

Dubai Gem Private School...



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational needs and disabilities



Innovation

## Inspection Report 2015-2016

Dubai Gem Private 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	Oud Metha
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1986
Website	www.dubaigem.org
Telephone	04-3376661
Address	Oud Metha Road, Bur Dubai PO Box 989
Principal	Dr Tassos Anastasiades
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	8 to 11 February 2016

### Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-18
Grades or year groups	Foundation Stage 1 to Year 13
Number of students on roll	1,331
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	2
Number of students with SEND	51
Largest nationality group of students	Indian

### Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	117
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	20
Teacher-student ratio	10
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	8%

### Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	National Curriculum for England
External tests and examinations	International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) IBT, CAT4
Accreditation	Not applicable (N/A)
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT

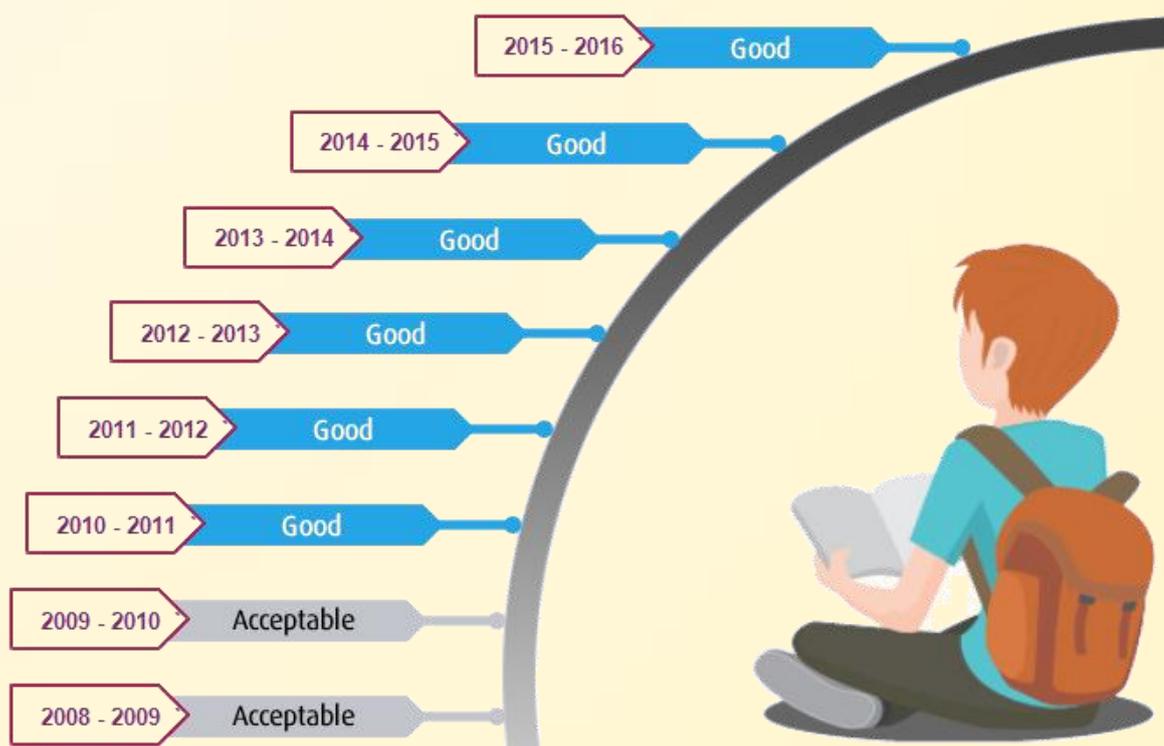


## Summary for parents and the community

**Dubai Gem Private School** was inspected by DSIB from 8 to 11 February, 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was **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 Dubai Gem Private School provided a **good** level of education for its students.

- Attainment and progress were at least good in English, mathematics, science and Islamic education. In Arabic as a first and additional language, attainment and progress were acceptable. Learning skills were very good in the post-16 phase and good across the rest of the phases.
- Students' personal development was one of the strengths of the school. Their attitudes and behaviour were exemplary. They had a good understanding of Islamic values across the school and very good social and innovation skills.
- Teaching was good across the school but the teaching of Arabic languages needed improvement. The use of assessment information to influence and support students' learning was very good in secondary and post-16.
- 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 and disabilities (SEND).
- Good arrangements for the health and safety of all were in place. 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 for the school and parents valued its family nature. Systems of self-evaluation provided the school and the governing board with an understanding of areas that needed to improve further. The pace of change was at times too rapid to allow for consolidation. Management, facilities and resources were good.



### What did the school do well?

- Outstanding attainment in English, mathematics and science in the secondary phase and outstanding progress made by students in primary science. The development of language skills was very strong.
- The outstanding personal development of all students.
- The arrangements for assessment, which supported good teaching and learning.



### What does the school need to do next?

- Manage the pace of change by:
  - ensuring areas of development are fully understood before continuing to the next initiative
  - clearly understanding the success criteria for each target in the school improvement plans and monitoring their impact
  - sharing best practice across the school and celebrating success when targets have been fully met.
- Raise the attainment in Arabic as a first language in the primary and secondary phases and Arabic as an additional language in the primary phase by:
  - identifying clear starting points in learning in every lesson
  - providing opportunities in each lesson for students to evaluate what they have learned
  - matching tasks to the different needs of students.
- Improve teaching by:
  - ensuring that assessment data is used consistently across the school to inform planning so that appropriate work is set for different ability groups in each class, especially for students with SEND
  - providing training for teachers to support students in their use of technology.



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

- The provision for students with SEND was good and the progress that the majority of students made was good. The school was inclusive and students with a wide range of students with SEND were well cared for.
- Parents welcomed the three meetings a year to discuss the progress of their children. Consequently they felt informed in supporting their children's needs at home. However, a few parents commented that they would welcome curriculum information in advance.
- Parents reported they felt confident in contacting the school at any time. They particularly, appreciated the support and guidance offered by the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO).
- Through discussions and meetings, the SENCO helped parents understand their children's learning needs and provided advice and strategies for parents on how to support them at home.
- School leaders were committed to improvement and more resources had been provided to increase the rate of progress made by students with SEND in lessons.

## 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. Progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets was as expected.
- The school had taken the necessary measures to promote the National Agenda amongst all the stakeholders. The students gave clear explanations of why the benchmark tests were important to the school. They pointed out their value in helping the school group students according to their ability levels.
- The heads of departments had begun the process of curriculum modification to ensure the needs of all the students were met fully. They had clearly focused on the acquisition of skills and a good example was in English where the need to work on complex inference from non-fiction texts had been identified, and as such, the department had introduced the DEAR reading programme.
- Strategies to develop critical thinking and enquiry were an emerging feature. In primary, the investigative approach to teaching in science was having an impact as the students were asked to predict, test and evaluate. In mathematics, there was some evidence of modelling with students asked to apply their learning to real life applications. It was not, however, a consistent feature across all subjects and all phases.
- The school had recently introduced the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) scheme. The use of tablets was evident in some lessons but measurement of its effectiveness as an aid for learning, was in its early stages. When it was used effectively, the students were far more involved in their own learning and consequently made better progress.

## 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:

- School leaders demonstrated a clear understanding of what strategic measures were required to promote a culture of innovation across the school. The leadership was addressing potential barriers to sustain school improvement with a gradual integration of improvements to the school's infrastructure. The school was aware of the need to embed innovation in their curriculum design although this was limited in terms of learning, teaching and enterprise.

Overall school performance

Good

1. Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Islamic education</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
<b>Arabic as a first language</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable ↑	Not applicable
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
<b>Arabic as an additional language</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Not applicable
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Not applicable
<b>English</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Good	Good	Outstanding	Not applicable
	<b>Progress</b>	Good	Good	Outstanding	Not applicable
<b>Mathematics</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Good	Very good ↑	Outstanding	Very good ↓
	<b>Progress</b>	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
<b>Science</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Good	Very good ↑	Outstanding	Very good ↓
	<b>Progress</b>	Very good ↓	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Learning skills</b>	Good	Good	Good	Very good ↑

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Very good ↓	Very good ↓	Very good ↓

## 3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

## 4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good ↑	Good	Good

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good	Good	Good	Good
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

## 6. Leadership and management

	All phases
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Parents and the community	Good
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	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Very good ↓

- Although all children were learning English as a second language, they reached high levels of spoken language by the end of Foundation Stage. They learned through games, songs and positive interactions with their teachers. Children in Foundation Stage 1 had good listening skills and an increasing knowledge of letters and sounds. Many children had early writing skills and matched letters with pictures. Attractive displays of books in classrooms encouraged them to enjoy looking at pictures and stories. By Foundation Stage 2, children's speaking skills were well developed. Their wide vocabulary on a good range of topics enabled them to speak confidently to a group and describe events, such as a visit to Mushrif Park. Many children were beginning to read independently. They shared books with parents and their teachers.
- Younger Foundation Stage children were counting reliably from one to ten and beginning to group and count objects. They knew number songs and showed their understanding of number concepts by using vocabulary correctly when playing with sand. By Foundation Stage 2, they were beginning to use their knowledge to solve problems. They counted money when playing in the classroom shop, or confidently used words such as 'one more' when filling containers with cups of water. The names of days of the week and months of the year were used correctly to describe class events. Children had an increasing understanding of the value of ten and how tens could be added together. They were making good progress towards achieving the early learning goals.
- In science, younger Foundation Stage children had an extensive vocabulary base developed from good teacher interactions and from play-based activities. Educational visits, for example to a children's zoo, had increased their experiences about various animals and the kinds of foods they ate. They used their knowledge to talk to their teachers in science focus sessions. They described a mixture of flour and water as 'sticky' or 'soft' and used an increasing range of tools to find things out. By Foundation Stage 2, children began to record what they had seen, by completing charts or labelling drawings. Their science learning skills were less well developed as teachers often over directed the 'investigations' Nevertheless, they were making very good progress towards achieving the early learning goals.

### Primary

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

- The majority of students attained levels that were above the curriculum standards in Islamic education. The majority had a strong knowledge of the Pillars of Islam. Students' recitation skills were developing with some links to what they had learnt in the Qur'anic verses. The majority of students progressed well in their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the learning objectives in the lessons. The progress of the different groups of students, including students with SEND, was inconsistent.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students in primary could read short familiar texts and understand their meaning relatively well. Most students showed good listening skills. They developed an acceptable range of vocabulary in speaking. However, writing was underdeveloped due to limited opportunities for free writing styles. Most students showed adequate levels of knowledge, skills and understanding. Students' progress was what the curriculum expected in relation to their starting points. However, the more able students were not challenged sufficiently to make better progress.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students in primary attained levels that were in line with the curriculum standards according to the years of learning. When speaking, students gave limited responses because the questions asked were closed and demanded short answers. Discussions and collaboration were not part of class routines. Internal assessment information showed that the students met the expected standard levels. Students made expected progress in knowledge, skills and understanding. Writing was underdeveloped across the phase due to very limited opportunities for free writing. Students made adequate progress in developing their vocabulary.
- In English, students in primary were attaining and progressing at a better than expected level and were above curriculum standards throughout the phase. The school had started to use a variety of international benchmarking tests to measure attainment and progress but, as yet, the impact of the analysis had not consistently improved teaching and learning. In lessons, attainment and progress were good. Students had many opportunities to practise their speaking skills. For example in a Year 1 lesson, students were able to ask questions using the vocabulary that they had learned. By Year 6, students were able to write complex sentences and read extended texts. Work had started to track levels of attainment over time.
- In mathematics, a large majority of students attained levels above curriculum standards throughout the phase. The school had started to use a variety of international benchmarking tests to measure attainment and progress but, as yet, the impact of the analysis had not consistently improved teaching and learning. In lessons, attainment and progress were good. Where progress was better, students were adequately challenged and their learning was enhanced by the use of ICT. In other lessons, the work set by the teacher was too easy and the children were not challenged sufficiently by the work. The evidence to track levels of attainment, over time, showed that very good improvement was being made.
- In science, a large majority of students attained levels above expected curriculum standards and had done so over recent years. This was validated by external benchmark tests taken in upper primary. Students made excellent progress in developing scientific knowledge, and when challenged by better teaching, could give explanations showing deep understanding. For example, they could explain why the various nutrients were required to give a healthy diet. They made outstanding progress in developing skills of investigation and planning fair tests. However, because of lack of challenge, progress in explaining the scientific reasoning and predictions was not as strong.

## Secondary

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attained levels that were above curriculum standards. Students were able to apply their learning to real life situations. Their knowledge and understanding of the Fiqh, Islamic etiquettes and Islamic morals and values were above the expected level. However, recitation skills and the use of the Qur'anic verses and Hadith were developing. The majority of students made good progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the learning objectives in the lessons. The progress of different groups of students, including those with SEND, was inconsistent.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attained expected levels in listening and reading in line with curriculum standards. However, writing was underdeveloped due to very limited opportunities for free writing. Students made adequate progress in developing their vocabulary. Discussions and collaboration to extend the use of the language was not evident in lessons, as students responded to closed questions that did not extend their language skills. Internal assessment information showed that most students made expected progress in line with the curriculum expectations.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students had good listening skills. They could communicate simple answers appropriately, but the speaking skills in general needed development. Writing was underdeveloped across the phase due to limited exposure to written styles. Most students made adequate progress in developing their vocabulary. However, the speaking skills of a few students were below the curriculum standard. Groups and individuals maintained levels in line with the curriculum standards. The attainment of girls was slightly higher than that of the boys. In general, the students' progress matched the curriculum expected in relation to their starting points.
- Students in the secondary phase of the school maintained outstanding attainment and progress in English. This was evident in external examinations, including IGCSE where most students attained highly, as well as other examinations such as the IBT test. However, workbooks did not reflect the high levels of attainment in examinations. In a well-taught Year 10 lesson, students were able to analyse the conventions and structure of a letter of complaint. They were able to discuss using a wide range of vocabulary. The success of the lesson was due to lesson planning built on students' prior knowledge and the opportunities for interactions. Over time, the students' results at IGCSE had been consistently outstanding.
- In the secondary phase, levels of attainment in mathematics were outstanding and the rates of progress were very good. The school had recently introduced International Benchmark Tests in order to make comparisons with other schools. At IGCSE most students attained grades A\* - B. In lessons, the students showed understanding of the skills and this was reinforced by the written work in their books and through self-assessment. In a Year 10 lesson, the majority of the students were able to apply formulas to calculate the volume and areas of 3D shapes. Students made the best progress in those lessons where they were challenged.
- A large majority of secondary students made better than expected progress in relation to their ability and this had resulted in outstanding IGCSE results across the sciences. This had been the pattern over recent years. Upper school students had an excellent understanding of an appropriate range of scientific concepts, for example population growth in biology. Some students developed strong practical skills as shown by work to verify Ohm's law.

## Post-16

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attained levels that were above curriculum standards. The majority could apply their learning to real life situations well. They had a strong knowledge and understanding of Islamic principles. The students' ability to use Hadith and verses from Holy Qur'an to support their views and opinions was less strong. Students quickly understood Islamic morals and values but their understanding was slower in recitation. The progress of the different groups of students including students with SEND was inconsistent.
- The very small number of students studying English in the post-16 phase meant that no judgements for attainment and progress were made. Overall, students were able to discuss purposefully in a range of contexts and were aware of the importance of listening. In their writing, they were able to address a range of viewpoints and use vocabulary to make fine distinctions in what was being expressed. Students were able to read a range of texts with fluency and expression.
- Students attainment and progress in mathematics were very good. In external examinations, a large majority of students attained grades A\*-B at A level, and a majority of the students sitting AS attained grades at A-B. In lessons, students were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. Year 13 students were able to integrate, using the reverse chain rule. Progress in lessons was good. There were no significant differences between the performances of different groups in the school. Over the previous three years, attainment, at both AS and A level, averaged out as very good when compared to international standards.
- In science lessons, and in recent work, a large majority of students in both year groups were performing above curriculum standards. In Year 12 external exams (AS level), a minority of students achieved results above curriculum standards whilst at Year 13 (A level) a large majority of students did so. Attainment at A level was better in biology than in physics. In lessons, a large majority of students made better than expected progress but external assessment results indicated that progress in Year 13 was significantly higher than in Year 12.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good	Very good ↑

- In all phases, children and students showed a strong interest in their schoolwork and an enjoyment of learning. They behaved responsibly, concentrated well in lessons and were proud of what they achieved. Older students often worked with little teacher intervention, knew how well they were doing and took steps to improve.
- Collaborative activities were valued and evident across the school. In the secondary phase, students discussed science topics in depth and justified the answers they gave. Year 8 appreciated each other's contributions as they discussed the features of a newspaper. Younger students listened attentively to each other and were eager to share information with their peers.
- Teachers planned opportunities to link learning to the real world. Foundation Stage children practised counting skills as they bought items in their classroom shop. Year 6 students applied their knowledge in mathematics lessons to the construction of buildings and detailed architectural drawings. Students confidently collected scientific data and gained information from it by using their mathematical skills to manipulate formulae and interpret graphs.
- An increasing use of technology by students enabled them to find things out for themselves. Students used devices and presented their learning confidently and more often in certain subjects such as mathematics, science and French. In the post 16 phase, students strongly demonstrated an ability to think critically and applied this to problems. This was a less developed feature in other phases.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Most students demonstrated a maturity beyond their years. Whilst they were very independent, they also had a strong commitment to the school and appreciated the atmosphere and the security that the school provided for them.
- Behaviour, both within class and around the school, was exemplary. In class, it had a very positive impact on the learning environment. At break times and in lesson changeovers excellent attitudes meant that a real sense of order pervaded. Students were very self-disciplined and had a real understanding of how they should behave. There was no evidence of any bullying.
- The positive relationships that had developed between the students themselves, and between the students and the staff, contributed significantly to the very positive atmosphere that existed in the school. There was a high level of mutual respect between the staff and the students and this influenced all areas of life in the school.
- Students had a strong commitment to following a safe and healthy lifestyle. Year 3 pupils were able to explain the importance of the food pyramid and were very happy to discuss the contents of their lunchboxes and the reasons for the choice of content. They also reflected on the importance of physical activity as an essential part of a healthy lifestyle.

- Attendance levels at the school were very good. Punctuality, in terms of morning arrival and getting to lessons on time, was a strong feature. The importance they placed on their own punctuality was another indicator of their positive attitude to school life.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Across all school phases, students had a good understanding of Islamic values. They could explain well their impact on society in Dubai and the UAE. Students, particularly in secondary and post 16, shared their thoughts of how this positively influenced their habits and relationships with others.
- The children in Foundation Stage and students in other phases were well aware of the Emirati heritage and culture. They appreciated life in the UAE and its history. In addition, they shared what they learnt from visits to local places.
- Students were well aware of the diversity within the UAE and Dubai. They appreciated its impact in their life and in how they dealt with each other. In addition, they proudly spoke highly of their own culture, customs, traditional meals and daily routines. However, their understanding of the wider world cultures was less developed.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Social responsibility and innovation skills</b>	Good	Very good ↓	Very good ↓	Very good ↓

- Students took responsibilities in school life and the wider communities. They initiated and led activities, which were encouraged by the school. For example, the student council and the student reporters' team, had positive effects on the school community. Raising funds for 'Breast Cancer Awareness', 'Diabetes Week' and the visits to special needs centres made worthwhile social contributions.
- Students demonstrated a very good work ethic. They were resourceful, innovative and creative. They successfully initiated and managed projects. The school website 'innovation project' was an example of innovation and creativity. The 'Reading Caterpillar' and 'E Book' projects had a positive impact on the whole school community.
- Students across all grades initiated activities to improve the school environment. They chose practical ideas that had an impact on sustainability and conservation in the local and global environment, such as switching off lights, recycling paper and plastic bottles.

### 3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Nearly all teachers had a good understanding of their subject and most could apply this in an age-appropriate way to ensure that students learned well. In the Foundation Stage and lower primary, support assistants were skilled in working with young students.
- Teachers across the school planned lessons in detail. Most provided purposeful and often stimulating activities. In a small number of lessons, the time allocated for feedback by groups of students on their work or research was not well managed, which impeded development of the key lesson points.
- Teacher-student interactions mostly demonstrated high levels of mutual respect. Teachers asked probing questions and students often gave detailed and reasoned answers. In the secondary and post-16, students were challenged to link their work to real world issues. However, in a minority of lessons, particularly in primary school, teachers did not sufficiently challenge students to develop conceptual understanding.
- In most lessons, teachers effectively met the needs of the majority of students. Although most teachers considered the needs of different ability groups in their classes, only a minority planned different activities to support the least able in developing understanding of the lesson objectives.
- Opportunities for students to think critically was developing. In science, the ladder of investigative skills provided a framework to develop skills across the school but its application was not consistent. Teachers did not enable students to analyse and solve problems in a structured way. As a result, in grade seven, when a chance arose for students to think innovatively, the task proved beyond their capabilities.
- In Arabic, teachers planned lessons and used resources adequately to help students meet learning expectations. Challenge and support was provided but it was not sufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of most students.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Good	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- The school had developed a coherent system of assessment processes that spanned all phases, linking assessment to the English national curriculum levels and IGCSE standards. In upper secondary and Post-16, there was a strong understanding of examination assessment requirements, which led to greater validity of assessments.
- The school had recently introduced a range of external benchmark tests to monitor both progress and attainment. In upper secondary and post-16, the use of external benchmarks ensured validity of internal assessment. International Benchmark Tests were taken by a number of year groups, but in some, the sample size was small and not necessarily representative of the cohort
- Assessment data was analysed well and provided tracking of student attainment and progress through the school. The outcomes of analysis were provided to all teachers to challenge and improve the performance of groups of students, particularly in secondary and post-16 phases.

- The school had analysed assessment data to identify gaps in content and skills taught in several areas of the curriculum, and then introduced effective changes. The use of the information by teachers in the classroom to plan activities to meet the needs of students of differing abilities was developing.
- Teachers in all phases knew their students well and the majority gave good verbal feedback to students, particularly in the Foundation Stage. In the best lessons, teachers and students used the learning ladder to assess progress and to suggest areas for further work and the Strength, Improvement Response (SIR) system was used to give constructive feedback.

#### 4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The curriculum had a clear rationale and was closely aligned to the National Curriculum for England. It took account of the recent changes in the UK, particularly in mathematics. It was compliant with the Ministry of Education requirements for Arabic and Islamic education. A range of subjects including art, sports and modern foreign languages ensured breadth.
- Curriculum planning supported students in building their skills and knowledge progressively. Leaders had improved transition from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 by the introduction of a thematic approach in the latter, which incorporated literacy, numeracy, creative development and physical development. Students were well prepared for higher education and the world of work.
- The school provided appropriate options for the age ranges of the students. For example, opportunities for play were provided for children in the Foundation Stage in recognition of their learning styles. The choice of academic and vocational pathways in the post-16 phase enabled students to take courses which suited their abilities and learning styles.
- Cross-curricular links were planned as part of the Foundation Stage curriculum. For example, in science children began to practice writing skills by recording information. In the secondary and post-16 phases, cross-curricular links in mathematics and science were designed carefully. They were less developed in the primary phase.
- Foundation Stage staff reviewed the curriculum in regular meetings in order to continually improve provision. The school had reviewed the curriculum in the light of the assessment and the National Curriculum changes in England. Modifications to enhance skills, in line with National Agenda targets were in place. An example of this was the provision of greater opportunities for investigation in science.
- The curriculum for social studies was effective in developing students' knowledge, skills and understanding. Cross-curricular links were well-planned and helped students transfer learning between different subjects.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good ↑	Good	Good

- The curriculum was designed to be inclusive and was modified to meet the needs of most of the students. The quality of curriculum planning and modification at classroom level was in the process of development.
- A majority of students chose to participate in the extracurricular activities planned after school. There were planned opportunities for the majority of students to engage with the local community. Older students' academic and personal development was enhanced through international visits, such as the trips to Prague and Paris.
- Appreciation of UAE values, culture and society were promoted effectively through different areas of the curriculum, particularly through art. A social studies booklet had been produced to ensure a deeper understanding of the UAE for older students. Programmed visits to mosques and museums, and celebration of Eid, National Day, enhanced the engagement of all the students with UAE values, culture and society.
- Arabic was taught for 40 minutes a week to Foundation stage 1 classes and 120 minutes a week for Foundation Stage 2 classes. It was based on an appropriate set of standards for teaching Arabic to emergent learners. Teachers modelled the correct use of the language and children learnt through songs.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Policies for child protection had been communicated by the school. Staff, parents, and students were informed both verbally and in writing, and the policies were available on the school website. Training for all staff had been planned in order to support effective implementation.
- The school had created appropriate policies and procedures for safety checks of the school facilities. They were in the process of fully implementing all procedures. The school doctor had worked with the school canteen staff to ensure hygienic food preparation. Supervision of students was effective around the school.
- There was a maintenance schedule to ensure that buildings and equipment were well maintained. This included guidance on the appropriate procedures to be followed. The implementation of these procedures was underway. The medical staff provided extensive records for student health checks and medical concerns.
- The premises and facilities provided a safe environment. There were plans to build facilities to support students with restricted mobility. However, the lack of elevators, ramps, or chair lifts did not allow people with some physical disabilities to use the school's facilities.
- Staff effectively promoted safe and healthy living across the school. This was seen on posters promoting healthy eating habits. These posters prompted discussions in lessons about unhealthy food choices, and the improvement of the food on offer in the school canteen.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The positive ethos in and around the school promoted strong relationships between all staff and students. Staff knew their students well and were aware of their personal, social and emotional needs.
- There were effective systems, policies and procedures in place to manage and track student attendance and punctuality. As a result, students conducted themselves well at all times, attended regularly and were punctual to lessons.
- The school's inclusive admission procedures were underpinned by thorough systems for the identification of students with SEND. The SENCO, parents and class teachers worked together to ensure students' needs were appropriately identified. The recent introduction of base line testing and screening on entry to the school was an effective tool in this process.
- Most class teachers did not specifically plan for students with SEND in their lessons. They relied on the SENCO for strategies. Teaching assistants worked alongside students with SEND to support their access to learning in lessons.
- The personal and academic guidance and support provided by the school counsellor, phase leaders and other staff was strong. Staff showed genuine care for students' well-being, helping to monitor and develop their self-esteem, well-being and life skills. The school organised events to provide guidance on higher education and careers to enable students to make informed choices about future pathways.

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

The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities	Good
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- The school welcomed students' with a range of SEND. Senior leaders were committed to improving provision for all groups of students and had recently recruited a well-qualified and experienced SENCO. There were appropriate policies and procedures in place to guide assessment upon entry.
- The SENCO had a good understanding of the main learning needs of students and a strong working knowledge of the KHDA categories. The school identified the needs of students with SEND through the outcomes of formative and summative assessments, teacher referral systems and observations by the SENCO.
- The school worked closely with the parents of students with SEND. Parents were welcomed at the school and were encouraged to become involved in their children's support programmes.
- Individual education plans for students with SEND noted appropriate modifications to suit each student's interests and learning styles. However, the quality of delivery varied across phases and lessons. Whilst effective support was evident in lessons and in the small group activities led by the SEND team, this good practice was not fully embedded across the whole school.
- The development of systems to track and rigorously analyse the progress of students with SEND was at an early stage. Detailed information that could positively impact on lesson planning was not yet available. Overall, students with SEND made good progress.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The newly appointed principal communicated a clear strategic direction. Initiatives for improvement had been introduced. These demonstrated a commitment to national and Emirate priorities and this was evident in the strategic plan. All leaders and staff had a firm commitment to inclusion.
- Most leaders had secure knowledge of the curriculum and best practices in teaching, learning and assessment. They were effective in establishing a positive learning culture and in achieving high standards of students' learning and personal development.
- Relationships and communication were professional and effective. The school delegated leadership effectively to individuals and teams, and held them accountable for ensuring good quality outcomes. Morale throughout the school was positive.
- Leaders at all levels had a clear understanding of what needed to be done to improve the school and had introduced many initiatives, including making improvements to the building. Changes had been made at a rapid pace. The full commitment and understanding of the changes by parents, staff and students had yet to be secured.
- Leaders had been innovative and successful in developing key aspects of the school and maintaining high school performance. However, the impact of the many initiatives had not had time to fully impact consistently across all subjects or year groups.

### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- Systematic self-evaluation, using both internal and external data, was used in the school's improvement planning and in its practices at most levels. The school knew its strengths and areas for improvement well although some judgements made in the self-evaluation were generous.
- Effective monitoring ensured that there was appropriate evaluation of teaching and learning and their impact on students' achievements. Weaker areas had been identified as a result of monitoring and action plans put in place. Senior staff met regularly to discuss progress towards achieving improvement goals.
- School improvement plans were comprehensive and based on self-evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They contained detailed actions to address the school's and the UAE's national priorities, and were impacting well on students' achievements.
- The school was showing sustained improvements over time in most of the key areas. Most staff were actively involved in implementing strategies for improvement and development plans were clear. As a result the school had made progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection.

Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents were partners in their children's learning by supporting homework and research activities due to the introduction of the school intranet. There were opportunities for parents to express their thoughts and ideas through the school website. They expressed confidence that all suggestions were responded to.</li> <li>• The school used a wide range of effective methods to communicate with parents, including the use of technology. All parents were given regular and useful summaries of school priorities and were engaged as partners particularly if their children had SEND. The weekly coffee morning provided opportunities for parents to speak informally with staff.</li> <li>• Parents received regular reports of their children's progress and attainment. These gave helpful, detailed and accurate information to parents regarding their children's achievements and targets for improvement. Parents were satisfied with the opportunities they had to contribute to their children's learning and progress, but would have liked more information.</li> <li>• The school organised effective educational visits to companies and institutions with whom they had formed links. All year groups made at least three educational excursions during the year. In some subjects in the senior school, students made good use of community resources which were directly linked to their topics of study.</li> </ul>	

Governance	Good 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance had representation from an advisory board, which included parents, students and other stakeholders. All were taking an active role in gathering the views of others in order to increase their knowledge about the school and make improvements.</li> <li>• The governing board held regular meetings with the advisory body to discuss and evaluate the school's performance as well as making informal visits. Senior leaders were held accountable for the achievements and personal development of all students.</li> <li>• The governing body was clear about its aspirations for a school that developed students who were kind, considerate and educated for living and working in the 21st century. It wanted to see improvement and supported the newly appointed Principal in his drive to develop and improve the school further.</li> </ul>	

Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Good ↑

- Most aspects of the day-to-day management of the school had been well organised, and this had had a positive impact on student achievement. Timetabling and the deployment of staff ensured that there was a smooth transition across the school day. Good communication with parents ensured support for the organization of activities.
- The majority of staff were appropriately qualified, and approved by KHDA to teach in the school. School leaders were committed to develop a structured professional development programme for staff in the school. This aspiration was fully shared by the governing body.
- The school had made considerable investment and improvements to school facilities, and this had had a positive impact on the learning environment across the school. The creation of learning spaces, such as the ICT classrooms, as well as the school-wide Wi-Fi connection, female prayer room, and upgrades to the library, were having impact on student achievement and personal development.
- The school had appropriate resources for teachers to use to help them prepare students for the external examinations in the upper secondary and post-16 phases. The school had invested in technology throughout the school, and implemented a 'bring your own device' programme, in order to increase the amount of resources available for both students and teachers.

## 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	
<b>Parents*</b> 	2015-2016	507
	2014-2015	241
<b>Teachers</b> 	106	
<b>Students</b> 	244	

\*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 said that it had improved
- A large majority of parents agreed that their child made progress in almost all subjects. This was agreed by most of the students although a significant number of them did not know whether they made progress in Arabic as an additional language.
- Almost all parents agreed that students had opportunities to develop community and environmental responsibility in school. However, 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 their school was well led and that their views were respected and acted upon.
- Parents' comments indicated some concern about the pace of change in school.

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