CHRYSALIS
INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY

CHRYSALIS INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY (DUBAI)

Founding Principal

An English National Curriculum school opening in Dubailand in September 2027.

Recruitment managed by RSAcademics on behalf of Chrysalis International Academy

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Everything you need to decide whether this is the right next step for you, and how to take it.

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CHRYSALIS
INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY

01 · INTRODUCTION

A career-defining opportunity

Become the Founding Principal of Chrysalis International Academy, Dubai: an English National Curriculum school opening in September 2027 and growing to 3,500 pupils.

We seek a compassionate leader who prioritises holistic growth and community connection, and who will build a safe, innovative, inclusive and inspiring learning environment from the ground up.

It calls for exceptional educational leadership and the entrepreneurial spirit to turn a blank canvas into a world-class educational landmark.

02 · WHO WE ARE

Experienced owners, a brand-new school

Nalapad Investments and MVK Holdings already run two established education institutions in Dubai.

Chrysalis will nurture future-ready learners through a balanced blend of academics, creativity and wellbeing.

Credence High School

A 2,500-strong school offering holistic learning from Pre-KG to Grade 12.

Crayons Nursery

An international Early Years centre.

Chrysalis International Academy

Opens September 2027, offering the National Curriculum for England from FS1 to Year 13.

The campus

350,000 sq ft in Liwan, Dubailand. Construction began in November 2025.

02 · AT A GLANCE

Chrysalis in eight facts

OPENING

September 2027

CURRICULUM

National Curriculum for England, FS1 to Year 13

AT LAUNCH

Around 400 pupils, up to Year 6 or 8

CAPACITY

3,500 pupils

CAMPUS

350,000 sq ft, purpose-built

LOCATION

Liwan, Dubailand

CONSTRUCTION

Under way since November 2025

OWNERS

Nalapad Investments and MVK Holdings

03 · LIVING IN DUBAI

One of the world's most sought-after places to teach

Safe and sunny

Renowned for its safety, world-class infrastructure and year-round sunshine.

Education first

A national priority, with a thriving British-curriculum sector and progressive regulation.

Global lifestyle

World-class dining, leisure and sport, with seamless global connections.

Easy to settle

Modern healthcare, diverse communities and strong expatriate networks.

OUR VISION

Nurturing young minds from diverse backgrounds and capabilities to become learners, leaders and achievers: global citizens who are inquisitive and analytical, think critically, collaborate effectively, communicate well, are fully digitally literate, and contribute to society impartially and fearlessly.

OUR MISSION

We aim to celebrate the unique abilities and talents of each individual, raising expectations and standards in every area to maximise each student's potential.

Our core ethos

A culture of happiness, inclusion and excellence

Every child seen, heard and supported

Aligned with the UAE National Agenda and the KHDA framework

Local culture and values visible every day

Innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship woven into school life

05 · THE CAMPUS

Every child will have the chance to excel

Raised football and cricket ground, padel courts, cricket nets, indoor badminton and basketball arenas

Temperature-controlled pools for different age groups

Contemporary library and digital resource centres

Innovation hubs, STEAM labs, art and music studios, and D&T workshops

Light-filled, tech-enabled classrooms, inclusive learning zones and outdoor classrooms

A sustainable, purpose-built 350,000 sq ft campus in Liwan, Dubailand. Visualisations by Plural Architecture and Design.

THE ATRIUM

A library and forum at the centre of school life

Atrium render, Plural Architecture and Design · 09

Shaded play area

The campus from above

The school from the street

The National Curriculum for England, tailored for Dubai

01

Global perspectives

Global issues woven into study, with local partners and businesses for real-world learning.

02

Language and literacy

High-quality literacy in English and Arabic, while celebrating other European and world languages.

03

Technology and critical thinking

Innovative, tech-rich teaching from staff who know the English curriculum and the UAE Inspection Framework.

04

Flexibility and support

Flexible pathways, academic counselling, wellbeing support and careers guidance as the secondary school grows.

> *Creative arts, music, drama and sport sit firmly at the heart of the school's ethos.*

07 · THE ROLE

The chief architect of curiosity

Founding a school in Dubai is very different to taking on a success story or turning around a failing one. In the right hands, it can create a new generation of leaders and global citizens.

Working with a dynamic Chairman, and free of unwanted legacies, you will have the licence to innovate, ignite and inspire, moving between the British curriculum and the pulse of the UAE National Agenda.

07 · THE ROLE

Not a desk job. No ivory towers.

Hands-on leadership

Ambassadorial, strategic, operational and managerial. You will embody the school's values, champion student voice and help young minds feel seen, valued and fearlessly capable.

Real backing

Teams to build, a culture to nurture and a community to inspire, with the experience and proven success of Nalapad Investments and MVK Holdings behind you. Ambition will have room to breathe.

Community first

A strong relationship with KHDA is essential. More important still is the happiness of parents and pupils: their experience will decide the school's success.

08 · THE BOARD

Who you will work with

Mr. Abdulla Nalapad

Founder and Chairman, Chrysalis International Academy, Credence High School and Crayons Nursery. MD, Nalapad Investment.

Mr. Sameer K. Mohamed

Director, Chrysalis International Academy. MD, MVK Holdings.

Mr. Haris Nalapad

Director, Chrysalis International Academy. Director, Nalapad Investment.

Dr. Zakir K

Consultant General and Colorectal Surgeon. Regional Medical Director, NMC, Dubai.

Two more members will join later: one from the field of education, and one from a different background who will add value to the Chrysalis ethos.

09 · JOB DESCRIPTION

Role purpose

The Founding Principal is the chief academic and educational leader of CIA Dubai, responsible for day-to-day leadership, management and delivery of the academic programme, and for safeguarding within the community.

The focus is academic excellence, staff leadership, student outcomes and the lived culture of the school, within the strategic framework set by the Founder and Chairman together with the Principal.

You will work closely with the Chairman and the non-academic team so that academic and commercial goals stay in harmony.

REPORTING LINE

09 · KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Leading learning and people

1

Academic leadership and delivery

- Lead day-to-day academic operations from Early Years to Senior School
- Ensure high-quality teaching, learning, assessment and pastoral care
- Drive continuous improvement in outcomes, progress and wellbeing
- Apply group academic strategy to the Dubai context

2

Academic staff leadership and performance

- Recruit, develop and retain strong staff with the Head of HR
- Lead professional development and performance management
- Set clear expectations for performance and conduct
- Build a collaborative, reflective, high-trust culture

3

Curriculum implementation and timetabling

- Oversee curriculum delivery, timetabling, assessment and reporting
- Ensure pathways meet student needs and regulatory requirements
- Evaluate curriculum effectiveness and adjust on evidence

09 · KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Caring for students, families and the school

4

Student experience, pastoral care and safeguarding

- Ensure a strong culture of care, inclusion and safeguarding
- Oversee pastoral systems, wellbeing, SEN support and behaviour
- Promote student voice, leadership and co-curricular balance

5

Parent and community engagement

- Be the primary academic interface with parents
- Communicate clearly on standards and expectations
- Build a shared sense of community among families and staff
- Be the academic voice of the school to prospective families

6

Operational collaboration

- Align academic and commercial goals with the Chairman and non-academic teams
- Work with HR on staffing, performance and resourcing
- Work with Admissions and Marketing on student recruitment
- Ensure readiness for inspections and accreditation

10 · PERSON SPECIFICATION

Experience and qualifications

ESSENTIAL

A recognised teaching qualification and a relevant postgraduate degree

Proven senior leadership in a K–12 international or high-performing national school, most likely as a Principal

MOST LIKELY TO HAVE

- Experience in a founding environment
- A track record of improving and sustaining strong academic outcomes across grade levels
- Led curriculum development, assessment frameworks and evidence-based improvement
- Familiarity with global best practice in teaching and learning
- Managed diverse, multicultural teams
- Worked closely with parent communities and external accreditation bodies

10 · PERSON SPECIFICATION

Competencies and personal attributes

Competencies

- Analyses academic data, spots trends and leads targeted interventions
- Coaches, mentors and develops teachers at every career stage
- Strong organisation and strategic planning for complex operations and growth
- Excellent communicator who builds trust with students, staff, parents and partners
- Confident decision-maker who balances academic and pastoral needs
- Fosters a collaborative, high-performance culture of shared accountability
- Adaptive: leads innovation and manages change well

Personal attributes

- Warm, approachable, student-centred and highly visible
- Collaborative, humble and transparent; an active listener
- Culturally sensitive, globally minded and respectful of Dubai's diverse context
- High integrity, emotional intelligence and resilience under pressure
- Passionate about holistic education, academic excellence and wellbeing
- Engaging and inspiring; a confident ambassador for the school

A competitive package

Compensation will be competitive, with an attractive package and performance-based appraisals.

RSAcademics Ltd is managing this recruitment. For an initial confidential conversation, email Jean with a copy of your CV.

Jean Sullivan, Head of International Search
jeansullivan@rsacademics.com

Chris Edwards, Senior Advisor, International Appointments
chrisedwards@rsacademics.com

CLOSING DATE

Monday 16 November, 10:00 UK / 14:00 Dubai

However, applications will be processed on receipt and early applications are encouraged. Interviews are likely to be begin before the Closing Date. Chrysalis International Academy Dubai and RSAcademics reserve the right to make an appointment ahead of the stated deadline.

Apply at rsacademics.com using the Apply Now link. Submit:

- A completed application form
- A completed data sharing agreement
- Your CV or résumé
- A covering letter (no more than two pages) addressed to Mr Abdulla Nalapad, Founder and Chairman, on why you are applying and how your experience and philosophy fit

Upload queries: Alison Hooper, applications@rsacademics.com

12 · RECRUITMENT TIMELINE

What happens next

16 November

Applications close

Every application is acknowledged by email within two working days.

w/c 16 November

First round

Preliminary interviews by video call with RSAcademics.

w/c 23 November

Second round

Interviews with the CIA Dubai team.

w/c 30 November

Final interviews

The final stage of the process.

Later stages

References

Collected by RSAcademics, only with your express permission.

No acknowledgement within two working days? Call RSAcademics on +44 (0) 204 6269 791.

CHRYSALIS
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Where brilliant ideas take flight and children grow into confident global citizens.

Chrysalis is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any appointment is conditional on criminal records clearance. References will be obtained for all candidates called to final interview, and questions about suitability to work with children will be asked throughout the process.