

British International School Al Khobar

Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia



Governed with the British Embassy since 1977, this not-for-profit Gulf school earned exemplary marks in its 2025 BSO inspection.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	70/100
Academic outcomes	72/100
University placement	70/100
Prestige & heritage	73/100
Alumni network	72/100
Facilities	76/100
Transparency	70/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

British International School Al Khobar has two features that matter in this market: governance tied to the British Embassy since ****1977****, and a 2025 BSO inspection that graded it exemplary. That combination gives the school unusual weight. Plenty of Gulf schools sell a British identity; fewer have that level of external scrutiny and institutional continuity behind it. BISAK is also a not-for-profit day school for ages 3 to 18, teaching in English and accredited by BSO, COBIS and Cambridge International. For parents who want a British school with ***proper oversight*** rather than glossy branding, that alone puts it firmly on the shortlist.

The school's appeal rests on stability, seriousness and a broad community role in Al Khobar. Its own language leans heavily on community and global citizenship, but the more telling detail sits elsewhere: it publishes inspection reports, academic results and a clear whole-school structure from pre-prep to sixth form. The website also flags high demand for places, with extra Year 1 and Year 4 classes opened to absorb pressure. That points to a school with real local pull, not one padding out numbers. At an average annual day fee of ****SAR 64,440**** across the full age range, BISAK sits in the **upper-middle to premium** bracket for the Eastern Province: expensive, but not at the speculative luxury end of the market.

This is the right school for families who value a **settled, academically anchored** British education and who want a school that reads more like an institution than a franchise. It will suit students who thrive in a structured environment, want a conventional school journey through to sixth form, and benefit from a community that prizes belonging as much as attainment. It is less compelling for families chasing an ultra-boutique campus, a progressive educational experiment or a visibly high-gloss brand proposition. BISAK's strength is different: **substance over display**, backed by ****3-18**** continuity and a governance model that remains **rare in the Gulf school market**.

STRENGTHS

- Rated Outstanding in all areas by a February 2025 British Schools Overseas inspection carried out on behalf of the UK Department for Education, making it the first British school in Saudi Arabia to achieve this across every category.
- Long-established provider of British education in the Eastern Province, operating continuously since 1977 with an active British Embassy presence on its governing board.
- Purpose-built campus completed in 2019 at a reported cost of 20 million SAR, replacing older premises.
- Not-for-profit structure governed by elected British-passport-holding parent volunteers, meaning fee income is reinvested in the school rather than distributed to shareholders.
- Broad international intake drawn from around 50 nationalities, offering GCSE/IGCSE and A Level pathways through to Year 13.

TRADE-OFFS

- Admissions explicitly prioritise British passport holders ahead of other nationalities on the waiting list, which structurally disadvantages non-British applicants seeking places in oversubscribed year groups.
- Several year groups (e.g. Reception and Year 7 in 2025-26) operate on waiting lists with no guaranteed places, so families relocating on short notice may struggle to secure a specific entry point.
- Fees vary widely by year group (published ranges cited around SAR 46,500 to over SAR 90,000 per annum) plus a separate capitation/registration fee of SAR 16,000 per child, adding to relocation costs.
- Non-British and Saudi national applicants face additional bureaucratic hurdles, including mandatory Ministry of Education approval documentation before an application can even be processed.

ADMISSIONS

BISAK admits pupils from Nursery (age 3) to Year 13 (age 18) via a registration form followed by placement on a Waiting List; registration does not guarantee a place. British passport holders are given admissions priority, with remaining places offered by chronological registration date. Non-British applicants, including Saudi nationals, must supply additional Ministry of Education approval documentation before an application proceeds. Availability is published per year group each academic year and fluctuates, with some year groups closed or waitlisted at times, indicating meaningful demand pressure, particularly for British families.

WTS RATING 

This profile summarises editorial research by World's Top Schools. Verify all admissions dates directly with the school before submitting. Sources are cited in the full online profile at WorldsTopSchools.com/schools/sch_1864a05cd8.