



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023
Tuesday 28th November 2023 at 7:30pm
Secondary Auditorium

The Honorary Secretary, Ms Maheen Pfeffer, welcomed all in attendance at the British School Al Khubairat's Annual General Meeting for 2023 and introduced her fellow Governors, Headmaster and Director of Finance and Operations who were also present at the top table.

The Hon. Secretary continued that, due to there being 105 registrations for the AGM, under the School's Constitution, the meeting was not quorate as it did not have the required 20% of parental attendance. The meeting therefore dissolved for a short period of time before being reconvened by order of the Board. During the break, the Head Boy and Head Girl of Secondary, Arham Rakhecha and Madeleine Robinson, gave short talks on what it meant to be a BSAK student.

The Hon. Secretary thanked the Head Boy and Head Girl for their enlightening speeches. The Hon. Secretary also confirmed that, following expiry of the requisite time period, the meeting was declared quorate under Paragraph 6 III (ii) of the Constitution and the Agenda items could therefore commence.

1. Adopt the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 2022

The Hon. Secretary asked for the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday the 7th of December 2022 to be adopted. The Minutes had been posted on the School's website and parent portal for review from Monday the 6th of November 2023.

No objections were noted from all present and the Hon. Secretary declared them approved.

Proposed: Zaheer Nasser
Seconded: Elaine Rawlings

Following the adoption of the Minutes, the Hon. Secretary introduced Mr Sean Magee, the Board Chair.

2. Introduction from the Chair – Mr Sean Magee

Good evening BSAK Community,

On behalf of the Board of Governors I would like to formally welcome you to the 2023 Annual General Meeting of The British School Al Khubairat.

As we approach 2024, we have plenty to be positive about. Our busy school is full of energy, with a fantastic range of opportunities on offer – both educational and extra-curricular. I hope that your children are enjoying their time at BSAK and progressing well in their education here.

The Headmaster will outline recent achievements at the School in his report to follow. Please also refer to the Governor's Annual Report for the 2022-23 Academic Year, which will be distributed to you all shortly after the AGM.

The Board works proactively with the School to ensure resources are in place to allow the School to continually improve. We are delighted that the Science & Innovation Centre is now fully operational, enriching the educational offering at the school. The development also created an opportunity to make additional improvements within the existing Secondary buildings to extend and improve a number of areas including the Sixth Form with new study and support facilities, a number of refurbished classrooms and office areas, the addition of a female prayer room, revamp of the Secondary Sports Hall and a state of the art Fitness Suite, making this a great time to be a part of the BSAK Community.

I wish to make the following acknowledgements;

To our Staff and Leadership Team – first and foremost, we are very fortunate to be blessed by a fantastic team of talented teaching, support and operational staff under the exceptional leadership and vision of our Headmaster Mark Leppard and his Senior Leadership Team.

The School has recently attained 'Outstanding' assessments in both the recent ADEK Irtiqaa and BSO Inspections. This external validation confirms what students and parents already know, that there is something truly special and unique about our school. More recently the school has won a gaggle of Schools Compared Awards, including Overall Best School in the UAE and Best Headmaster. On behalf of the Board and the BSAK community, I wish to publicly congratulate and thank each and every member of the BSAK Staff for their successes and unwavering dedication to the Students.

To our Parents – We thank you for your continued support of BSAK. BSAK is an excellent school, committed to supporting your child in their educational journey, their development and wellbeing. We welcome your communication with the School, both positive and negative. This encourages our Staff in their successes and where there is room for improvement, provides much needed visibility to the School, who can assess, adapt and improve where possible.

ADEK – We thank ADEK for its continued support and guidance and look forward to continuing partnerships and knowledge exchange for the benefit of the whole Education Sector in Abu Dhabi.

Sponsors – We thank the ruling family of Abu Dhabi for their continued support and sponsorship of our School. BSAK was originally established in 1968 on land which the late President His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan generously donated and the School was registered by way of His Highness' Emiri Decree in 1971 which amongst other things donates land to the School in perpetuity.

We thank His Majesty's Ambassador and the British Embassy with which BSAK has a long association. The Ambassador is the School's Patron and BSAK is an officially recognised Embassy school which greatly supports our operations.

To my peers on the Board of Governors I thank them for their time volunteered to support the School. I feel truly privileged to have acted as Chair for the past four years. The Board will select a new Chair at our upcoming board meeting and I look forward to supporting them as a continuing Board member.

This evening we have 1 position to fill on the board – of which more later.

With that, I thank you for joining us this evening and again thank you for supporting BSAK.

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The Hon. Treasurer thanked the Chair for his speech.

3. Report from the Hon. Treasurer

The Hon. Secretary advised the meeting attendees that the Honorary Treasurer's Report and Audited Financial Statements had been posted on the School website and Parent Portal for review since Thursday the 16th of November 2023. The Hon. Secretary advised that The Hon. Treasurer, Headmaster and Director of Finance and Operations were available to answer any questions on the Report and the Financial Statements. After confirming there were no questions, The Hon. Secretary asked those present to consider and vote on the following resolutions:

1. "That the audited financial statements for the year ended 31st August 2023 be approved and published"

A resolution of the meeting that the audited finance statements for the year ended 31st August 2023 are approved and hereby published.

It was noted that nobody opposed the motion, it was passed unanimously.

Proposed: Dr Omar Najim
Seconded: Elaine Rawlings

2. "That the auditors KPMG be appointed as the School auditors for the academic year ending 31st August 2024".

It was noted that nobody opposed the motion, it was passed unanimously.

Proposed: Ellie Edgar
Seconded: Asha Sherwood

4. Ballot for Parent Elected Governors

The Hon. Secretary explained that there was 1 vacancy for Parent Elected Governor this year and 6 candidates putting themselves forward for the roles. Each candidate introduced themselves in turn with a 3 minute speech in order by surname: -

- Hiba Al Kufaishi
- Dr Heba Al-Naseri
- Jodie Drew
- Nisha Dyson
- Dr Omar Najim
- Hanin Yassine

The Hon. Secretary thanked the candidates for their speeches and requested that the Parents in attendance complete their ballot paper by voting for 1 candidate only using the provided Ballot Papers. She also reminded the Parents that they had to have signed the register to confirm attendance at the AGM in order for their vote to be valid.

Completed ballot papers were collected by the Head Boy/Girl and were counted by the Clerk prior to the results being announced at the end of the meeting. Whilst the votes were being ratified, the Hon. Secretary introduced the Headmaster, Mr Mark Leppard, for his report which included the launch of the BSAK Purpose – the exciting culmination of a process started at the AGM 2022 with the 'School Vision Roundtable'.

5. Report from the Head – Mark Leppard MBE

Good evening BSAK community and welcome to the School AGM.

As a school we all believe that it is important to have this opportunity to meet face to face to share successes of which there are many, to explain where we are currently and to highlight future plans.

The more our Community is involved in the School, the better we all understand one another and can work together to ensure we provide our Students with the very best opportunities we can. This must always be our primary focus. The past 18 months has seen a conscious drive to bring parents into the School through more coffee mornings, various workshops and events. This helps with understanding but also strengthens our already amazing Community.

At this point it is important to acknowledge and thank my Senior Leadership Team who support me as Headmaster to ensure that we deliver a successful academic program and the non-academic areas that also support in achieving our aims:

Heads of Schools; Elaine Rawlings, Nigel Davis

Deputy Heads; John Foster, Gareth Jones, Pete Collings, Ellie Edgar,

Assistant Heads; Charlotte McDowell, Sam Walter, Nichola Cooper, Steve Oakes, Rafeef Kadhum, Jeff Payne and Mike Byrne.

I also want to acknowledge and thank our Board of Governors under the Leadership of the Chair, Sean Magee. They play the role of critical friend and I never feel unsupported. Their focus is always crystal clear: Are we doing the very best for each BSAK child? This in fact is our focus throughout the School, but important it comes from the top.

The 2022-23 academic year was hugely rewarding, and I hope I have managed to capture it in my contribution to the annual report.

Writing my speech for tonight was an opportunity to reflect on the year, celebrate what we have achieved but also challenge ourselves to see if we could do things even better. There is a great deal to be extremely proud of at BSAK and it is important that we do reflect on the many positives that may be forgotten.

BSAK is an exceptional school that offers a first class holistic education. The cornerstone of this holistic education is our academic provision. I would like to share with you a high level summary of our Students' academic achievements. I deliberately stated high level as in school we have the tools and expertise to drill down from the key stage data, through year and class groups down to individual students. The ability to do this means we can be proactive rather than reactive and also approach each child's academic education on an individual basis.

I must point out that all of our data from the Early Years through to Year 13 is triangulated using internal teacher assessment as well as extensive external tools that are UK nationally standardised. These are also the systems ADEK use in their inspections and we share all the data with them.

The Early Years and Key Stage 1 data highlights a superb foundation in preparing students for their future educational journey. You can see our comparison to all UK schools, state and independent which is a strong picture and highlights the strength of a BSAK education.

The picture in Key Stage 2 is very positive and shows a consistent picture over the past 3 years. At the meeting & above level for attainment and progress and in the above category for the same, we are in a very strong position compared to all schools in the UK, which includes both state and Independent schools.

Key Stage 3 paints an equally positive picture with 97% of our cohort meeting 4 or above compared to 75% in the UK and 64% attaining 7 and above compared to 25% in the UK. Again, this comparison highlights our educational provision, preparing students for the next stage where public exams feature.

Last year's GCSE results were exceptional whichever lens you look through. Raw outcomes were superb putting the School on a par with UK Independent and selective schools. These are especially pleasing as they

were the first in person public exams the cohort had sat. If we view from a value added perspective, our outcomes on average show the BSAK experience lifts actual grade outcomes by over a full grade compared to external predicted outcomes. In any school a positive value added move of a grade is outstanding.

It is good to see our outcomes compared to UK schools by sector.

[The Headmaster presented a slide of a 3 year pattern to show consistency.]

We are producing results comparable to the most academic type of UK school.

Our A level outcomes were impressive and we are fulfilling our target of improving our A* numbers. This has a positive impact upon all grades.

BTEC results once again were sensational with 100% of students achieving at least two A grades if not higher. Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), a further voluntary pathway for 6th Form, also produced exceptional grades resulting in lower grade offers being made to students by many UK universities.

This leads me on to student destinations after A levels. Again, another very positive picture. Basically, a BSAK education ensures doors beyond BSAK are open for all pathways for our ambitious students. This is seen through a global perspective, not just UK pathways. It is important to understand some of the work behind the scenes regarding pathways.

Our students are picked up in Year 9 before GCSE options and given information and guidance to start shaping option choices. Mr Oakes and his 6th Form team, work with students and universities to ensure BSAK students are known amongst a mass of applications.

Last year Mr Oakes and I visited Oxford and Cambridge to further understand some of the perceived mystery surrounding the application process. This networking has resulted in future visits by these two universities to BSAK to specifically support our Students. Further networking visits will take place targeting other universities to build important relationships. This is what BSAK does. It tries to go that extra mile for our students.

We offer an extensive high quality co-curricular and enrichment provision which allows our Students to experience a variety of activities to help them find their passion. This again supports student pathways beyond BSAK. Only two weeks ago there were dozens of students who on a Wednesday, Thursday and Friday had participated in Oliver! to then do a two day desert walk for Duke of Edinburgh on Sunday and Monday. On Tuesday that week they performed in the Secondary Music Concert, a few days later were attending rugby practice in preparation for a sports tournament. This is the BSAK experience and when grasped fully it opens many opportunities.

BSAK continues to develop its wellbeing programme for all of the Community. As well as a greater focus through lessons, we have successfully hosted parental workshops and it is a regular item to be discussed at Board and Leadership meetings. It is important to drive this area so that every student not only feels safe but is able to flourish. We cannot assume every student will be happy all of the time, but we must work with parents to ensure students can cope when faced with more challenging times. To support the vital area, we now have two school counsellors and two university and careers counsellors as well as trained Heads of Year.

Our new state of the art Science and Innovation centre was completed for the start of this academic year along with our refurbished classrooms and sports hall, a new 4G AstroTurf, a new fitness suite and last but by no means least a complete re generation and enhancement of our 6th Form facilities. This transformation does not stop there. We are currently creating a new 5 year plan that will see further facility enhancements for our students.

I have spoken about the strong academic outcomes achieved at BSAK. I have touched upon the co-curricular opportunities available and our culture of care and focus upon wellbeing. We know there is always more to do and any high performing school should look to continually improve, but it is important to occasionally take stock and seek validation for the journey so far.

Over the past 15 months we have achieved 'Outstanding' in both the ADEK Inspection and the UK Government BSO Inspection. We are also judged by the schoolscompared.com UAE School Awards as:

- Best School in the UAE for Sport 2023-24
- Best School in the UAE for Fine Art and Creative Studio Work 2023-24
- Best British Curriculum School in the UAE 2023-24
- Overall Best School in the UAE 2023-24
- Best Principal in the UAE 2023-24

These inspection judgements and external awards are wonderful to receive and certainly acknowledge the team approach at BSAK, but as soon as I heard about these lovely acknowledgements my thoughts immediately turned to:

Where and what Next?

It is important that we look to the future and continually improve. To do this we need to be clear on what our purpose is and after 12 months of consultation with students, staff, parents and Board members we can now share the outcome. Based on the feedback and review of our previous Vision, we wanted a sharp statement that captures our purpose. I am delighted to be able to share with you the BSAK purpose:

'A Community committed to inspiring our Students to create an impactful legacy'

This is what will drive us over the coming years.

[The Headmaster then shared a short video capturing the BSAK ethos and foundation upon which the purpose was built.]

Thank you to you as parents, for putting your faith in the School and for supporting the journey we have embarked upon.

I want to thank the British Embassy, particularly the former Ambassador, His Excellency Patrick Moody now Edward Hobart and former Deputy Ambassador Sophia Brecknell now Jon Knight for the amazing support of BSAK, as the only British Embassy school in the UAE.

Our Governors led by Chair Sean Magee deserve acknowledgement and praise. A voluntary body who gives hours to ensure BSAK is the beacon of education recognised locally, regionally and internationally.

Thank you to our brilliant staff who guide, motivate and inspire students daily be that in the classroom or elsewhere within BSAK.

Finally, thank you to our Students. Their enthusiasm, thirst for knowledge and openness to learn is just palpable.

Thank you for listening and for your continued support. I am genuinely so proud to be the Headmaster of BSAK, this brilliant school and am so excited about its future.

The Hon. Secretary thanked Mr Leppard for his report.

6. Result of Ballot

The Honorary Secretary once again thanked the candidates for standing and confirmed that Dr Heba Al Naseri had been successfully appointed as Parent Elected Governor and passed on her congratulations.

7. Any Other Business

The Hon. Secretary advised that no resolutions or formal motions had been put forward and therefore no further voting had to take place.

Mr Faisal Raja, The Honorary Treasurer – Mr Raja provided a summary on the financials for the AGM Attendees. From the numbers' perspective, the School is in a really strong position. We had a surplus of AED11.5m this year compared to AED10.4 last year. It is really important that we continue to build that surplus as it is what will allow us to make future investments. The AED50m investment in the School which was done for the new science building was funded completely from the reserves. Therefore, it is important that we continue to exert that financial control. I would like to thank the Director of Finance and Operations for her diligent help in doing just that.

Following the financials summary from the Hon. Treasurer, the Hon. Secretary invited the attendees present to raise any further questions which were responded to by the Headmaster and Chair.

The Hon. Secretary concluded the AGM by thanking everyone for attending and for their continued support and participation in the BSAK Community. The AGM for 2023 was declared closed at 8:57pm.

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