RELOCATE2UAE | SCHOOL GUIDES

Schools in the Rest of the UAE 2026/27

Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah

Named schools, fees, inspection ratings, best areas, commutes and admissions for relocating families

Last updated 18 October 2026 | Next review 1 December 2026

Independent. No school pays to appear in this guide. General information only, not professional advice.

Contents

01 Quick answer
02 Key facts at a glance
03 Who regulates private schools in each emirate?
04 What works differently outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi
05 Which emirate is best for your family's schooling?
06 Schools in Sharjah
07 Schools in Ras Al Khaimah
08 Schools in Ajman
09 Schools in Umm Al Quwain
10 Schools in Fujairah and the east coast
11 School fees compared: Sharjah, RAK, Ajman, UAQ and Fujairah
12 Where to live and the school commute
13 National rules that apply everywhere
14 Choosing a curriculum outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi
15 School ratings and inspections explained
16 Admissions, documents and timelines
17 Additional learning needs and inclusion
18 Questions to ask every school
19 Practical checklist before you sign anything
20 The five things that matter most
21 Frequently asked questions
22 Related guides
23 How we researched this guide
24 Disclaimer

Schools in the Rest of the UAE 2026/27: Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah

Last updated 18 October 2026. Next scheduled review: 1 December 2026. Written by the Relocate2UAE editorial team, an independent Abu Dhabi based relocation platform. No school pays to appear in this guide, and naming a school is not a recommendation.

Quick answer

Outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi, Sharjah has by far the most school choice: around 135 licensed private schools in 2026/27, published inspection ratings from the Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA), and curricula from British and American to IB, Indian, French, German and Australian. Ras Al Khaimah has 34 private schools with independent 2026 inspection reports published by the RAK Department of Knowledge (RAKDOK). In Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah, private schools are regulated by the federal Ministry of Education, which does not routinely publish school-by-school ratings, so families do more of the checking themselves. Fees are generally lower than in Dubai: Indian curriculum schools in these emirates start at about AED 3,000 to 8,000 a year, while British, American and IB schools typically run from about AED 8,500 to 75,000. Choose the curriculum first, confirm a place, then choose where to live.

Key facts at a glance

Question	Short answer
Who regulates private schools in Sharjah?	The Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA), which inspects schools under its Itqan programme and publishes the reports.
Who regulates private schools in Ras Al Khaimah?	The Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge (RAKDOK), which took over from the Ministry of Education in a transfer agreed in 2024.
Who regulates private schools in Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah?	The UAE Ministry of Education. Ajman also has a local Office of Private Education Affairs that works alongside the Ministry.
How many private schools does Sharjah have?	About 135 licensed for 2026/27, with more than 204,000 pupils expected. 127 schools hold an Itqan rating.
How many private schools does Ras Al Khaimah have?	34, teaching more than 35,000 pupils across nine curricula.
Are there Outstanding schools outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi?	Yes, two: GEMS Millennium Private School in Sharjah (Indian CBSE) and RAK Academy Al Hamra in Ras Al Khaimah (British).
Can I read inspection reports?	In Sharjah (spea.shj.ae) and Ras Al Khaimah (dok.rak.ae), yes. In Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah, generally no.
Are schools cheaper than in Dubai?	Generally yes. Indian and Pakistani curriculum schools are among the most affordable in the country, and British and American schools usually cost less than Dubai equivalents.

Question	Short answer
What is the school starting age for 2026/27?	Children must reach the required age by 31 December of the admission year (31 March for April-start schools). Grade 1 or Year 2 entry is age 6.
Do all schools follow the same calendar?	No. Sharjah private schools follow SPEA's own calendar, and Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi curriculum schools follow an April to March year.
Is Arabic compulsory?	Yes. Every private school must teach Arabic, plus Islamic Education for Muslim pupils and Moral Education and UAE Social Studies.
Is the Dubai fee freeze in force here?	No. The 2026/27 freeze applies to Dubai only. Sharjah links fee increases to inspection ratings, and RAK has its own fee policy.

Who regulates private schools in each emirate?

Short answer: It depends on the emirate. Sharjah has its own regulator (SPEA) and so does Ras Al Khaimah (RAKDOK). Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah come under the federal Ministry of Education. The regulator decides what you can read before you visit, how fees are controlled, which calendar applies and where you complain if something goes wrong.

Emirate	Private school regulator	Published school ratings?	Where to look
Sharjah	Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA)	Yes, Itqan inspection reports	spea.shj.ae
Ras Al Khaimah	Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge (RAKDOK)	Yes, 2026 quality evaluation reports	dok.rak.ae/schools
Ajman	UAE Ministry of Education, with Ajman's Office of Private Education Affairs	Not routinely published	Ask the school for its latest Ministry inspection outcome
Umm Al Quwain	UAE Ministry of Education	Not routinely published	Ask the school directly
Fujairah	UAE Ministry of Education	Not routinely published	Ask the school directly
For comparison: Dubai	KHDA	Yes	See our Dubai schools guide
For comparison: Abu Dhabi	ADEK	Yes	See our Abu Dhabi schools guide

Ajman's local office. Ajman set up an Office of Private Education Affairs in 2022 to coordinate with the Ministry of Education and monitor private school performance. It issues circulars to Ajman schools, for example on student protection, and in August 2026 signed a quality improvement programme covering around 50 private schools. It works alongside the Ministry rather than replacing it, so the Ministry remains the regulator for licensing and fees.

What works differently outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi

Short answer: Four things change. In three emirates you cannot read an inspection report. Sharjah runs its own school calendar. The school markets are much smaller, so your curriculum may only exist in one or two schools. And specialist learning support is thinner. None of these makes the northern emirates a worse choice, but each changes how you research.

1. In Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah you cannot build a shortlist from a ratings table

The Ministry of Education inspects private schools in these emirates but does not routinely publish school-by-school reports the way KHDA, ADEK, SPEA and RAKDOK do. Your due diligence is direct: visits, current parents, exam results, staff turnover, external accreditations and the school's own disclosures. A school with no published rating is not a school with a bad rating. It is a school where the work falls to you.

2. Sharjah sets its own school calendar

Sharjah private schools follow a calendar approved by SPEA. For 2026/27 it is close to the national calendar but not identical, and Sharjah schools have worked a Monday to Thursday week since the emirate moved to a Friday to Sunday weekend in 2022, so check your school's weekly timetable. If one child is at school in Sharjah and another in Dubai, expect two sets of dates and different weekly rhythms.

3. The markets are much smaller

Sharjah aside, these are small sectors. Ras Al Khaimah has 34 private schools. Ajman has around 45 to 50, and Umm Al Quwain only a handful that serve expatriate families. The chance that an emirate has your curriculum, in your child's year group, with a place and the support your child needs, drops quickly as the market shrinks. In Dubai you shortlist. Here you often confirm one option and build your move around it.

4. Specialist learning support thins out

Provision for children with additional learning needs is considerably thinner outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi. For anything beyond mild, mainstream-manageable needs, the support should decide the emirate, not the other way round.

Which emirate is best for your family's schooling?

Short answer: Sharjah if school choice matters most. Ras Al Khaimah if lifestyle drives the move and your curriculum is available there. Ajman if cost matters most and you can do your own due diligence with Sharjah's schools nearby. Umm Al Quwain only after you have confirmed a specific place. Fujairah if you want the east coast, and look at Sharjah's east coast towns of Kalba and Khorfakkan alongside it.

If your priority is...	Best fit	Why
The widest curriculum choice	Sharjah	About 135 schools and the only French, German and Australian schools in the northern emirates
Published, comparable ratings	Sharjah or Ras Al Khaimah	Both publish full inspection reports on the national framework
An Outstanding-rated school	Sharjah (Indian CBSE) or RAK (British primary)	GEMS Millennium and RAK Academy Al Hamra are the only two
Lowest overall cost	Ajman, then Sharjah	Low rents and many schools under AED 15,000 a year
British curriculum at moderate fees	Sharjah, RAK or Ajman	A wide spread from about AED 11,000 to 73,000
IB	Sharjah, then RAK or Ajman	Raffles World Academy, American Gulf School, Victoria International, RAK Academy Khuzam and Ajman Academy
Indian curriculum (CBSE)	Sharjah or Ajman	The deepest and most affordable sector in the country
A daily commute into Dubai	Sharjah or Ajman	The only realistic daily commutes, and peak traffic is heavy
Beach, mountains and space	Ras Al Khaimah or Fujairah	Different pace of life, but not a daily Dubai commute
Additional learning needs	Sharjah, or reconsider Dubai or Abu Dhabi	The other emirates have limited specialist provision

Still deciding where to live? Our UAE Emirates Comparison Guide compares cost, housing and lifestyle emirate by emirate.

Schools in Sharjah

Short answer: Sharjah is the strongest alternative to Dubai for families who want real curriculum choice at lower fees and rents. It has around 135 licensed private schools for 2026/27, published Itqan inspection reports, a public school search with fee filters on the SPEA website, and fee increases tied to inspection ratings. The trade-off is the peak-hour commute into Dubai.

Sharjah's school sector in numbers

- **About 135 licensed private schools** for 2026/27, including six new schools (three Indian curriculum, three American curriculum), plus 161 nurseries. SPEA's online directory listed 136 schools in October 2026.
- **More than 204,000 pupils** expected in private schools in 2026/27.
- **Itqan ratings across 127 rated schools (July 2026):** 1 Outstanding, 19 Very Good, 77 Good and 30 Acceptable, with no school rated Weak or Very Weak.
- **About 87% of rated-school pupils** attend a school rated Good or better.
- **Direction of travel:** at the 2018 baseline Sharjah had no Outstanding schools and 26 rated Weak or Very Weak. The improvement is real.

Sharjah's top-rated schools

The only Outstanding school in Sharjah is **GEMS Millennium Private School** in Muwailih, an Indian CBSE school rated Outstanding in the 2022/23 review. Five schools moved up to Very Good in the 2025/26 cycle: the International School of Choueifat Sharjah, American Gulf School, Al Rushed American Private School, Rosary School and Victoria International School's Central Region campus.

Named Sharjah schools: ratings and fees

Fees are annual tuition. Figures without "approx." are from the school's own published fee schedule or a regulator; figures marked "approx." are indicative published figures. Always ask for the current SPEA-approved schedule.

British curriculum

School	Area	Ages / grades	Itqan rating (year)	Annual tuition (AED)
Sharjah English School	Industrial Area 17, near University City	FS1 to Year 13	Very Good (2023/24)	28,420 to 72,765 (2026/27)
GEMS Cambridge International Private School	Muwailih	FS to Year 13	Very Good (2023/24)	approx. 22,175 to 34,800
International School of Creative Science, Muwaileh	Muwaileh	FS1 to Year 13	Very Good (2024/25)	approx. 23,080 to 45,020 (2026/27)
Al Ansar International Private School	Al Qarain 2	KG to Grade 12	Very Good (2024/25)	approx. 22,440 to 30,340
Rosary School	Halwan	FS2 to secondary	Very Good (2025/26)	approx. 11,295 to 13,465
Wesgreen International School	Muwailih	FS1 to Year 13	Good (2024/25)	approx. 19,000 to 47,465
GEMS Westminster School Sharjah	Muwailih	FS1 to Year 13	Good (2024/25)	13,765 to 27,005 (2025/26)
Victoria English School	Al Azra	FS1 to Year 13	Good (2025/26)	approx. 15,900 to 41,640

American and IB

School	Area	Curriculum and grades	Itqan rating (year)	Annual tuition (AED)
American Gulf School	Al Rahmaniya	American and IB, KG to Grade 12 (growing)	Very Good (2025/26)	approx. 35,540 to 75,440 (2026/27)
Al Rushed American Private School	Muwaileh Commercial	American, KG to Grade 12	Very Good (2025/26)	approx. 12,765 to 28,780
Sharjah American International School	Al Rumaqiyya	American, KG1 to Grade 12	Good (2024/25)	approx. 18,730 to 36,060 (2025/26)
Raffles World Academy Sharjah (new 2026)	Aljada	IB (PYP, MYP, DP, CP) and US diploma; Pre-K to Grade 8 in 2026/27	Not yet rated	approx. 40,000 to 64,000 (2026/27)

SABIS, Australian, French and German

School	Area	Curriculum and grades	Itqan rating (year)	Annual tuition (AED)
International School of Choueifat Sharjah	Industrial Area 6	SABIS, KG1 to Grade 12	Very Good (2025/26)	approx. 21,000 to 37,200 (2026/27)
SABIS International School Aljada	Aljada	SABIS, Pre-KG upward	Good (2024/25)	approx. 27,000 to 48,000
Australian International School Sharjah	Industrial Area 18	Australian, Pre-KG to Grade 12	Very Good (2023/24)	38,077 to 69,129 (2026/27)
Victoria International School of Sharjah	Al Mamzar / Al Taawun	Australian and IB, Pre-KG to Grade 12	Very Good (2023/24)	approx. 28,350 to 74,900 (2026/27)
Victoria International School, Central Region campus	Mleiha (Central Region)	Australian	Very Good (2025/26)	Ask the school for its current schedule
French International Private School (formerly Lycée Français Georges Pompidou)	Al Abar	French, Pre-KG to Grade 7	Very Good (2023/24)	approx. 27,500 to 46,400 (2026/27)
German International School Sharjah	Al Abar	German, KG1 to Grade 12	Good (2024/25)	approx. 20,950 to 49,400

Indian curriculum (CBSE)

School	Area	Grades	Itqan rating (year)	Annual tuition (AED)
GEMS Millennium Private School	Muwailih	Pre-KG to Grade 12	**Outstanding** (2022/23)	15,880 to 25,360 (2026/27)
Delhi Private School Sharjah	Muwailih	Pre-KG to Grade 12	Very Good (2023/24)	12,200 to 16,520 (2026/27)
Amity Private School Sharjah	Muwailih	Pre-KG to Grade 12	Very Good (2024/25)	approx. 14,760 to 25,420
Ambassador School	Muwailih	KG to Grade 12	Very Good (2023/24)	approx. 8,820 to 25,700
Our Own English High School (Girls)	Industrial Area 6	KG1 to Grade 12	Very Good (2023/24)	approx. 8,350 to 16,115
Our Own English High School (Boys)	Juwaiza	KG1 to Grade 12	Very Good (2023/24)	approx. 8,440 to 16,240 (2026/27)
Sharjah Indian School	Rolla area	KG1 to Grade 12	Good (2024/25)	3,700 to 6,480 (2026/27)

New and coming soon. INDEX Private School (Indian curriculum, Muwailih) and Rushmore American School (Al Suyoh) are new and not yet rated. Reigate Grammar School is building a British school at Arada's Masaar community, due to open in September 2027, and an American school is planned for Sharjah Sustainable City.

To see every licensed school, filter by fee band, curriculum, region, gender and rating, and download each school's approved fees, use the SPEA school directory.

Best areas in Sharjah for schools

Area	Why families choose it	Schools nearby
Muwailih (Muwaileh)	The densest school cluster in Sharjah, close to University City	GEMS Millennium, Delhi Private School, Amity, Ambassador, GEMS Cambridge, GEMS Westminster, Wesgreen, ISCS, Al Rushed American
Aljada	New master community with modern housing	Raffles World Academy Sharjah, SABIS International School Aljada
University City and Industrial Areas 17 and 18	Close to Muwailih and the airport road	Sharjah English School, Australian International School
Al Rahmaniya and Al Suyoh	Villas and newer communities, quieter	American Gulf School, Rushmore American School
Al Abar and Halwan	Central, established	French International School, German International School, Rosary School
Al Taawun, Al Khan and Al Mamzar	Closest to the Dubai border	Victoria International School
Al Azra and Al Qarain	Family villa areas	Victoria English School, Al Ansar International

Why families choose Sharjah

- The broadest curriculum choice outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi
- Lower rents than Dubai for comparable space
- Strong, affordable Indian curriculum provision
- Published inspection reports and a searchable school directory with fees
- Fee increases capped by inspection rating
- A realistic, if congested, daily drive to Dubai

Where Sharjah can disappoint

- Peak-hour traffic into Dubai is the most common complaint from families who move here
- Only one Outstanding school, and its rating dates from 2022/23
- A separate calendar and a Monday to Thursday week complicate mixed-emirate families

Sharjah's east coast: Kalba and Khorfakkan

Sharjah also governs Kalba and Khorfakkan on the east coast, next to Fujairah. Schools there are SPEA-regulated with published reports, so if the east coast appeals you get Fujairah's lifestyle with Sharjah's transparency.

School	Town	Curriculum and grades	Itqan rating (year)	Annual tuition (AED)
Victoria International School, Kalba	Kalba	Australian, Pre-KG to Grade 9	Good (2024/25)	approx. 23,000 to 43,000
Victoria International School, Khorfakkan	Khorfakkan	Australian, Pre-KG to Grade 9	Good (2024/25)	approx. 22,500 to 43,000

School	Town	Curriculum and grades	Itqan rating (year)	Annual tuition (AED)
English Private School of Kalba	Kalba	British, KG upward	Good (2025/26)	approx. 12,350 to 23,175
American Private School of Kalba	Kalba	American, Grades 6 to 12 only	Good (2022/23)	approx. 15,975 to 23,465 (2025/26)
East Coast English School	Khorfakkan	Indian CBSE, KG1 to Grade 10	Acceptable (2023/24)	approx. 3,300 to 5,060 (2025/26)

We found no SPEA-licensed international private school in Dibba Al Hisn. Families there usually look at schools in Dibba Al Fujairah, covered in the Fujairah section.

Schools in Ras Al Khaimah

Short answer: Ras Al Khaimah has 34 private schools teaching more than 35,000 pupils across nine curricula, regulated by the RAK Department of Knowledge (RAKDOK). In 2026 every UK, US, IB, SABIS and Ministry curriculum school was evaluated by an independent provider on the national framework, and RAK Academy Al Hamra became the emirate's first Outstanding school. RAKDOK's website lists every school with its rating, fee range and full report.

Ras Al Khaimah's school sector in numbers

- **34 private schools**, more than **35,000 pupils**, and **nine curricula**: UK, US, IB, UAE Ministry of Education, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, SABIS and Filipino.
- **Independent inspections.** The RAK government contracted an international provider to carry out all private school quality evaluations, using the UAE School Inspection Framework. 23 schools were evaluated in January and February 2026.
- **2026 results:** RAK Academy Al Hamra moved from Very Good to Outstanding; the International School of Choueifat RAK and GEMS Westminster School RAK moved from Good to Very Good; and schools including St Mary Private High School and Indian Public High School moved from Acceptable to Good.
- **Where to read reports.** Every school's page in the RAKDOK school directory shows its 2025/26 rating, fee range and a link to its full report.
- **New for 2026/27.** Three new schools add about 3,000 places: Bloom American Private School (Sidrow, American curriculum) and two Ministry curriculum schools, Al Ibdaa Private Academy (Dafan) and Al Naser Private School Branch 2 (Al Dahan). RAK Academy has also announced a secondary school at Al Hamra, starting with Grades 6 to 8; confirm which year groups are open with the school.

RAK's fee rules

RAKDOK's Tuition Fees Policy applies from 2025/26, with full compliance required by 2026/27. It sets clear limits that protect parents:

- **Application fee:** no more than AED 500.
- **Registration deposit:** no more than 5% of tuition, and it must be deducted from fees.
- **Payment:** in three terms (no more than 40%, 30% and 30%) or ten monthly instalments.
- **Fee increases:** only schools that have operated for at least three years, hold a valid licence and submit two years of audited accounts may apply, within a window RAKDOK announces.
- **Refunds if you withdraw:** within two weeks of the start of the year the school may keep one month's fee; within a month, two months' fees; after more than a month, a full term.

Named Ras Al Khaimah schools: ratings and fees

Ratings are RAKDOK's 2025/26 ratings. Fees are the annual range shown by RAKDOK unless the school's own 2026/27 schedule is given.

School	Area	Curriculum and grades	Rating (2025/26)	Annual tuition (AED)
RAK Academy Al Hamra	Al Hamra	British, Pre-K to Grade 5 (secondary campus announced)	**Outstanding**	18,700 to 35,200
GEMS Westminster School RAK	Seih Al Uraibi	British, Pre-K to Grade 12	Very Good	13,340 to 24,250
International School of Choueifat RAK	Al Dhait	SABIS, Pre-K to Grade 12	Very Good	28,000 to 54,000
RAK Academy Khuzam	Khuzam	British and IB, Pre-K to Grade 12	Good	18,700 to 46,475 (2026/27, school schedule)
RAK Academy Al Rams	Al Rams	British, Pre-K to Grade 5	Good	18,700 to 35,200
St Mary Private High School	Khalifa bin Zayed City	British, Pre-K to Grade 10	Good	13,600 to 26,000
RAK American Academy	Seih Al Uraibi	American (Cognia accredited), KG to Grade 12	Good	20,000 to 44,550 including books (2026/27, school schedule)
The WellSpring Private School	Dafan Al Khor	American with AP (Cognia accredited), Pre-K to Grade 12	Good	20,000 to 46,200 plus AED 2,000 enrolment fee (2026/27, school schedule)
Emirates National School RAK	Al Dhait	American, Pre-K to Grade 12	Good	15,705 to 32,450
Harvest Private School	Al Dhait South	British, KG1 to Grade 12	Acceptable	8,500 to 20,600
Delhi Private School RAK	Al Dhait	Indian CBSE, KG1 to Grade 12	Good	12,500 to 17,500
Indian Public High School	Ras Al Khaimah	Indian CBSE, KG1 to Grade 12	Good	3,302 to 7,305
Scholars Indian Private School	Ras Al Khaimah	Indian CBSE, KG1 to Grade 12	Acceptable	4,866 to 8,930

School	Area	Curriculum and grades	Rating (2025/26)	Annual tuition (AED)
New Indian School RAK	Mamourah	Indian (Kerala State Board), KG1 to Grade 12	Acceptable	4,345 to 8,850
Alpha Private School	Ras Al Khaimah	Indian, KG1 to Grade 12	Acceptable	8,000 to 16,000
Pakistani Higher Secondary School	Ras Al Khaimah	Pakistani, KG1 to Grade 12	Acceptable	2,610 to 6,140
New Filipino Private School	Ras Al Khaimah	Filipino, KG1 to Grade 10	Not yet rated (opened 2025)	9,000 to 22,000

Where RAKDOK and the school's own fee schedule differ, as they do for RAK Academy Khuzam and RAK American Academy, the school's current approved schedule is the figure to budget for.

Best areas in Ras Al Khaimah for schools

Area	Why families choose it	Schools nearby
Al Hamra Village	The most popular expatriate community, beach and golf	RAK Academy Al Hamra
Khuzam and Al Nakheel	Central, close to the city's facilities	RAK Academy Khuzam
Al Dhait and Khalifa bin Zayed City	Villas and a dense school cluster	Choueifat RAK, Emirates National School, Delhi Private School, Harvest, St Mary
Seih Al Uraibi	Between the city and the airport road	GEMS Westminster RAK, RAK American Academy
Mina Al Arab	Popular waterfront community	No licensed school inside the community; most families use Al Hamra or central RAK schools

Why families choose RAK

- Space, beaches and mountains at prices Dubai cannot match
- Independent, published inspection reports on the national framework
- Clear fee rules, including capped deposits and defined refunds
- New schools and an announced secondary campus

Where RAK can disappoint

- 34 schools is a small market: check your curriculum and year group exist first
- IB is available at only one campus in practice (RAK Academy Khuzam)
- Dubai is roughly 100 to 130 km away, which is not a daily school or work commute
- Bus routes do not always reach every community: confirm yours

Schools in Ajman

Short answer: Ajman is one of the most affordable emirates for families, with around 45 to 50 private schools, strong Indian (CBSE) provision and a growing group of British and American schools. Schools are regulated by the Ministry of Education, with Ajman's Office of Private Education Affairs monitoring them locally. Ratings are not routinely published, so check accreditations and visit. Sharjah's schools are close by, and living in Ajman while schooling in Sharjah is common.

What to know before you shortlist

- **Ratings.** The most recent school-by-school ratings we could find for Ajman are for 2023/24, when six schools were reported as Good and most others as Acceptable. These were not published in the same way as SPEA or RAKDOK reports, so treat them as a starting point and ask each school for its latest Ministry inspection outcome.
- **Two fee figures.** Several Ajman schools publish a "Ministry-approved" fee and a lower discounted fee that is actually charged. Ask for both, in writing, and ask whether the discount is guaranteed for the following year.
- **Calendar.** Many Indian and Pakistani schools in Ajman run an April to March year, which also changes the age cut-off (31 March).

Named Ajman schools

Fees are indicative published figures unless stated; confirm the current approved schedule with the school. Ratings are the 2023/24 outcomes reported for Ajman.

School	Area	Curriculum and grades	Rating / accreditation	Annual tuition (AED)
Ajman Academy	Al Tallah 2	IB (PYP, MYP) with IGCSE and A Level, Pre-KG to Grade 12	Good (2023/24); IB World School since 2014	approx. 24,000 to 66,350
International School of Choueifat Ajman	Al Tallah 2	SABIS, Pre-KG to Grade 12	Good (2023/24)	28,000 to 54,000 approved; 26,000 to 49,000 discounted (2025/26, school schedule)
The City American Private School	Al Tallah 2	American, KG upward	Good (2023/24)	approx. 15,600 to 31,500
The First Academy	Al Hamidiya	American, KG1 to Grade 12	Good (2023/24)	approx. 14,500 to 25,900 (2026/27)
Frontline International Private School	Al Tallah 2	British (IGCSE, A Level), FS1 to Year 13	Good (2023/24)	approx. 15,000 to 27,000 approved (2026/27)
Ajman American Private School	Al Jurf 1	American, KG1 to Grade 12	Acceptable (2023/24)	approx. 17,200 to 30,900 (2026/27)
British International School Ajman	Al Nuaimia	British, FS1 to Year 13	Acceptable (2023/24)	approx. 11,000 to 22,000
Woodlem British School	Al Hamidiya	British (opened 2023)	New when last reported	approx. 18,000 to 26,000 approved (2026/27)
North Gate British Private School	Al Hamidiya	British (opened 2024, growing year by year)	New	approx. 19,900 to 29,800 (2026/27)

School	Area	Curriculum and grades	Rating / accreditation	Annual tuition (AED)
Habitat School Al Tallah	Al Tallah 2	Indian CBSE, Pre-KG to Grade 12	Acceptable (2023/24)	approx. 10,000 to 19,000 approved; 6,900 to 11,150 discounted (2026/27)
Habitat School Al Jurf	Al Jurf 2	Indian CBSE, KG to Grade 12	Acceptable (2023/24)	approx. 6,500 to 10,600
Woodlem Park School	Al Jurf	Indian CBSE, KG1 to Grade 12	Acceptable (2023/24)	approx. 6,350 to 10,850
Al Ameer English School	Al Jurf 2	Indian CBSE, KG1 to Grade 12 (founded 1991)	Acceptable (2023/24)	approx. 4,900 to 10,300
International Indian School Ajman	Al Jurf 2	Indian CBSE, KG1 to Grade 12	Acceptable (2023/24)	approx. 5,200 to 12,000

Pakistani curriculum families can look at Pakistan Islamia Secondary School in Ajman.

Best areas in Ajman for schools

Area	Why families choose it	Schools nearby
Al Tallah 2	Ajman's main school cluster	Ajman Academy, Choueifat Ajman, City American, Frontline, Habitat Al Tallah
Al Jurf	Residential, good for CBSE schools	Habitat Al Jurf, Woodlem Park, Al Ameer, Ajman American, International Indian School
Al Hamidiya	Newer British and American schools	The First Academy, Woodlem British, North Gate British
Al Nuaimia and Al Rashidiya	Closest to the Sharjah border	British International School Ajman; easy access to Sharjah schools
Al Mowaihat and Al Yasmeen	Villas and newer developments	Short drive to Al Tallah

Why families choose Ajman

- Among the lowest rents of any emirate
- Many established Indian schools under AED 12,000 a year
- A growing set of British and American schools
- Sharjah's much larger school market is next door

Where Ajman can disappoint

- No routinely published inspection reports
- Thinner premium international provision than Sharjah
- The Dubai commute is a Sharjah commute with Ajman added to it

Schools in Umm Al Quwain

Short answer: Umm Al Quwain is the smallest school market covered here, with only a handful of private schools that serve expatriate families, regulated by the Ministry of Education. The main international options are the International School of Choueifat UAQ (SABIS) and the Sharjah American International School's UAQ campus. Confirm your school before you commit to the emirate.

School	Area	Curriculum and grades	Annual tuition (AED)
International School of Choueifat UAQ	Khalifa City	SABIS; check the grades offered for your child's age	approx. from 20,000
Sharjah American International School, UAQ campus	Al Salamah	American, KG1 to Grade 12	approx. 17,500 to 32,300 (2025/26)
The English Private School	Al Salama	Founded in 1983; sources describe its curriculum differently, so confirm the curriculum and board for each grade with the school	approx. from 5,200
New Indian School UAQ	Al Riqqah	Indian (CBSE and Kerala board), KG1 to Grade 10	approx. 3,000 to 4,500
Wise Indian Private School	Al Riqqah	Indian CBSE, KG to Grade 10	approx. 5,200 to 7,000 (2026/27)

Fees are indicative published figures. No inspection ratings are published for Umm Al Quwain schools, so ask each school for its latest Ministry inspection outcome and any external accreditation.

The rule for Umm Al Quwain

Confirm your school before you commit. Not the area: the emirate. If you need a specific curriculum, exam pathway or learning support, check it exists first. Note that two of the Indian schools stop at Grade 10. If what you need is not here, you are choosing between changing curriculum and a daily commute to Ajman, Sharjah or Ras Al Khaimah.

Commuting out of UAQ

Living in Umm Al Quwain and schooling in Ajman or Sharjah is workable for some families: Sharjah city is roughly 35 to 40 km away and Ras Al Khaimah city about 55 to 60 km. Neither is trivial twice a day for a young child, and cross-emirate buses are not guaranteed. Ask the specific school whether it runs a UAQ route and what time the bus collects.

Schools in Fujairah and the east coast

Short answer: Fujairah has a small private school sector regulated by the Ministry of Education, with British, American and Indian options concentrated around Fujairah City, plus a few schools in Dibba. Ratings are not routinely published. If you are open to the wider east coast, Sharjah's towns of Kalba and Khorfakkan offer SPEA-rated schools on the same coastline.

School	Area	Curriculum and grades	Rating / accreditation	Annual tuition (AED)
GEMS Winchester Private School Fujairah	Sakamkam	British (IGCSE, A Level), Pre-KG to Grade 12	No published rating	24,950 to 39,290 (GEMS published range)
Fujairah Private Academy	Academic City, near City Centre Fujairah	British (Cambridge IGCSE, A Level), KG to Grade 12	British Schools Overseas inspected (last listed visit 2017)	approx. 23,850 to 42,000
Diyar Private Academy	Sakamkam, plus separate boys' and girls' campuses in Dibba	American, Pre-KG to Grade 12	US accreditation (AIAASC)	approx. 15,480 to 31,590 (2026/27)
St Mary's Catholic High School	Al Sharia	Choice of British (GCSE, A Level) or Indian CBSE	No published rating	approx. 6,000 to 13,000
Our Own English High School Fujairah (GEMS)	Al Faseel	Cambridge IGCSE and Indian CBSE streams, KG1 to Grade 12	Cambridge centre; CBSE affiliated	approx. 5,750 to 12,300 IGCSE; 5,150 to 10,950 CBSE (2026/27)
Indian School Fujairah	Al Faseel	Indian CBSE, KG1 to Grade 12	CBSE affiliated	3,100 to 6,250 (school published)
Eminence Private School	Sakamkam	Indian CBSE, KG upward	CBSE affiliated	approx. 8,500 to 13,500
Modern Indian School, Dibba	Dibba Al Fujairah	Indian CBSE, KG to Grade 12	CBSE affiliated	approx. 4,360 to 9,300
Pakistan Islamia Higher Secondary School	Fujairah	Pakistani (Federal Board)	No published rating	approx. 2,225 to 4,450

Why families choose Fujairah

- A lifestyle you cannot find elsewhere in the UAE: mountains, Indian Ocean beaches and little traffic
- Low rents and a strong community feel
- Better connected since June 2026: Etihad Rail's passenger service links Fujairah with Abu Dhabi

Where Fujairah can disappoint

- A small market with no published inspection reports
- Roughly 120 to 130 km from Dubai, so not a school run
- Limited specialist support and post-16 subject choice

Areas to consider

Fujairah City, Sakamkam, Al Faseel, Al Sharia and Dibba Al Fujairah. If you are looking at Dibba or anywhere away from Fujairah City, confirm the school and the bus route before choosing a home. And look at Kalba and Khorfakkan alongside Fujairah: same coastline, published ratings.

School fees compared: Sharjah, RAK, Ajman, UAQ and Fujairah

Short answer: Fees outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi are generally lower. Indian and Pakistani curriculum schools start from about AED 2,200 to 8,000 a year. Mid-market British and American schools typically charge about AED 11,000 to 35,000. The top tier, mostly in Sharjah, reaches about AED 70,000 to 75,000 a year for senior grades. Tuition is only part of the bill: budget for transport, uniform, books, exams and trips too.

Typical annual tuition by curriculum (2025/26 and 2026/27 published figures)

Curriculum	Sharjah	Ras Al Khaimah	Ajman	Umm Al Quwain	Fujairah
Indian (CBSE)	about 3,300 to 25,700	about 3,300 to 17,500	about 4,900 to 19,000	about 3,000 to 7,000	about 3,100 to 13,500
Pakistani	check the SPEA directory	about 2,600 to 6,100	low-cost options available	none confirmed	about 2,200 to 4,500
British	about 11,300 to 72,800	about 8,500 to 46,500	about 11,000 to 30,000	none confirmed	about 5,750 to 42,000
American	about 12,800 to 75,400	about 15,700 to 46,200	about 14,500 to 31,500	about 17,500 to 32,300	about 15,500 to 31,600
IB	about 28,400 to 75,400	up to about 46,500 (RAK Academy Khuzam)	about 24,000 to 66,400 (Ajman Academy)	none confirmed	none confirmed
SABIS	about 21,000 to 48,000	about 28,000 to 54,000	about 26,000 to 54,000	from about 20,000	none confirmed
Australian	about 22,500 to 74,900	none	none	none	none
French / German	about 21,000 to 49,400	none	none	none	none

All figures in AED, lowest grade to highest grade, drawn from the school tables in this guide. They are a planning range, not a price list.

What drives the range

Curriculum (South Asian curricula are the most affordable; British, Australian and IB the most expensive), year group (fees usually rise steeply from Year 7 and again for sixth form), inspection rating, facilities and location.

Budget for the total, not the tuition

- Application and registration fees (in RAK, capped at AED 500 and 5% of tuition respectively)
- Tuition, and how it is split across terms
- Transport, often the largest single add-on outside the cities
- Uniform, including PE kit
- Books, stationery and any required devices
- Meals
- Trips, including residential trips at secondary level
- Exam fees at IGCSE, A Level, AP, IB and board examination level
- After-school activities and any learning support, often charged separately

How fee increases are controlled

Emirate	Who approves fees	How increases work
Sharjah	SPEA	Increases are linked to the Itqan rating. Under SPEA's published framework the maximum was 5% for Outstanding, 3.75% for Very Good, 2.5% for Good, 1.25% for Acceptable and nothing below Acceptable, and schools could apply once every two years. Approved fee files are published on each school's SPEA profile.
Ras Al Khaimah	RAKDOK	Under the RAKDOK Tuition Fees Policy, schools need three years of operation and audited accounts to apply, within an announced window. Deposits, payment instalments and refunds are capped.
Ajman, Umm Al Quwain, Fujairah	Ministry of Education	The Ministry reviews fee changes, taking account of school quality and what parents can afford. Approved schedules are not published centrally, so ask the school for its Ministry-approved schedule.

The 2026/27 fee freeze announced by KHDA applies to Dubai schools only. We found no equivalent freeze for Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain or Fujairah.

Three things to ask in writing

1. "Please send me the current regulator-approved fee schedule." Not a summary: the approved document.
2. "Is this the approved maximum or the amount you actually charge, and is any discount guaranteed next year?"
3. "What is your refund policy if we withdraw before or during the year?"

Never compare schools on tuition alone. Compare them on total annual cost. For a whole-household budget, use our UAE Cost of Living Guide, and if you are negotiating a package, the UAE Salary Guide shows what school allowances typically look like.

Where to live and the school commute

Short answer: Choose the school first, then the home. Outside the main cities the school run shapes your week more than the school itself. Sharjah to Dubai is the only commute most families attempt daily, and peak traffic can turn 20 km into an hour or more. Drive the route at 7am on a weekday before you sign a lease.

Approximate road distances

Route	Approximate distance
Sharjah city to Dubai (Deira)	15 to 20 km
Ajman to Sharjah city	10 to 15 km
Ajman to Dubai	about 25 to 30 km to Deira, about 40 km to Downtown
Umm Al Quwain to Sharjah city	35 to 40 km
Umm Al Quwain to Dubai	about 50 km to the Dubai border area, about 65 km to central Dubai
Umm Al Quwain to Ras Al Khaimah city	55 to 60 km
Ras Al Khaimah to Dubai	100 to 130 km, depending on route and destination
Fujairah to Dubai	120 to 130 km

These are distances, not journey times. Emirates Road and Al Ittihad Road at 7am bear no resemblance to the same roads at 11am.

Public transport in 2026

Etihad Rail's passenger service opened between Abu Dhabi and Fujairah in June 2026 and added stations at Al Yalayis in Dubai and Al Dhaid in Sharjah in September 2026, with Sharjah University City due in 2027. It is useful for weekend travel, but it is not a practical school-run option, and Ras Al Khaimah, Ajman and Umm Al Quwain have no stations yet. An RTA intercity bus links Dubai and Sharjah. There is no Dubai Metro link to Sharjah.

School bus questions

- Do you run a route to my specific community, not just my emirate?
- What are the real pick-up and drop-off times, and how long will my child be on the bus?
- What does it cost per year, and is there a sibling discount?
- Is there a trained adult supervisor on board?
- Do you run routes across emirate borders?

A young child on a 70-minute bus each way spends more than two hours a day travelling. For primary-age children especially, put proximity ahead of small differences in rating.

Cross-emirate schooling that works

- **Ajman to Sharjah:** common and workable. The emirates are contiguous and many Sharjah schools run buses into Ajman. Confirm your route exists.
- **Sharjah to Dubai:** common, but plan for traffic. Living close to the Dubai border (Al Taawun, Al Khan, Al Nahda) shortens the run to Dubai schools.
- **Umm Al Quwain to Ajman or Sharjah:** possible, with long days for young children.
- **Fujairah to Kalba or Khorfakkan:** a short drive along the coast to SPEA-rated schools.

For the Dubai side of the border, see our Dubai Area Guide. For housing in the northern emirates, our UAE Housing Guide explains tenancy registration and costs.

National rules that apply everywhere

These apply in every emirate, whatever the curriculum, and they cause the most surprises for relocating families.

The school entry age cut-off is now 31 December

From 2026/27, schools whose year starts in August or September use 31 December of the admission year as the age cut-off, replacing 31 August. Schools that start in April keep 31 March.

Stage	British equivalent	Age by 31 December
Pre-KG	FS1	3
KG1	FS2	4
KG2	Year 1	5
Grade 1	Year 2	6

- It applies to new admissions only. Children already enrolled stay under the rules in place when they registered.
- Children born between 1 September and 31 December 2021 may register in KG1 or KG2 for 2026/27, depending on the school's readiness assessment.
- Meeting the age rule does not guarantee a place. In private schools, placement depends on assessment and availability.

The 2026/27 academic calendar

The Ministry of Education's unified calendar for 2026/27 runs as follows:

Milestone	Date
Schools open	31 August 2026
Mid-term break	12 to 18 October 2026
Winter break	14 December 2026 to 3 January 2027
Spring break	5 to 11 April 2027
Last day of the year	2 July 2027

Three exceptions matter in these emirates:

1. **Sharjah private schools** follow SPEA's calendar: start 31 August 2026, winter break from 14 December, spring break 5 to 8 April 2027, and the year ends on 1 July 2027.
2. **Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi curriculum schools** are outside the unified calendar and usually run an April to March year. In Sharjah, for example, their 2026/27 year runs from 23 March 2026 to 5 April 2027.
3. **Non-Ministry curriculum private schools outside Sharjah** may be allowed by their regulator to split the mid-term break between October and February.

Ras Al Khaimah publishes separate September-start and April-start calendars on the RAKDOK website. Your own school's approved calendar is the only one that governs your family. Our UAE School Holiday Calendar 2026/27 sets out term dates and public holidays in full.

Arabic, Islamic Education and Moral Education are compulsory

Every UAE private school, whatever its curriculum, must teach Arabic (as a first language for Arab pupils and as an additional language for others), Islamic Education for Muslim pupils, and Moral Education and UAE Social Studies, which many schools deliver to non-Arab pupils as Moral, Social and Cultural Studies.

In kindergarten, the Ministry's guidelines now set minimum time: about 40 minutes of Arabic a day (200 minutes a week), rising to 60 minutes a day by 2027/28, and 90 minutes a week of Islamic Education for Muslim children. Compliance inspections of kindergarten provision begin in 2026/27.

A meaningful share of your child's timetable is fixed before the school's own curriculum gets a look in. What varies is how well schools teach Arabic to non-Arabic speakers, so ask about it at every visit.

Your child's right to a school place

Federal Law No. 29 of 2006, as amended by Federal Law No. 14 of 2009, guarantees people of determination equal educational opportunities and says a disability must not prevent admission to any government or private school. It applies in Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah exactly as it does in Dubai.

Choosing a curriculum outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi

Short answer: Decide the curriculum first, then the school, then the home. Indian (CBSE) and American schools exist in every emirate covered here, and British schools in all but Umm Al Quwain. French, German and Australian schools exist only in Sharjah, and IB is limited to a few schools in Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah and Ajman, so if your child needs one of those, it narrows your map before you start.

Curriculum continuity is the single largest predictor of how smoothly a child settles after an international move, and it matters more the older your child is. A six-year-old can switch systems easily. A fifteen-year-old halfway through a GCSE course cannot.

Curriculum	Exit qualifications	Where you will find it outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi
British (English National Curriculum)	IGCSE / GCSE, A Level	Wide choice in Sharjah; available in RAK, Ajman, Fujairah and Kalba; none confirmed in UAQ
Indian (CBSE, some ICSE / Kerala)	CBSE Class 10 and 12 board examinations	The largest and most affordable sector, especially in Sharjah and Ajman; present in every emirate
American	High School Diploma, AP	Every emirate covered here
Pakistani	Federal Board (FBISE) examinations	Ajman, RAK and Fujairah; check the SPEA directory for Sharjah
IB	PYP, MYP, IB Diploma	Limited: Sharjah (several schools), RAK Academy Khuzam and Ajman Academy
SABIS	IGCSE, A Level or AP	Choueifat campuses in Sharjah, RAK, Ajman and UAQ, plus SABIS Aljada
French	Brevet, Baccalauréat	Sharjah only, currently to Grade 7
German	German International Abitur pathway	Sharjah only (German International School Sharjah)
Australian	Australian curriculum, IB Diploma	Sharjah, including Kalba and Khorfakkan
UAE Ministry of Education	UAE secondary certificate	Widely available, including government schools; private Ministry curriculum schools mainly serve Arabic-speaking families

Three questions most families forget to ask

1. **Does the school offer your curriculum all the way through?** Many schools teach to Year 11 or Grade 10 with no sixth form. If your child is nine, that is a problem you will meet in seven years.
2. **What is the real subject choice at examination level?** A school may offer A Levels in only a handful of subjects, none of which your child wants.
3. **How many students actually sit the exit examinations?** Small cohorts limit subject choice and change the teaching dynamic.

School ratings and inspections explained

Short answer: Sharjah (SPEA) and Ras Al Khaimah (RAKDOK) publish inspection ratings on a six-point scale aligned with the unified UAE School Inspection Framework, the same framework and scale KHDA uses in Dubai. Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah schools are supervised by the Ministry of Education, which does not routinely publish per-school reports, so there you check accreditations and outcomes instead.

Rating	What it means
Outstanding	Performance substantially exceeds UAE expectations
Very Good	Performance exceeds UAE expectations
Good	Performance meets UAE expectations (the expected level)
Acceptable	Performance meets minimum UAE expectations

Rating	What it means
Weak	Performance is below UAE expectations
Very Weak	Performance is significantly below UAE expectations

Check the date on the rating

SPEA does not inspect every school every year: each Itqan cycle reviews a group of schools, and higher-rated schools can go two or more years between reviews. Sharjah's only Outstanding rating, for example, dates from the 2022/23 review. A "Very Good" badge on a school website may date from several years ago, under a different principal. Always find the year of the report, not just the grade.

Read the phase, not just the headline

A rating is an average across the whole school. A school rated Good overall may be Very Good in primary and Acceptable in the middle years. If your child is eleven, the overall grade is the wrong number. Ask for the full report and read the phase-by-phase judgements.

Accreditations worth checking, especially in Ajman, UAQ and Fujairah

Some schools hold external accreditations that are independent of the UAE regulator and can be checked online:

- **British Schools Overseas (BSO)**: UK Department for Education inspection of British schools abroad
- **Cambridge International** registration for IGCSE and A Level
- **Council of International Schools (CIS)** and **Cognia** accreditation
- **IB World School** authorisation, searchable on ibo.org
- **CBSE affiliation number**, searchable on the CBSE affiliation portal

In emirates without published inspection reports, these are your best independent cross-check.

Admissions, documents and timelines

Short answer: Apply three to six months before your move, start document attestation six to eight weeks before you need to register, and get your child's year-group placement confirmed in writing. Mid-year entry is common and widely accepted; availability, not willingness, is the constraint.

Start attestation before you choose a school

The UAE is not part of the Hague Apostille Convention, so documents issued abroad need full legalisation rather than an apostille. For a transfer certificate and reports, the usual chain is: the education authority (or a notary, depending on the country) in the issuing country, then the UAE embassy or consulate there, then the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs once you arrive. Documents not in Arabic or English need a legal translation. This takes weeks and is much harder after you have left, so start six to eight weeks before you need to register. Sharjah English School, for example, asks for an attested transfer certificate from Year 2 (Grade 1) upward. Requirements vary by school and emirate, so ask each school exactly what it needs for your child's grade.

The standard document set

- Transfer certificate from the previous school (attested where required)
- School reports or mark sheets, usually for the last one to two years
- Birth certificate (attested where required)
- Passport copies for the child and both parents, with UAE residence visa pages or entry permit
- Emirates ID, or the application receipt
- Passport photographs
- Vaccination and immunisation record
- Any educational psychology, medical or learning support reports

Grade equivalency and year-group placement

Children arriving from abroad or changing curriculum are placed by their last successfully completed grade under the Ministry of Education's equivalency rules. A formal Ministry equivalency certificate is mainly needed at secondary level (Grades 10 to 12), and can be applied for online from abroad for Grade 12. Do not assume year groups match: British Year 7 is not automatically Grade 7, and the 31 December age cut-off has shifted some placements. Get the year group confirmed in writing before you accept a place.

When to apply

Your timeline	What to do now
6 to 12 months before	Decide curriculum, shortlist schools, check age placement, begin attestation
3 to 6 months before	Submit applications, book assessments (many can be done online), confirm placement in writing
Under 3 months	Contact admissions directly, widen your geography and fee band, ask about waiting lists
Already arrived mid-year	Ask where you sit on the waiting list and how fees are pro-rated, in writing

Additional learning needs and inclusion

Short answer: Every UAE private school has a legal duty not to refuse a child solely because of a disability or additional learning need, but specialist provision is much thinner outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi. If your child needs more than light-touch support, confirm the provision exists before you choose the emirate.

Know your position

Federal Law No. 29 of 2006 on the rights of people of determination (as amended by Federal Law No. 14 of 2009) guarantees equal educational opportunities and says a disability must not prevent admission to any government or private educational institution. It applies in Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah exactly as it does in Dubai. If a school will not engage, escalate to the regulator: SPEA in Sharjah, RAKDOK in Ras Al Khaimah, and the Ministry of Education in Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah.

Be pragmatic about capacity

A right of admission does not create specialist provision that does not exist. A school that must admit your child but has no inclusion lead, no speech and language therapist and no experience of your child's profile is not a good outcome.

Ask every school

- Who leads inclusion, and which specialists are on staff?
- Have you supported a child with my child's specific profile?
- Is learning support included in tuition, or charged separately, and at what rate?
- Can external therapists work with my child on site?
- What examination access arrangements can you provide?
- What happens if the school decides it cannot meet my child's needs?

Share the full picture. Softening a diagnosis to secure a place almost always backfires, because a school that does not understand a child's needs cannot resource them.

Questions to ask every school

Curriculum and outcomes

- Which curriculum do you follow, and through to which year group?
- What qualifications do students leave with, and what subjects are offered at exam level?
- How many students sat exit examinations last year, and what were the results?
- Where do your graduates go to university?

Regulation and quality

- What is your most recent inspection rating, and from which academic year?
- May I see the full report, including the phase-by-phase judgements?
- Which external accreditations do you hold, and when do they expire?

Places and admissions

- Is there a place in my child's year group right now?
- Is there a waiting list, and where would we sit on it?
- What assessment is needed, and can it be done remotely?
- Which documents must be attested for my child's grade?
- Which year group will you place my child in? Please confirm in writing.

Cost

- May I have the current regulator-approved fee schedule?
- What other fees apply across a full year (transport, uniform, books, trips, exams, activities)?
- What is your refund policy if we withdraw before or during the year?

The school day

- What are your hours, and which authority approved this year's calendar?
- How is compulsory Arabic taught to non-Arabic speakers, and by whom?
- Do you run a bus to my community, at what cost, and how long is the journey?

Practical checklist before you sign anything

- Curriculum decided, and continuity to my child's exit point confirmed
- Year group checked against the 31 December cut-off and confirmed in writing
- Regulator identified (SPEA, RAKDOK or Ministry of Education)
- Latest inspection report read, including its year and phase judgements, or accreditations checked
- Approved fee schedule received, plus transport, uniform, books, exams and trips costed
- Total annual budget per child agreed
- Place confirmed, or waiting-list position known
- Documents requested, translated and attestation started
- Transfer certificate obtained
- School bus route to our community confirmed, with real journey time
- Peak-hour commute driven at 7am and at 2.30pm on a weekday
- Learning support confirmed and costed in writing
- Arabic provision for non-Arabic speakers discussed
- School academic calendar checked against the other parent's work and any siblings' schools
- Visited on a normal teaching day and spoken to current parents

The five things that matter most

1. **Confirm the school before you commit to the emirate.** In small markets this is not the same as choosing an area. If you need a specific curriculum, exam pathway or specialist support, make sure it exists first.
2. **Know your regulator.** It decides what you can read, how fees are controlled and where you escalate. In Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah you will be doing more of the due diligence yourself.
3. **Read the rating and its date.** A "Very Good" from three years ago may describe a different school. Read the report and the phase judgements, not just the headline.
4. **Budget the total, not the tuition.** Transport is often the largest add-on outside the cities, and exam fees catch families out at secondary level.

5. **Drive the route before you sign the lease.** At 7am on a weekday, not at the weekend and not at 11am.

Need hands-on help? Relocate2UAE's school placement and education support page offers help with school selection, applications and enrolment.

Frequently asked questions

Who regulates private schools outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi?

Sharjah has the Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA) and Ras Al Khaimah has the Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge (RAKDOK). In Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah, private schools are regulated by the federal Ministry of Education. Ajman also has a local Office of Private Education Affairs that monitors schools alongside the Ministry.

Which emirate has the most schools outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi?

Sharjah, by a wide margin, with about 135 licensed private schools for 2026/27 and more than 204,000 pupils. Ajman has around 45 to 50 private schools and Ras Al Khaimah has 34.

What are the best schools in Sharjah?

By inspection rating, GEMS Millennium Private School (Indian CBSE, Muwailih) is Sharjah's only Outstanding school. Very Good schools include Sharjah English School, the Australian International School, Victoria International School, American Gulf School, the International School of Choueifat Sharjah, Delhi Private School, Amity, GEMS Cambridge and the French International School. The best school for your child depends on curriculum, year group, budget and location.

What are the best schools in Ras Al Khaimah?

RAK Academy Al Hamra is the emirate's first Outstanding school. GEMS Westminster School RAK and the International School of Choueifat RAK are rated Very Good. Good-rated options include RAK Academy Khuzam (British and IB), RAK American Academy, The WellSpring Private School, Emirates National School, St Mary Private High School and Delhi Private School.

Are there British schools in Ajman?

Yes. Frontline International Private School, British International School Ajman, Woodlem British School and North Gate British Private School follow the British curriculum, and Ajman Academy offers IGCSE and A Level alongside the IB. Many Ajman families also use British schools in Sharjah.

Are there international schools in Fujairah?

Yes, a small number. GEMS Winchester Private School and Fujairah Private Academy teach the British curriculum, Diyar Private Academy is American, and St Mary's Catholic High School offers a British or Indian stream. Sharjah's Kalba and Khorfakkan, on the same coast, add SPEA-rated Australian, British and American options.

Which schools are in Umm Al Quwain?

The main international options are the International School of Choueifat UAQ (SABIS) and the Sharjah American International School's UAQ campus. There are also several low-cost Indian curriculum schools. Confirm your curriculum and year group before choosing to live in UAQ.

How much are school fees in Sharjah?

From about AED 3,300 a year at the most affordable Indian schools to about AED 75,000 for senior grades at the top international schools. Mid-market British and American schools typically charge about AED 13,000 to 35,000. Check the SPEA-approved fee file on each school's SPEA profile.

Are schools cheaper outside Dubai and Abu Dhabi?

Generally yes, especially in Ajman and Umm Al Quwain, and Sharjah's Indian curriculum schools are among the most affordable in the country. But the range is wide, and transport can add significantly to the total.

Can I read inspection reports for schools in Ajman, Umm Al Quwain or Fujairah?

Generally no. The Ministry of Education inspects these schools but does not routinely publish school-by-school reports. Ask the school for its latest inspection outcome, and check external accreditations such as British Schools Overseas, IB authorisation, Cognia or CBSE affiliation.

Are school ratings comparable between emirates?

Largely, yes. Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah and Dubai use the UAE School Inspection Framework and the same six-point scale, from Outstanding to Very Weak. What differs is how recently each school was inspected, so always check the year of the report.

Has the school starting age changed for 2026/27?

Yes. For schools starting in August or September, a child must reach the required age by 31 December of the admission year, so Grade 1 or Year 2 entry is for children who are 6 by 31 December. April-start schools use 31 March. The change applies to new admissions only.

Do schools in Sharjah follow the same calendar as Dubai?

Not exactly. Sharjah private schools follow SPEA's calendar, which for 2026/27 starts on 31 August 2026, has a spring break of 5 to 8 April 2027 and ends on 1 July 2027. Sharjah schools have also worked a Monday to Thursday week since 2022. Indian and Pakistani curriculum schools follow an April to March year.

Can we live in one emirate and send our children to school in another?

Yes, and it is common, particularly living in Ajman and schooling in Sharjah, or living in Sharjah and schooling in Dubai. Confirm the school runs a bus to your community and test the peak-hour journey before you sign a lease.

Does the Dubai school fee freeze apply in Sharjah or Ras Al Khaimah?

No. The 2026/27 freeze applies to Dubai schools only. Sharjah links fee increases to each school's Itqan rating, Ras Al Khaimah applies RAKDOK's fee policy, and the Ministry of Education approves fees in Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah.

Is Arabic compulsory in private schools in these emirates?

Yes. Every private school in the UAE must teach Arabic, whatever its curriculum, along with Islamic Education for Muslim pupils and Moral Education and UAE Social Studies. Kindergarten Arabic time is rising to 60 minutes a day by 2027/28.

What documents do I need to enrol my child?

Usually a transfer certificate from the previous school, recent reports, a birth certificate, passport and visa copies, an Emirates ID or application receipt, photographs and vaccination records. Documents issued abroad generally need legalisation through the issuing country and the UAE embassy, then the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, because the UAE does not accept apostilles.

What if my child has additional learning needs?

Specialist provision is thinner than in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Federal law says a disability must not prevent admission, but a right of admission does not create support that does not exist. For anything beyond mild needs, confirm the provision and its cost in writing before choosing the emirate.

Related guides

- Schools in Dubai: KHDA ratings, curricula and fees
- Schools in Abu Dhabi: ADEK ratings and the best areas for families
- UAE School Holiday Calendar 2026/27: term dates, breaks and public holidays
- Nurseries in Abu Dhabi: early years options and fees
- Moving to Dubai With a Family: budgets, areas and settling in
- UAE Emirates Comparison Guide: which emirate suits your family
- UAE Housing Guide: renting, deposits and registration
- UAE Cost of Living Guide 2026: full household budgets
- UAE Visa Requirements 2026: family visas and Emirates ID
- School placement and education support: help with school selection and enrolment

How we researched this guide

We checked every rule against official sources first: the UAE Ministry of Education and u.ae, the Sharjah Private Education Authority (school directory, Itqan reports and calendars), the Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge (school directory, quality evaluation reports, Tuition Fees Policy and calendars), the RAK Government Media Office, and the UAE Ministry of Justice legislation portal. School fees come from each school's own published fee schedule where available, and otherwise from published figures in reputable media and school comparison listings, which we mark "approx." Where official sources were silent or contradicted each other, we have said so rather than guess. Fees, ratings and school details change, sometimes at short notice: treat the date at the top of this guide as its expiry warning.

Where to check for yourself

- **UAE Ministry of Education:** moe.gov.ae: calendar, admission age, equivalency, and the school map service
- **Sharjah Private Education Authority:** spea.shj.ae: school directory with fee filters, approved fees, Itqan reports and calendars
- **Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge:** dok.rak.ae/schools: every licensed school with rating, fees and full report
- **UAE Government portal:** u.ae: private school regulation and certificate equivalency

Disclaimer

This guide is general information for families relocating to the UAE. It is not educational, legal, financial or immigration advice. School fees, availability, curricula, inspection ratings, admission rules and calendars change, sometimes without public announcement, so always confirm the current position with the school and the relevant regulator (SPEA, RAKDOK or the Ministry of Education) before you make enrolment, housing or relocation decisions. Where official or school information differs from this guide, the official or school source prevails. Naming a school is not a recommendation, endorsement or ranking, and Relocate2UAE has no commercial relationship with any school named. Where a family visa or residency question affects your child's enrolment, an immigration specialist such as our partner Davidson & Co. would be worth speaking to. Relocate2UAE accepts no liability for any loss arising from reliance on this guide.