science room and the STEAM garden. For English medium subjects the school follows the English National Curriculum and for Arabic-medium subjects it follows the UAE Ministry of Education's Curriculum. The school's curriculum adaptations offer enrichment and innovation. A comprehensive extra-curricular programme provides extensive added opportunities, many provided by the agency Gulf Star. The programme is suitable for all ages and abilities and supports the aims of the school.

In addition to the core curriculum of English, Mathematics and Science, the school offers French, Humanities, Coding/Computing, Music, Art, Arabic, Islamic studies, PSHE, 'My Identity' and PE to all pupils by the time they reach Year 1. Computing skills are taught throughout the school using iPads. Well-resourced coding activities add to the excitement and relevance of these learning activities.

### **The contribution of teaching**

Teaching across the school is highly effective in promoting positive progress and high levels of achievement. The team observed some excellent lessons. The teaching of PE and Arabic/Islamic was particularly noteworthy and quality of teaching in English, French, Maths, Science, Computing was also strong. The teaching staff were dedicated, enthusiastic, knowledgeable and skilled. Their lessons were well planned and, in the vast majority of cases, based on an accurate understanding of the pupils' needs. The children clearly enjoy their lessons and are actively engaged in their learning.

The teaching staff are supported by a highly committed and enthusiastic team of Teaching Assistants (TAs) whose efforts ensure that lessons run smoothly. There is a clear sense of partnership between the teachers and their TAs; the latter are also involved with parent communications and CPD, this includes training, and regular communication with the Head of Inclusion.

Lesson planning is thorough and plans often include differentiated objectives. It is routine for teachers to share the objectives with pupils at the start of the lesson and to engage pupils in assessing their progress against these objectives during the course of the lesson, and also in the plenary session at the end of the lesson. The Head of Inclusion and the school's Counsellor provide specialist interventions. As well as focussing on SEN pupils, small-group sessions for all are run for the development of

social skills. Initial feedback from class teachers is very positive and it is hoped that these will be able to continue.

Teachers demonstrated excellent subject knowledge and create vibrant learning spaces that are stimulating and interactive. The school is well resourced and teachers are skilled in using the resources to promote pupils' engagement and independent learning. Use of IT is entirely appropriate and it is being embraced and developed throughout the school to accelerate and personalise aspects of learning. The opportunity for parents, pupils and staff to make use of technology to share live updates on learning during the day is well established.

Praise and recognition of both effort and progress is a regular feature and the result is an animated, caring learning environment where pupils clearly feel confident to take risks with their learning. All teachers have received training in, and make use of, behaviour management skills and these are effective with this age group, particularly as they are used consistently in all subject areas.

Marking and feedback is completed in line with the school's detailed policy and, in the main, marking is regular, detailed and informative, providing feedback to pupils to identify ways in which they can progress. In some instances, particularly in the younger year groups, the written feedback provided by teachers is not always age appropriate; this should be addressed in order for marking to be accessible to pupils. CPD is central to the cycle of improvement. A comprehensive schedule of regular and varied CPD is in place incorporating both formal and informal training.

### **Pupil's Personal Development**

The pupils are well behaved and demonstrate the ability to act independently, for example they respond well to the expectation that they should take responsibility for their own bags and getting prepared for the remaining lessons of the day. This routine was well embedded and helped the transition from playtime to lessons. The children were well prepared for their bus journeys home and their after school activities. There is, however, a significant safety concern; in the mornings some children are crossing the busy road with their parents. Many of whom have parked dangerously adjacent to the central reservation.

A new Behaviour Policy has been introduced this academic year and it is being actively promoted throughout. The SLT from both campuses have been involved; integral to the policy are the ADEK recommendations, which have been closely followed. Rewards and sanctions, clearly set out in the policy, are consistently and fairly applied; staff have been given training on positive reinforcement in the classroom. Most classes have assigned spaces on the carpet and at the tables and the counting strategy to enable children to move around the classroom calmly is modelled in every class.

The School Councillor is approachable and child focused. She was involved in drafting the new Behaviour Policy and has been involved in staff training, focussing on how to encourage positive play, as a result here has been a noticeable reduction in the number of behaviour notes recorded on Engage.

The children understood the teachers' criteria for Star of the Week and they were able to articulate its importance. They responded enthusiastically to taking the class mascot and diary home for the week. They were clear about the topic of the term, which was Art for the term in question; this activity was introduced as a recommendation from the pupil council.

In the opinion of the team the range of foods in the lunchboxes was generally poor. This must be addressed as a matter of some urgency. A hot lunch delivery service has been introduced recently; the purpose being to encourage the children to try new foods and to provide a nutritious and healthy meal. The uptake though has been disappointingly low.

There is a clear process in place for basic first aid. Teachers are all trained and they apply cold packs or plasters as required. Paperwork is in order and parents are kept informed. The school nurse takes up more serious cases and sickness.

Children are able to organise themselves; they respected each other in simple game play and were able to take turns. Home learning has replaced homework. The change in name aims to encourage pupils to approach reassess their work out of school, thus making it more productive and engaging. The work is optional and includes learning projects. Reading and spelling remains a requirement. The use of the Seesaw app has been a positive tool in promoting communication between school and home, as well as a useful tool for notices.

The playground routines are well established. Everything has its place and the children are very good at tidying up at the end of the break time. There is a wide range of play equipment organized in different play zones; for example, construction, and problem solving. Role playing is encouraged and the staff on duty actively encourage sharing and play together. The duty members of staff wear high visibility jackets to make them instantly identifiable. They were able to resolve conflict calmly and through discussion. There is a strong community feel around the school. Wider community activities are promoted such as Al Bateen Beach Junior Aquathlon or the Swim Festival at Emirates Palace.

The parents are happy with the baby steps approach to the transition process and feel that they are kept well informed. Parents are kept well informed of the transition process from Rose to Fry; there is in place opportunities for the Rose pupils to experience the pool and PE facilities at the other campus. The day is longer on the Fry campus and this is a consideration with the planning at the start of Year 2.

Although there were no obvious issues with the transition process from FS2 to Year 1, the teaching staff are reviewing the steps.

There is a clear line of escalation for pastoral matters; class teacher, Head of Year, Head of Key Stage, Deputy Head, Head Teacher. The children were able to talk about who they would talk to if they had a worry or concern. Each room has a pupil worry box for the children should they feel the need to quietly articulate their concerns; although the children were unsure as to what happens to the worries once they went into the box, but they were happy to continue using it. The parents are impressed by the promotion of good manners and a balanced approach to the softer curriculum.

There are a number of displays around the school that highlight positive role models, for example prominent women or sports people in the UAE. The displays are colourful and attract attention, however consideration should be given to the display policy.

The Inclusion department has a clear structure and a clear plan. The school's policies reflect the level of importance that the school is placing on providing an inclusive education for the children and one that accommodates the range of behaviour issues. The referral system ensures that the Councillor is closely involved in supporting referred children and the two departments work closely together. The introduction of the PPM has allowed all children to be discussed, thus ensuring that no child is overlooked.

Although there are nine shadow teachers working with children in the school, there are no learning support assistants working in the school. The addition of LSAs would greatly enhance the level of provision that can be provided. There is access to a Speech and Language Therapist and an Occupational Therapist, however this is limited. As the inclusion provision develops, the need for more availability will increase. Children benefit from sensory breaks and they can easily access the Councillor's room. The calm corner is suitably resourced and there is a good range of sensory toys.

### **Early Years' Foundation Stage**

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) there are many areas to be celebrated and the team saw strong evidence that all teachers are committed to the culture of continuous improvement.

The classroom setting has made good progress since the previous inspection. The team was impressed that all teachers and assistants worked with a happy spirited attitude and worked enthusiastically together. The resources in the classroom were of a good standard. IT was used effectively throughout the Early Years department, although the team noted a degree of inconsistency, which could be improved in some classes. The team was particularly impressed by the creation of the STEAM garden

which they observed being used to good effect. There is a sensible, responsible and positive reward system in line with the behaviour policy: sticker charts, rockets were successfully applied. It was also clear that the enrichment and extracurricular activities were integral to the success of the school and were popular with pupils.

There is a well-planned CPD programme for all staff organised twice a week; although some staff found sometimes the twice weekly sessions detracted from time that they had previously used for lesson planning. The SEN policy is led effectively by the Head of Inclusion. The school has introduced passports for individual children that are shared with class teachers, Heads of Departments and Heads of Year.

The school has a well-structured performance management system which emphasises areas for personal development as well as a buddy system to support teachers. The EYFS framework is used to enable teachers to plan lessons effectively. Senior staff observe teachers regularly across the departments; this provides opportunities to advance the teacher skills and to share best practice, thus ensuring a greater degree of consistency. However on occasion the documentation was not as transparent as the team would have wished and planning in general should be the subject of a leadership review. But it was evident that liaison between the key leaders is effective and efficient.

The achievements of the pupils in Early Years were impressive. Pupils make suitable progress as indicated by lesson observation, work produced, curriculum, quality of teaching, although EYFS differentiation did not appear to be central to the planning process. In addition stretching the most able pupils is not always evident in EYFS, although the team noted it was more evident through questioning during carpet sessions. Child led “in the moment learning” is developing, teachers are working hard at adapting their classrooms to an “in the moment approach”: the teachers would undoubtedly welcome more training and sharing of best practice in this specific area. Whilst class assemblies are frequent and well structured the team felt that on occasion the length of preparation time caused some difficulties for the FS1 and FS2 pupils.

With regards to numeracy it might be possible for the TA at times to play practical activities, for example encouraging the pupils to build with blocks then encouraging them to count the blocks, this would be a fun way to explore numeracy, or for example to make their own bingo shape/number game to play with their friends. This might be refined at the beginning of the lesson with teachers explaining what is meant by free choice. This will allow the teachers to observe more precisely, and therefore, gain a stronger understanding of their abilities.

Senior leaders should consider strengthening the links between all EYFS departments by sharing daily, medium and long term plans; this will embed an integrated

approach to the EYFS. The team recommends that the necessary specialists were involved with physical and language development, which would further establish a cross curricular approach always to the benefit of the children.

The children obviously enjoyed their work and it was evident that pupils' attitudes to their work was purposeful and positive; the team enjoyed their commitment to the learning process. The teachers were enthusiastic, passionate and excited about the children's learning journey. The majority of teachers developed the learning opportunities of the children's imagination and the children were actively involved. The children's manners were very good. The children were confident and articulate and able to share their thoughts, knowledge and experiences during all learning opportunities.

In FS1 good progress was made; although on occasion the EYFS learning objective was unclear to the observers. It was not always apparent how assessment information was being used to moderate progress or attainment in the lesson. Again on occasion the children were completing the task but sometimes the teacher missed an opportunity to discuss with the child what they had learned. It was more evident in the FS2 classes that the children were making good progress in relation to their initial starting point; the children still worked from a template, but it was differentiated, although plans could have been annotated in more detail.

Whilst there were many opportunities for the children to develop their critical thinking skills through conversations with teachers, the team felt that there was often scope to develop these opportunities. The team was particularly struck by the commitment, enthusiasm and passion of the PE department. The children were challenged individually.

The children are active learners; they explore and investigate. They demonstrate strong powers of concentration and can work independently, think critically and be creative. Teachers are working on "in the moment" child initiated learning; although some teachers were more aware of the expectations of the senior leaders than others. At present each class teacher individually is trying to modify their teaching according to the needs and interests of the children in the class whereas a degree of uniformity across the year group would be beneficial, followed by the sharing of best practice. Once this new approach is embedded the children will have an enhanced sense of ownership of their learning. In the majority of classes progress is well under way; the children are given opportunities to explore their own interests within the class and in most classrooms the children were engaged in structured or independent activities.

The Curriculum is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs and supports the aims of the school. It reflects the EYFS and considers the development stages of the child. There is evidence that supports the teachers understand the characteristics of learning. The resources and activities planned were age appropriate. Read Write Inc was being

implemented within the Early Years department; the class sizes were relatively large and the 20 minute slots were too short for the children or the teachers to complete any substantial work. The team recommends that a review is necessary in this area.

There is a good transition between FS1, FS2 and Year 1. Continue to develop and expand on this to ensure it's seamless. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the educational programmes help all children to reach expected levels of development, considering the needs of the children attending, and how effectively those needs are met. It was evident that most children were working at expected levels, with some working above and a few below. Planning is there and does attempt to cater for all the children's needs. SEN children are being supported, the support in place is effective, and parents are working collaboratively to ensure effective provision for all. Teaching is generally well planned and based on an accurate understanding of pupils' needs, and marking and assessment comments are constructive; however whilst correction codes are used, it could be simplified.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff engage and motivate the children and have high expectations supported by the assessment and planning processes; they are knowledgeable about how to promote learning and development and use good quality resources. It was evident that the teachers were committed to providing effective provision for all pupils in their care. Resources were of a good standard and varied across the curriculum. Teachers paid wonderful care to the provision, supporting with commercial and personally created resources. The environments represented templates of work rather than the children's own individual work. Some displays evidenced photographs of the learning journey of the children involved in the task. Planned activities were challenging.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make a positive contribution and develop their skills for the future, (for example, they co-operate and share, respect and tolerate each other's differences and make appropriate choices and decisions); children are well prepared for transition within the setting or into school. There is an Early Years Award that highlights good examples of exemplary behaviour and there is a planned session each week to meet the needs to the class; these planned opportunities, for example, allow the children to celebrate different cultures. Specific learning opportunities arise in class, based on themes such as Dubai, Diwali, respecting their own and other cultures.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's welfare is promoted effectively and the safeguarding of children is carefully and rigorously embedded in all daily arrangements. The school emphasises attendance and punctuality.

Within the Early Years setting pastoral care is effectively supported by the Heads of Year. It is their responsibility to oversee policies regarding safeguarding and attendance and attendance. Teachers always ensure that there is a correct ratio of

adult to children in class and in the playground. Children are supervised at all times particularly when they are transitioning from subject to subject or to the nurse. Staff were aware of the procedures in the event of an emergency.

Overall the Early Years Department has a committed team of teachers who actively promote the school's inclusive ethos. Teachers strive to create an exciting stimulating environment for the children, who are always their priority. All teachers have a secure understanding of learning through play and all were professional. They demonstrated a motivation to further their own professional development.

The children were enthusiastically and actively involved in school life both inside and outside the classroom; they were expressive and demonstrated good manners. There is a palpable atmosphere of respect and care between the pupils and the staff. The environment is a relaxed, happy and calm place in which the pupils can learn to the best of their abilities. The school has many aspects that should be celebrated as they continue developing and improving their educational provision for all pupils.

### **The QAV team**

**Ian Davenport** is a governor of Repton and Foremarke UK. He was Head Master of Blundell's School; prior to this he was Senior Tutor and Head of Department at Radley College and an Economics tutor at Oxford University. He was also an ISI inspector. He is a University Fellow and an adviser to the Department for Education, ISC and HMC schools. After graduating he worked for an American investment bank. Currently he is a governor of two other independent boarding schools, as well as being a Board member of all of the RISL international schools.

**Paula Bushby** is currently Assistant Head (Academic) at Foremarke Hall, Repton Preparatory School where she has been since September 2009. After gaining a BSc (Hons) in Biology and a PGCE in Integrated Science from Goldsmiths' College, University of London, Paula taught Science and Biology at senior level for 9 years, both in the UK, and in International Schools. She gained her MEd in Educational Leadership from University of Buckingham in 2016. In addition to overseeing the academic life of Foremarke, she also teaches Science and PSHE.

**Zoe Woolley** started her teaching career as a primary school teacher in East London. She has a B.Ed. (Hons) in Mathematics and Education and an MSc in Educational Management and Curriculum. She taught Maths at The British School in Riyadh. On her return to the UK, she moved into management roles in both state and independent schools, including five years as a Head of a Junior School. At Repton Dubai she led mathematics in the Junior School and later became Head of the Infant Department. Zoe is currently the Headmistress of Foremarke Dubai.

**Louise Blakeley** is currently Head of Teaching and Learning in the EY department at Repton Dubai, as well as being a Reception teacher. She was a founding member of

staff at Repton Dubai. Louise has a B.A. (Hons) in Early Childhood Studies from University of East London and a PGCE from Buckingham University.