

National Agenda



Early years



Special educational needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

Horizon International School

Curriculum: UK

Overall rating: Good

[Read more about the school](#)



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“Don't look behind to see who is following you, but look forward to be ahead”



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School information

General information 	Location	Umm Al Sheif
	Type of school	Private
	Opening year of school	2008
	Website	www.horizonintlschool.com
	Telephone	04 348 3314
	Address	Umm Sheif, PO Box 51008, Dubai
	Principal	David Wilson
	Language of instruction	English
	Inspection dates	16 to 18 November 2015
Students 	Gender of students	Boys and girls
	Age range	3-16
	Grades or year groups	Foundation Stage 1 to Year 11
	Number of students on roll	937
	Number of children in pre-kindergarten	88
	Number of Emirati students	9
	Number of students with SEND	44
	Largest nationality group of students	UK
Teachers / Support staff 	Number of teachers	78
	Largest nationality group of teachers	British
	Number of teaching assistants	23
	Teacher-student ratio	1:9
	Number of guidance counsellors	4
	Teacher turnover	3%
Curriculum 	Educational permit / Licence	UK
	Main curriculum	UK / Ministry of Education (MoE)
	External tests and examinations	IGCSE, GCSE
	Accreditation	British Schools Overseas (BSO),
	National Agenda benchmark tests	GL Assessments

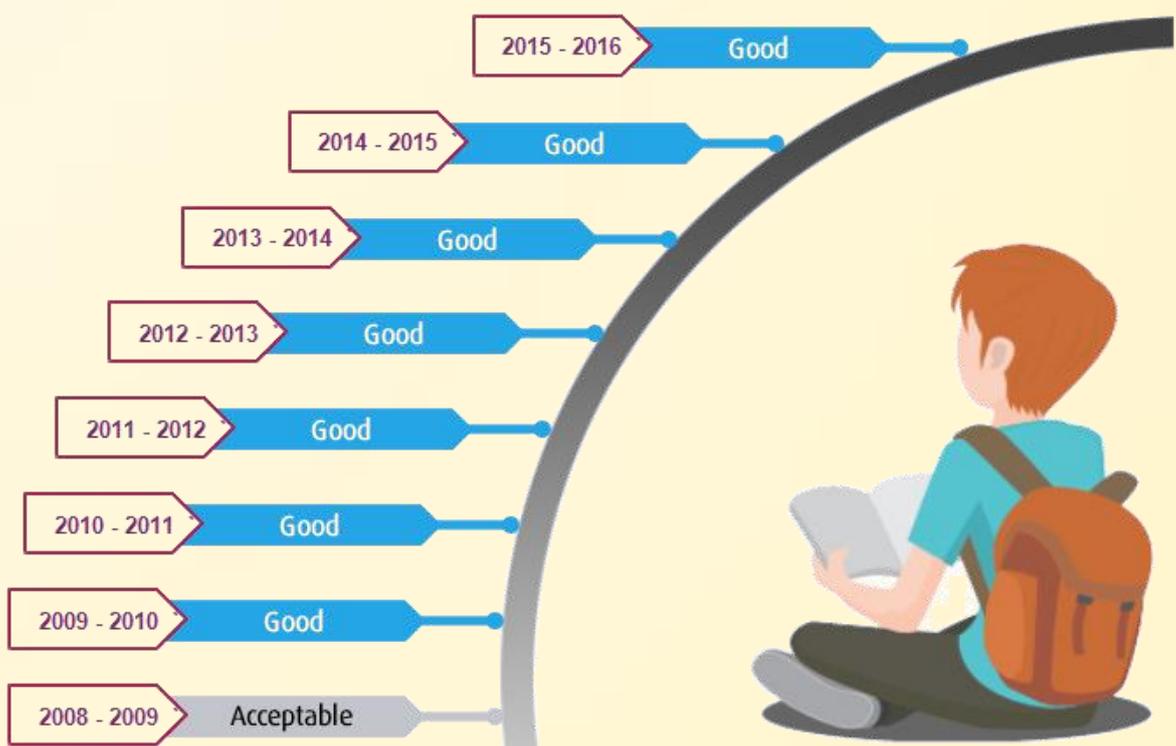


Summary for parents and the community

Horizon International School was inspected by DSIB from 16 to 18 of November 2015. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **good**.

In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by the school, inspectors considered six key standards of performance. Inspectors looked at children's attainment and progress in key subjects, their learning skills and their personal and social development. They judged how effective teaching and the assessment of learning were across the school. Inspectors considered how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside classrooms, met the educational needs of all children. They judged how well the school protected and supported children. In addition inspectors judged the effectiveness of leadership and governance, including management, staffing, facilities and resources.

The inspection judgements were drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observing children learning in lessons, looking at their work, talking with children, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and reviewing the parents', teachers' and senior students' surveys.





How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, **Horizon International School** offered a **good** quality of education for its students.

- Attainment and progress were mainly good in mathematics and science across the school. Children made very good progress in English in the Foundation Stage and attained high standards. In the primary and secondary phases students made good progress in English from their starting points and attainment was acceptable. In Arabic and Islamic education, attainment and progress were mostly acceptable in the primary and secondary phases.
- Students' personal development was one of the strengths of the school. The attitudes and behaviour of the students were exemplary. They had good understanding of Islamic values across the school.
- Teaching was good in primary and secondary, and very good in Foundation Stage. The teaching of Arabic and Islamic education needed improvement. The use of assessment information to influence and support students' learning in these subjects was not strong.
- The curriculum was broad, balanced and effective in developing students' knowledge, skills and understanding. Modifications made to the curriculum for different groups of students were not always effective, especially for students with special educational needs.
- The school was fully aware of all requirements for the health and safety of everyone within the school community. There were rigorous procedures in place for the care, welfare and support of students. Mutual respect, trust and confidence characterised interactions between staff and students.
- The principal had set a clear vision. Parents valued the family nature of the school. Systems of self-evaluation provided a clear understanding of areas that needed to improve further. Management, facilities and resources were good but the limited facilities for information technology (IT) in the secondary phase reduced opportunities to develop the curriculum. The school's understanding of its performance was not always accurate.



What did the school do well?

- The school provided very good care and support for students.
- The personal development of students across the school was outstanding.
- Teaching was good overall and learning was outstanding in the Foundation Stage.
- When teaching was inspirational, particularly in science, it led to the development of research and critical thinking skills.



What does the school need to do next?

- Improve the progress and attainment of students in Islamic education and Arabic by:
 - enabling teachers to share, learn from, and implement good teaching practice across the school
 - setting higher expectations of what students should learn.
- Ensure consistent high attainment in all subjects by:
 - involving all staff in analysing assessment information and its use in identifying starting points in learning and providing challenging tasks which ensure maximum progress
 - monitoring more closely the impact of the resulting actions on students' outcomes.
- Include success criteria that are more sharply focused on students' outcomes in all improvement plans.
- Monitor closely the delivery of in-class support for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to ensure that they all make at least good progress.



How well did the school provide for students with special educational needs and disabilities?

- Students with SEND made good progress in English, mathematics and science and acceptable progress in Islamic education and Arabic.
- The school kept parents well informed of the progress of their children. There was a range of formal meetings at least three times a year as well as informal communication through e-mail, phone contact, coffee mornings and drop in visits.
- The school worked closely with parents and was very successful in making sure that parents' views were heard and respected.
- The school and parents worked closely together to devise education plans for students with SEND. All targets in the plans were agreed by both the school and the parents.
- The school provided an increasing range of support and specialist resources for students with SEND.

National Agenda Parameter



In 2014, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, launched the UAE National Agenda 2021, with education being a prime focus. The National Agenda includes two major objectives developed with the intent of placing the UAE among the most successful countries that provide world-class education. By 2021, it is expected that the UAE will feature in the top twenty countries in the 'Programme for International Student Assessment' (PISA) test and in the top fifteen countries in the 'Trends in Mathematics and Science Studies' (TIMSS) test.

In response to this, each participating school was issued a report on their students' performance in these international assessments and in addition, they were provided with clear targets for improving their performance. This academic year, KHDA introduced the National Agenda Parameter, which is a method for measuring and monitoring schools' progress towards achieving their individual National Agenda targets through the use of external benchmarking assessments.

Main points:

- The school met the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter and progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets was as expected.
- Governors, owners and the principal promoted awareness and understanding of the National Agenda and the National Agenda targets among few of its stakeholders. The principal had made a decision not to promote the National Agenda and testing to the parent body at this stage until the school staff were more familiar with the demands to be placed upon students.
- Students were aware of forthcoming international benchmark tests that they would be taking later in the month. The curriculum was partially aligned to TIMMS and PISA requirements.
- National Agenda relevant subject skills and knowledge were acknowledged in the curriculum but were not systematically planned for progression. Teachers had received some professional development to improve their questioning skills and promote inquiry.
- Teaching in the primary phase in English, mathematics and science was increasingly effective in developing skills of analysis, evaluation and improvement. The activities that were most effective engaged students in 'learning through doing' and were based upon real life scenarios.
- Students occasionally used IT and other resources to develop their research skills as aligned to National Agenda targets. Students were encouraged to bring their own devices to school in order to develop their research skills. In science, students had enough resources to conduct independent research. In Year 5, for example, students used the iMovie application on their tablets to produce movies in which they presented their research on the life cycle of a butterfly.

Innovation in education

The *UAE Vision 2021* sets out the National Agenda for the UAE to be among the most innovative nations in the world. The National Innovation Strategy sets the context for 'innovation' and 'innovative leadership'. It provides a basis for evaluating public and private schools in order to deliver a world-class education for all children in the UAE.

Innovation is driven by a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. It is based on curiosity, the willingness to take risks, to experiment and to test assumptions as well as questioning and challenging the status quo. Being innovative is about looking beyond what we currently do well, identifying the great ideas of tomorrow and putting them into practice.



Promoting a culture of innovation:

- The school's leaders had initiated and implemented a range of ideas and strategies to promote a culture of innovation. Senior leaders had started to conduct personal research and attend professional forums to gain a broader understanding of the concept of innovation. They participated in an innovation audit in phase groups or subject teams. School leaders, teachers and students had initiated creative use of both internal and external space. The use of space and resources across the school was beginning to help the development of innovation skills. Adaptations to the curriculum at year and phase levels were starting to encourage teachers and leaders to establish links between subjects and promote innovative learning. This was a key feature of the curriculum in the early years.

Overall school performance

Good

1. Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable ↑
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Weak
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
English 	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Very good ↓	Good	Good
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good	Good ↑	Acceptable
	Progress	Good	Very good ↑	Good
Science 	Attainment	Good	Good ↑	Good ↑
	Progress	Good	Good	Good

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills	Outstanding	Good	Good

2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Very good ↑	Outstanding

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Very good ↑	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good	Good

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Very good ↑	Good	Good

5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

6. Leadership and management

	All phases
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Parents and the community	Outstanding
Governance	Good
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good



Main inspection report

The Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) is responsible for inspecting and reporting on the standards reached by students and the quality of education provided in Dubai's private schools.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale



Using this scale, the *Main inspection report* contains the judgements about the different aspects, phases and subjects that form the work of the school.

It provides the reasons for the answers to the questions in the *Summary for parents and the community*:

- How well did the school perform overall?
- What did the school do well?
- What does the school need to do next?

1. Students' achievement

Foundation Stage

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Good	Very good ↓
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- By the end of Foundation Stage, the majority of children achieved literacy levels that were above curriculum expectations for children learning English as an additional language. Children had secure phonic knowledge which they used to read and spell new words. Very young children enjoyed wearing monster ears to help them listen for environmental sounds. Older Foundation Stage children listened carefully for the sounds in words when attempting to write a shared sentence about what they wanted to be when they grew up. Children had knowledge of the common reading words and used a range of strategies to read and understand simple texts. Progress in speaking, listening and reading was more secure than in writing. Different groups made similarly very good progress over time.
- The majority of children had developed a secure understanding of basic mathematical concepts. They could confidently describe objects according to shape, size and colour. Children recognised numerals to at least 10 and were able to count small groups of objects accurately. They used real objects to solve problems and investigate. Young children enjoyed hunting for 'shape monsters' in the learning environment and were able to record their findings using the matching colour. During most lessons, teachers provided the appropriate levels of challenge and support, and most groups made better than expected progress over time.
- The majority of children had developed age-appropriate scientific skills, knowledge and understanding of a range of concepts. Their natural curiosity led them to explore and discover for themselves in the well-resourced and stimulating learning environment. For example, they learned that magnets attract metal, pets require food and water, and that the green bananas growing in bunches on the trees in the school did eventually change colour and could be picked and eaten. Children were developing an awareness of the need to observe, make predictions and test their assumptions. Higher ability children rose to the challenge of needing to think critically and solve problems. Most groups of children made similarly better than expected progress over time.

Primary

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Acceptable	Acceptable
English	Acceptable	Good
Mathematics	Good ↑	Very good ↑
Science	Good ↑	Good

- In Islamic education, attainment and progress were in line with national curriculum expectations. When learning about the Qur'an, most students memorised some of the verses and had knowledge of their meanings. Students could explain aspects of the life of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). In Years 1 and 2, students knew the names of members of the family of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH). In Year 6, students gave information about the Prophet's journey from Mecca to Medina. In Years 1, 2 and 3 they learned about the forms of worship in Islam and understood the importance of washing before prayers. They were able to describe the pilgrimage and had appropriate knowledge about Zakat and the importance of Friday prayers. Acceptable progress was made by most groups over time.
- In Arabic as a first language, attainment and progress were in line with national curriculum expectations. Students' skills were better in listening and responding than in reading and writing. When speaking, they used an adequate range of vocabulary and could form simple sentences that demonstrated their understanding of what they were learning. Most students could read familiar texts and understand the main ideas. In writing they could copy simple texts, but their independent writing was limited to a few words. They demonstrated adequate understanding of grammar appropriate to curriculum expectations and learning objectives. Different groups made similar progress over time.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the attainment of most students was in line with curriculum expectations. Students were able to hold a short conversation in simple Arabic about familiar topics. Simple and frequently used words and phrases could be adequately read aloud and correctly pronounced. However, when reading for understanding skills were less developed. Students' independent writing skills were weak. In the absence of national and international tests, no external assessment for benchmarking was conducted. In addition, the school's internal information was not used consistently to enhance learning. Most students had made adequate progress in relation to their starting points and against the learning objectives in lessons, particularly in listening and reading. Different groups made similarly acceptable progress.
- Students' level of attainment in English matched the English curriculum standard expected for their age. In international tests, attainment was also in line with expected standards. A few students exceeded this standard. Students demonstrated understanding of persuasive writing used to influence audiences. In Year 5, students developed confidence using a range of persuasive techniques in presenting their advertisements promoting travel to Dubai. Students did not always ensure that they checked the exact meaning of complex sentences or new vocabulary in their reading. From their starting points in this phase, most students, including those with SEND, made at least good progress in this subject.

- From their starting points in mathematics in Year 1, almost all students, both boys and girls, made very good progress so that by the end of Key Stage 2, attainment was above the UK average and was improving. Results for 2015 indicated that a higher proportion of students reached the above average Level 5 than in the England. Students were particularly competent in dealing with number and algebra but found it difficult to apply this knowledge in practical situations or when solving problems. By end of Year 6, students were able to construct simple line graphs from data. They could analyse their graphs, evaluate their own and each other’s work, and were able to explain how to improve their graphs. Different groups made similarly very good progress.
- Attainment and progress in science was good when compared to curriculum and international standards. Through hands-on activities students consistently acquired knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts. In Year 6, for example, students investigated the type of bird beak that was most suitable for collecting and eating seeds. They followed the steps of the scientific method in their investigations, especially hypothesising and predicting. Students' progress data over time and their progress in lessons were both good. In Year 4, students were able to develop their understanding of hearing. They built a model of an ear using play dough, identified its different parts and were able to explain how hearing took place. Different groups of students made similarly good progress.

Secondary		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language	Weak	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Acceptable	Acceptable
English	Acceptable	Good
Mathematics	Acceptable	Good
Science	Good ↑	Good

- In Islamic education attainment and progress was in line with national curriculum standards. Most students had sufficient knowledge of key facts and principles of Islam. They were able to explain the meaning of key words in the verses of Qur’an and made some links between what they learned and real life situations, for example when dealing with others. Students memorised Hadiths about a few Islamic morals and values. They understood the Pillars of Islam and the Pillars of Faith and could list the names of prayers and the number of times each day they are performed. Most groups made steady progress in learning about the life of the Prophet (PBUH) and his journey from Mecca to Madinah.
- In Arabic as a first language, in all grades, listening was the strongest skill for most students who could follow their teachers’ instruction in standard Arabic. Attainment was below curriculum standards but progress was improving for the different groups. Students could respond to questions orally but their extended speaking skills were below expectations. They could read familiar texts and understood the meaning of key words but often required support from their teachers. Students demonstrated only basic writing skills, with frequent errors in spelling, and their ability to write at length to express their ideas was limited. Students’ understanding of basic grammar rules was adequate. There were no external assessments for this subject in the school.

- In Arabic as an additional language, most students listened well and responded to simple questions about familiar topics such as introducing themselves and talking about their daily routines. They read aloud pre-learned sentences with a few pronunciation mistakes. Their reading comprehension and independent writing skills were less well developed. Progress, in relation to students' starting points, was adequate with the best progress being made in developing listening skills and decoding Arabic script in familiar texts. Progress in independent writing was slower. There was no marked difference in the progress of the different groups of students and no externally benchmarked assessments were available to be used. Internal assessment information did not help sufficiently in identifying students' linguistic needs.
- In English, most students' attainment matched the expected curriculum standards. Although there was some variability in different year groups, boys and girls achieved similar standards. In international tests the level of attainment in English was in line with expected standards. Students demonstrated confidence and enthusiasm in creative writing. As a result of careful and detailed analysis of extracts from published fiction, students enjoyed making connections and developed their own writing of mystery. Students appreciated poetry in English literature, for example when enjoying discussions of their interpretation of each stanza in Seamus Heaney's poem, *Follower*. Most groups made consistently good progress as a result of the engaging learning activities.
- In mathematics, both boys and girls made good progress. There were no IGCSE results because the current Year 11 classes were the first in the school. Cohorts at the top end of the school were also small which made any comparisons unreliable. Nevertheless, standardised assessments for Years 9 and 10 indicated that students performed slightly above international averages. There was a larger group of students in Year 9 and the assessment evidence collected by the school showed that current levels of attainment for the groups of students in this cohort were broadly similar. This was borne out by the content in students' workbooks.
- Students' attainment and progress in the sciences were good. Although assessment data did not show good levels of attainment at the time of the inspection, in lessons, students consistently attained very good levels. Through well-planned investigations, they acquired a very good understanding of scientific concepts. In Year 10, for example, students were able to carry out an investigation to test for the presence of proteins, lipids and carbohydrates in unknown substances. Progress was also good because the majority of students were able to make better than expected progress towards their targets.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills	Outstanding	Good	Good

- Almost all children in Foundation Stage were actively involved in their learning and concentrated very well on tasks. Throughout the school, students took increasing responsibility for learning, working well for long periods without teachers' guidance, for example when preparing videos on the Romans on Hadrian's Wall. Most students knew how well they were doing in their work. Their understanding of how to improve was less well developed.
- Students worked well with each other and in small groups. They discussed ideas and were willing to present their understanding of the subject to the rest of the class. Most students, at all levels, communicated with confidence in a range of topics.
- Students made clear connections between their learning and other parts of the curriculum. This was especially true for science where a number of practical activities examining matter were carried out. In Foundation Stage almost all learning was closely connected with everyday life and was integrated in a seamless manner.

- Enquiry skills were well developed across all stages of the school, as demonstrated in Year 5 where students were asked to 'create a gadget for spying'. Critical thinking was well developed and promoted as in the writing of code to create 'Shoot the Bug' application. Research was used successfully in many projects, for example those associated with famous Victorians.

2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students demonstrated consistently positive attitudes. They were helpful and responsible at all times. Students were very proud of their school and were keen to share their learning experiences with inspectors.
- Students' exemplary behaviour and conduct was deserving of recognition and praise. They were excellent ambassadors of the school. Many students responded with confidence in their interactions and were eager to embrace the many opportunities available to them at the school.
- Students were sensitive, respectful and empathetic towards the needs of others. They made considered attempts to help each other. This was seen in the way that those who were new to the school settled extremely quickly and made new friendships with ease. As a result, all students established positive relationships with their peers and with their teachers.
- Students were knowledgeable about healthy eating and the importance of healthy lifestyles. They were keen to exhibit the on-site juice bar 'Juzzz'. They made healthy choices and understood that the school considered a healthy lifestyle to be very important.
- Students consistently maintained a high level of attendance at school. They were punctual to lessons and occurrences of lateness to lessons were rare. This had a positive impact on students' learning.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good

- Students had a clear understanding of how Islamic values influenced their daily lives in Dubai and the UAE. They could explain how Islamic values positively affected their habits, manners and relationships with others.
- Students were well aware of the Emirati heritage and culture. They respectfully shared their thoughts about UAE history and what they learned from local visits. Emirati traditions and local social events and activities were known about and understood well.
- Across all phases, students had strong awareness of the diversity of UAE and Dubai. They appreciated the impact of this on their lives and how they dealt with each other. Students were able to make detailed comparisons between the customs, famous traditional meals and daily routines of people from their own and other cultures in the school.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Very good ↑	Outstanding

- Students were passionate about their school community and were committed to activities that had a positive impact on society. They initiated and participated in environmental drives, community outreach projects and ceremonies of cultural significance. Older students had participated in the recent Armistice Day ceremony in Sharjah.
- Across the phases, students increasingly demonstrated excellent work ethics and took increased responsibility for initiating and implementing projects and enterprise activities. Older students had opportunities to make informed economic decisions associated with their projects. The market day initiative had encouraged students to grow their own produce and sell it to the school community.
- From a young age, students were made aware of their impact on the environment. Students engaged in conservation projects and were actively involved in recycling activities within the school and the wider community. Members of the school council described recent activities associated with measuring the consumption of electricity used by the school.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Very good ↑	Good	Good

- Most teachers effectively applied knowledge of their subjects and understood how students learn. For example, science teachers were very aware that students deepened scientific understanding through practical work. Mathematics in Year 5 was particularly memorable for an example of a teacher encouraging students to be involved in creating individual graphs from a choice of real life data.
- The majority of teachers planned lessons which had clear purposes, providing interesting learning for students. Students understood what was required of them and enjoyed working to achieve lesson objectives. In primary, there was particularly effective use of 'talking partners' and planning generally took account of students' previous learning. Planning was not of a consistently high standard across all teachers.
- In the best lessons, teachers engaged students in meaningful discussion by asking questions that made students think. For example, in a Year 4 science lesson students were asked 'Do bigger ears mean better hearing?' Lively discussion followed, with students offering ideas to prove or disprove this hypothesis. In a minority of lessons, questions were only asked to obtain facts or check students' recall.
- Generally, teachers met the needs of most students effectively. For example, in Year 1 design technology, the teaching assistant was deployed most efficiently to support individual learning as students made models of medieval castle features. In a minority of lessons, the needs of higher and lower achievers were not met and teachers did not support or challenge these students appropriately.
- Critical thinking and independent learning skills were under-developed. Good examples were seen in Year 5 science where skillful use of IT provided opportunities for research and imaginative presentation of life cycle research. Year 8 IT teaching encouraged analysis and evaluation of websites to identify spoof sites. In many lessons, there was insufficient student autonomy and choice of learning activities in real life contexts.

- Teaching in Arabic as a first language was not always consistent. Teachers had appropriate subject knowledge and modelled correct language for their students. They planned for lessons regularly but did not always provide opportunities for all language skills to develop, particularly independent reading and writing. In a minority of lessons, oral questions and dialogue were used to engage more students.
- The quality of teaching in Arabic as an additional language was acceptable. Teachers had secure subject knowledge but limited understanding of how students learn. In most lessons, a whole-class approach was the main feature of the teaching strategy. In a few lessons, students were more effectively involved in their learning, which improved listening and basic speaking skills. Low expectation and a limited range of tasks and activities were main weaknesses in many lessons.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Assessment	Good	Good	Good

- The school aligned its internal assessments well with the curriculum standards in most subjects. These assessments generated generally reliable and valid data on students' attainment and progress with some variation in quality across the subjects.
- The school enrolled its students in an appropriate and wide range of external benchmarking tests that allowed valid comparisons between their attainment and progress and those of their counterparts on the national and international levels.
- The school analysed internal and external assessment data at the departmental level. The analysis generated reports that the heads of departments submitted to the senior leadership team on a termly basis. The effectiveness of the analysis method and its usefulness in tracking students' progress varied across subjects.
- All teachers used available assessment information to plan lessons and to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of all groups of students. Most planned lessons, as a result, included differentiated tasks that met students' needs. However, monitoring the impact of the modifications in teaching and the curriculum on student outcomes was still a developing feature of the assessment process.
- Teachers knew students' strengths and weaknesses fairly well and provided them with appropriate challenge in lessons. The quality of teachers' written feedback varied across the subjects. Some feedback was detailed and included clear next steps in learning. Students across subjects and levels were involved in a variety of effective self-assessment processes that allowed them to improve the quality of their work.

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Good	Good

- The school was committed to preparing students for their future lives, education or work. There was a clear rationale for the school's curriculum to ensure it remained relevant and met the needs of students. It met the requirements of a broad and balanced UK curriculum. The school taught UAE social studies integrated with various subjects.

- The progressive curriculum was planned to build on students' prior knowledge, ensuring development of knowledge and skills in each subject. Consequently, the curriculum met the needs of most students. The Foundation Stage curriculum ensured that the youngest children developed all the necessary skills to achieve well in the primary phase. This was a strength of the school's work.
- As the school had expanded, so had the range of subject options available to older students. There was a wide choice of subjects available for students to study at IGCSE. This ensured that students had every opportunity to realise their academic potential as well as develop their natural interests and talents, such as in sport, art and dance.
- The curriculum was meaningful to students because there were opportunities to transfer skills across subjects. Students could make connections in their learning which was evident in the many displays around the school. For example, Year 5 students produced 3D art related to Roman history. This was very impressive, as was their creative writing that was related to the Roman Empire.
- The school had reviewed the curriculum to ensure that the necessary adjustments to accommodate the recent UK curriculum changes in English, mathematics and science had been made. This ensured the continued good provision for students at the school.
- The school did not teach UAE social studies consistently throughout. It was taught through stand-alone lessons from Year 1 to year 6. In Years 1 to 4, it was the responsibility of a specialist teacher to deliver these lessons. In Years 5 and 6 the class teachers had responsibility for the delivery of the UAE social studies curriculum.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum adaptation	Very good ↑	Good	Good

- The curriculum was successfully adapted by teachers to ensure that it met the needs of different groups of learners. Careful attention was paid to adapting learning tasks for those students with SEND. 'Skills Enhancement Time' was a recently introduced curriculum adaptation. This was extremely effective in improving the accuracy of students' writing skills in English.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum was designed to match the needs of children as individuals from the outset, promoting independence and learning through play. Primary and secondary phases offered interesting, innovative learning experiences and a wide range of subjects designed to inspire and engage students' interests. The schools' 'Community Achievement Volunteering and Enterprise' programme promoted and enhanced students' personal and social skills.
- Learning experiences to provide students with understanding of the UAE's values, culture and society were not yet embedded. Some appropriate learning experiences were provided to develop students' understanding about UAE society. Understanding of Emirati culture and the UAE society was not promoted sufficiently well for all students.
- The school was committed to developing the provision of Arabic for children in Foundation Stage, offering three 25-minute sessions per week for all Foundation Stage 2 children. Speaking and listening skills using basic greetings, numbers and days of the week were targeted. The programme, designed for non-Arabic speaking learners, was an introduction to prepare children for Arabic in Year 1.

5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The school had a clear and comprehensive child protection policy that was available online and known to parents, students and staff. There were highly effective procedures in place for safeguarding against all kinds of abuse, including bullying on campus and online social media.
- The school ensured that its environment was hygienic and safe. Students were supervised at all times on campus and school transport, and their safety was the highest priority for all school staff. The school transport operation ran very smoothly and students were kept safe on buses.
- The school kept all equipment, including air conditioners, security systems, and fire extinguishers in excellent functioning condition. Comprehensive records were kept of both regular maintenance and actions taken in response to incidents. The clinic provided students with excellent health services and kept up-to-date health-related records on every student.
- The school premises, resources and equipment were suitable for the learning needs of all students including students with SEND. The buildings did not have elevators to enable students with physical disabilities to have access to the first and second floors.
- Healthy living and healthy life styles were a key priority for the school and were integrated into almost all aspects of students' school lives. The canteen offered a wide variety of healthy snacks such as fruit salads and smoothies, and the nurses played an essential role in promoting healthy living practices through giving well-planned lectures and seminars.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Care and support	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- Student staff relationships were of a very high order, with mutual respect shown to all involved. There were very good interactions between students and staff during class and at break times. Behaviour management was implemented in a caring and considerate manner.
- Procedures to promote attendance were very effective from Foundation Stage to the secondary phase. Students were punctual in coming to school and in arriving on time for all classes.
- A clear and effective strategy was in place for the early identification of students with SEND using a wide range of appropriate assessments. The school had identified students who were more able and also those who were gifted and talented.
- In conjunction with the 'Inclusion Centre' staff and using its guidelines, teachers and subject leaders aligned lesson plans to meet the students' individual needs. This promoted progress. A range of other enhancement programmes and personal development activities also took place. This enriched and positively impacted on the well-being of students with SEND.
- Children were supported very well in the Foundation Stage by their class teachers. In the rest of the school a designated teacher was available for meeting students who required some additional advice and a 'listening ear', either individually or in small groups. Career guidance was available through speakers from overseas, parents' career day and through direct support from a local enterprise.

Provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities

Good

- The dedicated special education needs coordinator (SENCO) and his team had very good support from the principal and governors to develop all aspects of SEND provision in an inclusive setting. The SEND policy was comprehensive, giving very good detail on identification strategies to meet students' needs.
- Identification of students with SEND was of a good quality. The school successfully used a wide range of suitable procedures to ensure accurate and early identification. The school had a good understanding of the needs of these students and it had developed a graded system of intervention to meet the individual and often complex needs of the students.
- Parents of students with SEND were kept well informed of their children's progress through formal reports at the end of each term and a range of other activities. Parents were updated regularly through email, telephone and meetings with the SENCO or class teachers. The school and parents cooperated well in the development of individual education plans (IEPs) and parental inputs were incorporated within those plans.
- Curriculum modification was achieved mostly through the development of IEPs. The effectiveness of these was lessened through the lack of clear starting points. The personal and social needs of the students were very well supported and targeted through a range of appropriate activities including social communication sessions, involvement in activities such as sailing, and auditory listening programmes.
- The progress of students with SEND was assessed regularly and suitably monitored, especially in the foundation classes. The assessment of progress was less rigorous in a minority of classes. The majority of students with SEND made good progress in English, mathematics and science but only acceptable progress in Arabic as an additional language and Islamic education.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- Senior leaders led by the principal were dedicated and effective. They shared a sense of purpose as a team and successfully communicated the school's aims. All staff members understood national priorities and worked towards achieving them.
- Leaders had secure knowledge of the best practices in teaching and learning and had made adjustments to the curriculum in line with national changes. The school was inclusive and effective in establishing a positive learning culture and in achieving high standards in students' personal development.
- Relationships were professional. Morale in the school was positive. The school had delegated leadership effectively to middle managers and coordinators; some were at an early stage of understanding fully what was needed to fulfil their roles. Responsibilities were organised clearly for each member of the senior leadership to provide monitoring and evaluation across all phases of the school.
- Leaders were constantly seeking ways to innovate and extend their professional skills in order to ensure that the school continued to move forward. The team worked together to evaluate and improve systems within school and accommodate the recent changes in order to sustain improvement.

- There had been success in improving aspects of the school as a result of changes made by the leadership and a commitment to moving the school forward. Leaders ensured that the school was compliant with all statutory and regulatory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- School self-evaluation using both internal and external data was increasingly used in school improvement planning but was inconsistent in practice. The staff were aware of the strengths and areas for development of the school and worked to make some improvements.
- The recent introduction of the middle leadership team had helped improve the quality of teaching in some areas. There was a clear annual cycle of monitoring teaching and learning. This was beginning to impact on attainment levels, particularly in mathematics and science.
- School improvement plans addressed the recommendations from the last inspection report but the criteria were not clear enough to measure success accurately. The action plans, although detailed, were insufficiently systematic with unrealistic timescales. Most staff were actively involved in implementing strategies for improvement. The school managed change competently.
- As a consequence of limitations in the school's self-evaluation processes, progress towards reaching the school's priorities over time has not been as effective or as rapid as it might otherwise have been.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Outstanding

- Regular information sessions were held within the school to inform parents of changes and how they could help their children learn at home. The 'Parent Teacher Association' organised and assisted in a number of school social events. There was regular two-way use of direct contact between teachers and parents, especially in the younger years.
- The school used a wide range of methods to communicate with parents. More recent additions included the use of Tapestry and Seesaw as online tools in order for parents to see and comment on the work that their children were doing. They were seen as partners in their children's learning and development, particularly if their children had special educational needs.
- There were termly parent/teacher meetings supported by detailed written reports reporting on all aspects of students' achievements, areas for improvement and the next steps. Parents were encouraged to have regular contact with teachers as and when necessary. They were able to make use of the principal's drop in morning that was held each week.
- The school made links with a number of environmental groups as it had recently embarked on an eco-drive to add to the recent bronze award. Parents were encouraged to come into school to speak with students on a range of topics. There were varied and mutually beneficial links with a number of external partners including local schools and businesses.

Governance	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a revised and improved structure to the board of governors, demonstrating a wider representation of both non-elected and elected stakeholders. These now included parents, teachers, owners, and members of the senior leadership team, and students by invitation. • Four meetings a year were held with each one including a detailed report from the principal. There were regular meetings with the representative of the owners and the principal for educational and strategic planning. Information from these was fed back to relevant groups and individuals. All parties had the opportunity to express concerns or suggestions. • There was an effective professional relationship between the governing body and the school after effort had been put into streamlining processes. Appropriate staffing and resources were available to address weaknesses. All statutory requirements were met. 	

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The day-to-day management of the school was very well organised. Structured routines for daily tasks were fully embedded within the school culture with teachers, students, support staff and parents working collaboratively. Students were respectful of the school routines with minimal time being lost between lessons. • All staff were suitably well qualified for the positions they held and benefited from regular professional development that was matched to the school's priorities. There were specially qualified staff who ran the Inclusion Centre with other staff who had particular areas of SEND experience. • The premises were spacious and provided a stimulating environment for the school with all classrooms being fitted with interactive whiteboards and projectors. The astro-turfed area at the front of the school provided an attractive space for sport and play but it lacked shade. • All necessary materials and equipment were in good condition. Teachers had a range of resources to support their teaching which were appropriate for the age of the students. The library was well stocked but there were very few books in Arabic or to support Islamic education. There was no prayer room for girls and the lack of IT facilities restricted the secondary curriculum. 	

The views of the parents, teachers and students

Before the inspection, the views of the parents, teachers and senior secondary students were surveyed. Key messages from each group were considered during the inspection and these helped to form inspection judgements. A summary of the survey statistics and comments from those who responded to the survey follows:

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
Parents* 	2015-2016	185
	2014-2015	236
Teachers 	62	
Students 	27	

*The number of responses from parents is based on the number of families.

- Almost all parents and a large majority of students who responded to the survey were satisfied with the education provided by the school. They had observed improvements in learning provision over recent months.
- A large majority of parents agreed that their children made progress in almost all subjects. This was agreed by most of the students although a significant number of them did not know the extent of the progress they made in Arabic as an additional language.
- Almost all parents agreed that students had opportunities to develop community and environmental responsibility in school. The majority of students did not think that there were sufficient opportunities to learn about Emirati heritage.
- Most of the students believed that their teachers were skilled and well qualified.
- Most parents and students thought that the school was well led and that their views were respected and acted upon.

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report, you should contact inspection@khda.gov.ae