



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

American International School

Curriculum: US

Overall rating: Acceptable

Read more about the school 



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‘Without challenges, we won’t feel the taste of success and happiness’



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School information

General information 	Location	Al Qusais
	Type of school	Private
	Opening year of school	2003
	Website	www.aisch.net
	Telephone	04-2988666
	Address	PO Box 87727, Community 232 Street 6, Al Qusais, Dubai
	Principal	Othman Abdalbari
	Language of instruction	English
	Inspection dates	18 to 21 January, 2016
Students 	Gender of students	Boys and girls
	Age range	4-18
	Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
	Number of students on roll	2496
	Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
	Number of Emirati students	129
	Number of students with SEND	52
	Largest nationality group of students	Arab
Teachers / Support staff 	Number of teachers	170
	Largest nationality group of teachers	Jordanian
	Number of teaching assistants	20
	Teacher-student ratio	1:14
	Number of guidance counsellors	1
	Teacher turnover	42%
Curriculum 	Educational permit / Licence	US
	Main curriculum	US / California
	External tests and examinations	SAT1, TOEFL
	Accreditation	None
	National Agenda benchmark tests	ITBS (IOWA tests of basic skills)

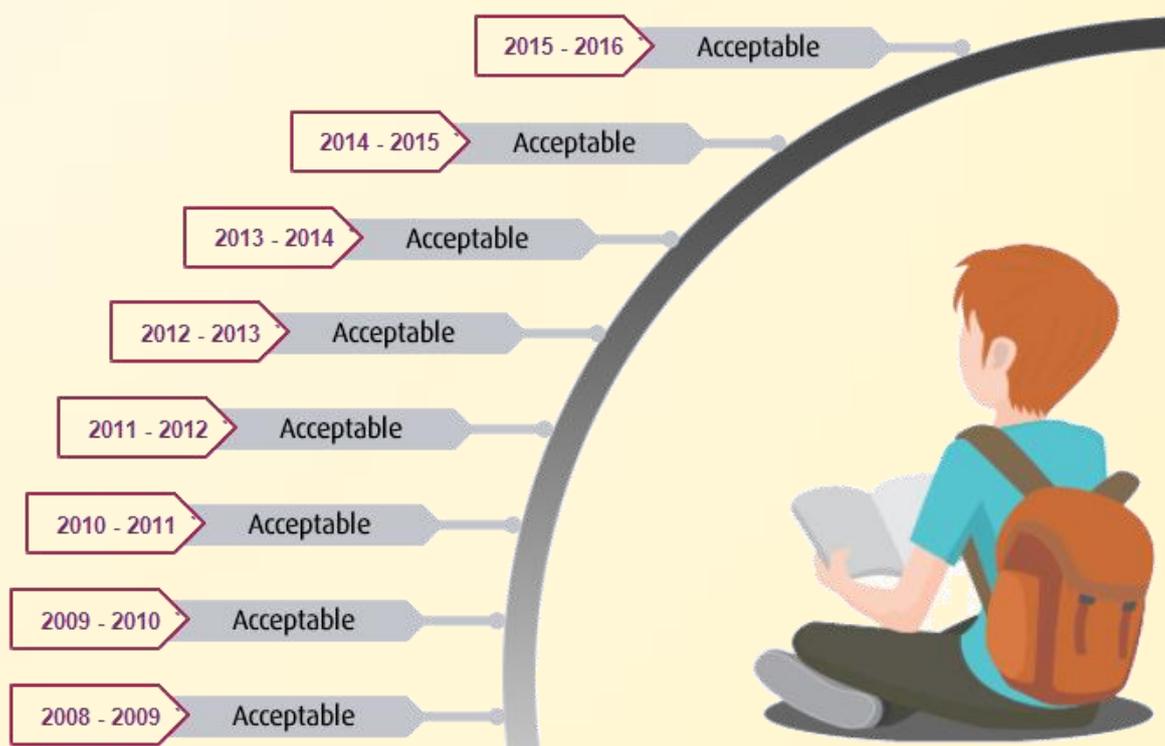


Summary for parents and the community

American International School was inspected by DSIB from 18 to 21 of January 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **acceptable**.

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, **American International School** provided an **acceptable** quality of education for its students.

- Students in the middle and high school phases achieved better outcomes than those in younger year groups. Their learning experience was of better quality in the high school phase, due to an influx of new teachers and fresh learning approaches implemented by the new leaders. At the lower end of the school, learning remained acceptable.
- As they progressed through the different phases of the school, students became more independent and critical. Older students demonstrated a very good understanding of local cultures and the values of Islam. They were involved in conservation initiatives. In all phases, they had a limited understanding of world cultures.
- Teachers did not systematically meet the needs of all students in lessons, nor did they engage them in activities to promote enquiry and research. This was particularly the case in the kindergarten, elementary and middle school phases. The quality of assessment processes was acceptable. Teachers were starting to use more information to help students to progress. Feedback provided in lessons or students' books was usually limited.
- The curriculum was broad and focused on the needs of different learners. It was planned and sequenced to build on students' previous learning in key subjects, and it met the needs of most students. Students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) were now integrated into the curriculum.
- The school was a safe and caring environment. There was less overcrowding in lessons but the school had not fully addressed this problem. Teachers cared about all their students. Staff with the correct expertise were now leading the SEND unit, and they supported parents, teachers and students well.
- The new school leaders were focused and had started the journey towards improvement. They knew the school's strengths and weaknesses well, but improvement or development plans were not fully in place. Parents were involved in the life of the school and were kept up to date. Governors had invested a significant amount of resources to improve students' experiences, leading to better outcomes. However, resources and facilities had not yet improved but sufficiently.



What did the school do well?

- Students maintained good attainment and progress in Arabic as a first language in the elementary, middle, and high phases of the school.
- Good teaching in the high school led to students developing good learning skills and making good progress in most subjects in this phase.
- Students demonstrated strong personal and social development across the school, especially in high school.
- The school provided students with a safe, secure, and supportive environment.



What does the school need to do next?

- Accelerate progress and raise attainment in all subjects, particularly in the elementary and kindergarten phases.
- Ensure that teachers analyze assessment data rigorously and effectively in order to:
 - provide the necessary challenge for students of all abilities
 - determine to what extent students have met or exceeded curriculum expectations.
- Enhance the curriculum by:
 - providing more opportunities for students to solve open-ended problems and develop their critical thinking skills
 - practicing writing across the curriculum for a range of purposes.
- Ensure that all staff, including teachers and teaching assistants, continue to have access to effective professional development matched to the type of support needed at each phase.
- Ensure that more effective communication links are established between all levels of management to enable the process of self-evaluation to become more accurate.



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

- Provision for students with SEND was now acceptable. Students received appropriate support in lessons and good individual support from the SEND team, this enabled them to make good personal progress.
- There was regular monitoring of students' progress by the SEND team, using a range of assessments to evaluate progress. Reporting to parents on their child's progress against their personalized targets was a developing feature of the SEND provision in the school.
- Parents were generally satisfied with the communication that they received from the school.
- Parents were more effectively involved in supporting their children.
- Parents stated that provision and support had improved this academic year. They appreciated the help and advice that they received from the school.

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 communicated and highlighted the importance of external testing to both parents and students.
- All departments had analyzed the results of external tests and had identified strengths and weaknesses. They had allocated specific time to focus on responses to questions and skills that were identified as being under-developed.
- Teachers were more aware of the need to challenge students to think critically.
- The use of learning technologies had effectively been introduced in some lessons to support learning, but this was not consistent across phases or subjects. Other resources, such as literary texts, were used effectively for analytical purposes.

Overall school performance

Acceptable

1. Students' achievement

		KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Good ↑
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable ↑
English 	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑	Good ↑
Mathematics 	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑	Good ↑
Science 	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good ↑	Good	Good	Very good ↑
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Very good ↑
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Acceptable	Good	Good	Outstanding

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑	Good ↑
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑
Care and support	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑

6. Leadership and management

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



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

KG

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	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The majority of children entered the Kindergarten (KG) with little or no English. By the time they left the KG, most children's speaking, listening and understanding were in line with curriculum standards. A few exceeded expectations. There were no external assessments of children's attainment in English. In recent years, the attainment of most children had remained broadly in line with expectations. Most children could understand a story, which was read to them, and describe the main points using short phrases. Their reading and writing skills were developing towards expected curriculum standards. Writing was limited in most cases to copying short sentences from a card.
- In mathematics, most children's attainment was in line with curriculum standards. In recent years, most children had reached acceptable levels of attainment. There were no data to compare children's mathematical ability with that of children of a similar age in schools following a similar curriculum. Children made steady progress in understanding the concept of number, and in counting, ordering and writing numbers to at least 20. Most could add two single-digit numbers. They could recognize basic 2-dimensional shapes. Children with additional learning needs and those learning mathematics taught in a language which was not their home language, made slightly better than expected progress. More able children made insufficient progress.
- In science, most children made acceptable progress and reached the expected curriculum standard for their age. However, they made limited progress in developing investigative skills because they had insufficient opportunities to explore their surroundings and develop their natural curiosity. By the time they left the KG, most children could name the main parts of plants, and they knew that plants needed water and sunshine to help them grow. Through watching a very effective demonstration, they clearly understood how water moves up the stem of a plant. Their ability to make predictions and to carry out their own investigations was underdeveloped.

Elementary

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

- In Islamic education, most students achieved acceptable attainment at the end of the elementary phase. Most demonstrated age-appropriate knowledge and understanding of basic Islamic concepts. Students were able to name the two Islamic Eids and knew how to perform Eid prayers. Students improved their skills of recitation of the Holy Qur'an by working effectively towards the learning objectives during lessons. Students made acceptable progress compared to their starting points and different groups of students made similar progress.
- In Arabic as a first language, the attainment of the majority of students was above curriculum expectations. Students' listening and speaking skills were good. Their reading was good overall but reading comprehension skills were less well developed. Their independent, creative writing skills were developing appropriately. There was no external assessment for benchmarking in Arabic. The majority of students made good progress in relation to their starting points and to the learning objectives in lessons. Progress was secure in listening, responding and reading skills, but slower in reading comprehension and writing.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the attainment of most students was in line with curriculum expectations. They could take part in a simple conversation in Arabic about themselves and about their daily life. Most students could read familiar words and phrases adequately but their independent writing skills were weak. No external Arabic benchmarking assessment were conducted in this phase. Students' progress was steady in listening and reading skills, but students lacked confidence in speaking and writing. Most students made adequate progress in lessons and against their starting points.
- In English, most students attained levels in line with the US Common Core standards. Attainment against international standards was acceptable. Most students were attentive readers who read accurately and at grade level. They enjoyed responding in class. Students presented their written work well but did not make sufficient progress in writing for different purposes. Feedback to students was insufficiently consistent to improve learning. Most students made expected progress over time. However, some needed better support or greater challenge to meet their learning needs.
- In mathematics, most students made expected progress and attained according to curriculum standards in lessons, although this varied from class to class. The school's own assessment data indicated that the attainment of most students was above curriculum standards. However, external Iowa assessment data showed attainment in in lower elementary was in line with curriculum standards and in Grades 4 and 5 it was below expectations. Grade 3 students understood the relationship between multiplication and division. Grade 5 students made good progress in understanding decimals and equivalence in values. Students increasingly made appropriate use of correct mathematical vocabulary. Their ability to apply their mathematical knowledge to more complex, real-life problems was underdeveloped.

- Students' attainment and progress in science were acceptable. External Iowa assessment data showed similar attainment trends. Students adequately and consistently developed their understanding of scientific concepts through hands-on activities. In Grade 5, for example, students created different mixtures of substances to investigate their different properties. Their progress in lessons was often hindered by unclear instructions from the teacher, inappropriate pace of the lesson, and excessive dependence on the teacher.

Middle

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

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrated age-appropriate knowledge of Islamic concepts such as the Islamic view of the 'Day of Judgment' and the life hereafter. A minority of students could explain some terms associated with this topic. Progress was acceptable in lessons and against their starting points. Few students were involved in more advanced topics and higher levels of thinking.
- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students attained above curriculum expectations. Students could express their views using a good range of vocabulary. They could accurately read about familiar topics. Students' independent and extended writing skills were developing well. No external assessment benchmarking was available and the school's internal assessment of students' attainment and progress was insufficiently accurate. Progress in listening, speaking and reading was rapid. Creative writing skills were still developing. The majority of students made good progress in relation to their starting points and to the learning objectives. Most groups of students made good progress.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the attainment of most students was in line with curriculum expectations. Students' speaking skills were acceptable and they could converse about daily life in a familiar context. Their listening skills were developing well. Most could read familiar sentences in line with expectations, but their independent writing skills were weak. No external benchmarking assessments were conducted and the school's internal assessment information for Arabic was not always sufficient to enhance learning. Most students made acceptable progress. Their progress was good in listening and acceptable in responding and reading, but slower in speaking and independent writing.
- Most students met expected curriculum and national standards for English in writing, reading and speaking. Students' international test scores were below curriculum standards. The majority of students made better than expected progress against the Common Core standards. They were able to express themselves well in writing and orally, using extensive vocabulary and standard grammar. In Grade 7, almost all girls were able to make inferences and critique literature, while evaluating the effectiveness of their own persuasive writing. They were able to relate themes in short stories to real life and make connections to the environment. Most were able to give positive feedback to their fellow students when making class presentations. Although most students demonstrated good literacy skills, they were seldom challenged to write extensive essays.

- Most students attained at an acceptable level in mathematics as measured against curriculum standards. In lessons, individualized and appropriate tasks enabled students to make good progress. Students, including those with SEND, enjoyed applying mathematical principles to real life. In a Grade 6 lesson on positive and negative numbers, they were able to accurately apply their understanding when reading the temperature. The school had recently introduced a range of national and international benchmark tests to enable them to confirm how their students were performing. Internal data indicated that the majority of students made better than expected progress in mathematics from their starting points.
- Students demonstrated acceptable attainment and made acceptable progress in science. In lessons, they were involved in practical activities to enable them to arrive at conclusions. In Grade 7, for example, students followed experimental procedures to measure the speed and acceleration of a marble. Their progress was often hindered by excessive teacher intervention that did not allow them to take full control of their own learning.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students demonstrated a good understanding of Islamic concepts and principles and their relevance to daily life. For example when reflecting on the Islamic view of divorce they were able to explain in detail the reasons for divorce in society and how to avoid it according to Islamic values. Students clearly understood how donations to build mosques, hospitals and other projects to help the community contributed to improving the economy and people's wellbeing. Progress over time and in the lessons was good. Students demonstrated acceptable progress in reciting prescribed verses of the Holy Qur'an and in applying required rules of recitation.
- In Arabic as a first language, attainment for the majority of students was above curriculum expectations. Students were able to express their points of view using a rich range of vocabulary and expressions. They could read familiar topics accurately and at levels above expectation. Some had difficulty with unfamiliar poetry. Their extended and creative writing skills were developing well. No external benchmarking assessment was conducted in Arabic. The majority of students had made better than expected progress in relation to their starting points and lesson learning objectives. Their progress in listening and speaking, and in reading familiar topics, was secure. Their creative writing skills were less well developed. Almost all groups made good progress.

- In Arabic as an additional language, most students' attainment was in line with curriculum expectations. Most could conduct a conversation satisfactorily using an appropriate range of vocabulary. Their listening skills were good. Most could read familiar texts adequately. Their speaking skills were less well developed, and their independent writing skills were weak. No external benchmark assessment was conducted in Arabic. The school's internal information did not always identify next steps in learning. Most students made acceptable progress in relation to their starting points and against lesson learning objectives. The progress of most students was good in listening but acceptable in responding and reading. Progress in speaking, reading comprehension and independent writing was slower.
- In English, the majority of students demonstrated levels of attainment above the common core standards. They made good or better progress, and their outcomes were above international standards for listening, speaking and reading skills. In Grade 12, the majority of students could use learning technologies effectively, particularly when they researched and presented historical events which had changed the direction of the world. They were able to think analytically when discussing important questions. They made good gains in evaluation techniques, in persuasive writing, and in reading for research and for personal pleasure. They achieved good writing skills, particularly focusing on editing, revision and organization.
- In mathematics, most students were attaining in line with curriculum standards and the majority were making better than expected progress. Problem-solving activities provided appropriate challenge for all students including those with SEND. A common feature was project work that enabled them to apply their skills to the real world. In a Grade 9 lesson, the students were able to apply graphical functions for use in building and engineering. In lessons, the majority of students made good progress in relation to appropriate learning objectives. Over time, a pattern of steady improvement in students' levels of attainment was emerging.
- Students' attainment and progress in science were good. Students developed a strong understanding of scientific concepts through experimentation. For example, in Grade 12 students were able to determine the impact of temperature on the rate of a chemical reaction. Students made good progress, especially in lessons where they used the scientific method to develop their understanding of concepts, and took control of their own learning. The school's assessment data indicated that good levels of attainment and progress had been mostly maintained over two to three years. Groups of students made similar progress.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑

- Students were interested in, and often took responsibility for, their learning. Children in the KG, the elementary and high school phases were engaged in learning. High school students were developing as independent learners. In the middle phase students were more often passive learners, dependent on the teachers' direction.
- In many contexts, students collaborated well and understood the benefits of working together. In middle school science, for example, students worked collaboratively to build a ramp and record the process and findings. In high school, students were effectively able to work in groups, and listen and learn from their classmates. In other contexts, students worked collaboratively but lacked the skills needed to produce good work.

- Students made good connections between different areas of learning. They could apply what they were learning to contexts outside the school. For example, in middle school, girls were able to relate their real life experiences to themes from the story 'A Walk in the Woods'.
- Overall, students were limited in their ability to research and to find things out for themselves. Often, lessons were teacher-directed with little opportunity for students to develop their critical thinking skills. There was very limited use of learning technologies throughout the school to support enquiry. Critical thinking and problem solving were developing across the school.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good ↑	Good	Good	Very good ↑

- In all phases, students took a confident approach to their work and could work independently and collaboratively in groups. In the high school, students were self-reliant, and showed independence and initiative. Most responded well to constructive feedback from their teachers.
- Positive behavior prevailed in classrooms and throughout the school. A majority of students demonstrated self-discipline, which made for harmonious relationships with their fellow students and teachers. Consequently, the school provided a safe and enjoyable atmosphere for all. Incidents of bullying were rare. In the high school, students demonstrated a business-like attitude to learning.
- Students celebrated their differences and cared for each other. For example, some had visited the children's ward of a local hospital and had prepared foods for an international day. Students were sensitive to the needs of others, including those with SEND. Students in the high school had greater access to activities where they could make a difference to their community.
- The promotion of healthy eating choices and healthy living had resulted in students internalizing the importance of good choices. They chose healthy meals and participated in physical exercise before, during and after school hours.
- Attendance and punctuality were good. Students arrived at school and to lessons on time, particularly in the high school phase.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Very good ↑

- Students were aware of the impact of Islamic values on the contemporary life in the UAE. They respected and appreciated Islamic traditions. Older students could talk confidently about the importance of Islamic values, the main Islamic dates, and Islamic culture in the UAE.
- Students respected the heritage and culture of Dubai. They described some of the major tourist attractions, sporting events and other celebrations. They had a good knowledge about traditional foods and clothing worn in the UAE, and participated in several cultural activities. High school students could make extensive links between their knowledge and their life experiences.
- Students fully appreciated and celebrated their own Muslim culture in many ways throughout the year. They demonstrated interest in learning more about foods from other countries, for example during International Food Day. However, they had limited awareness of other world cultures.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Acceptable	Good	Good	Outstanding

- Students had many opportunities to interact with the wider community through their participation in clubs and projects, supported and encouraged by the school. They volunteered for the 'Innovation Club', UNESCO, the student council and the debating club. They were aware of the importance of contributing to good causes. The school was considering ways to involve more students of different abilities, including those with SEND, in as many activities as possible.
- Students were interested in learning, anxious to succeed and worked hard to achieve their goals. They took on leadership responsibilities in extra-curricular and club activities, particularly in the leadership club. They participated in science fair projects and the national 'Think Science' competition which helped to develop their innovation skills.
- Students were well aware of the importance of conserving. The curriculum incorporated issues of sustainability and conservation. Those in the high school participated actively and enthusiastically in many school and community projects aimed at improving the school and the local environment. Students led projects to promote conservation and ecological awareness. However, children in the KG had limited opportunities to participate in such initiatives.

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑

- Teachers had secure subject knowledge. Their understanding of how students learn was inconsistent. Some teachers were able to use that understanding to prepare and implement effective lessons that allowed students to learn actively. In the KG, teachers had varied understanding of how children learn through practical activities, and of the need for a multi-sensory approach. They did not plan sufficient opportunities for children to learn through play, or to make choices and become independent learners.
- Teachers planned lessons well. They made good use of available time and limited resources to enable students to learn effectively. They often linked learning objectives to curriculum standards. They consistently built on students' prior learning and shared learning objectives with their students at the beginning of lessons. The learning environment, however, was not sufficiently stimulating, as resources and displays in the classrooms were often limited.
- The quality of teachers' questioning techniques varied. Some teachers asked open-ended and higher-order questions, especially in high school science, Arabic, and mathematics. In these classes, students were fully engaged in group discussions which encouraged them to draw meaningful conclusions.
- Teachers' lesson plans included differentiation, especially by support and by outcome. However, practice did not always reflect the planning. In science, Islamic education and English for example, tasks were rarely differentiated. In the KG, most teachers varied their strategies to engage and motivate children through the use of projector displays, animations, music and role-play.
- Teaching to develop critical thinking skills varied across the school. Teachers in the high school effectively promoted problem-solving, critical thinking, and independent learning skills, especially in Islamic education, English and science. In one English lesson, for example, students were asked to read a poem and create a situation in which they made it their own. In KG, most teachers directed children's learning. They rarely planned activities to investigate or to solve open-ended problems.
- The quality of teaching Arabic as a first language was inconsistent. Teachers had sound subject knowledge and an adequate understanding of how students learn and acquire language. In the large majority of classes, teaching strategies met the needs of most students, and the quality of questioning was good. In some lessons, students were effectively involved in their own learning. The promotion of problem-solving and independent learning skills was not a common feature in these Arabic lessons.
- The quality of teaching in Arabic as an additional language was also inconsistent. Teachers had secure subject knowledge but limited understanding of how students learn an additional language. In most classes, a whole-class approach was the main teaching strategy. In a few lessons, students played a part in their learning. Low expectations, lack of challenge and limited differentiation were the main weaknesses of teaching.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Internal assessment processes had improved, but there were still many inconsistencies. The school was getting better at assessing student progress in all core subjects. Assessments were generally aligned to the appropriate curriculum standards. This was a developing feature across all subjects and grades, including the KG.
- An appropriate range of international benchmarking tests were used for Grades 1-12. These enabled students' performance to be compared with that of other students' both nationally and internationally. Students had participated in TIMMS and PISA testing in 2015. Systems to use external assessments to calibrate and secure the accuracy of internal data were developing.
- The school analyzed assessment data from internal and external tests from Grades 1-12 to provide information about students' strengths and weaknesses. KG leaders and staff were in the early stages of data analysis.
- In Grades 1-12, the school had begun to use assessment information to aid their planning, teaching and to make the appropriate modifications to the curriculum in order to meet the needs of all students. The school had recently introduced pilot assessment schemes, particularly in mathematics, to produce an in-depth analysis of individual student performance.
- Teachers in Grades 1-12 had a reasonable knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses. KG teachers knew their students better. Self-assessment was a developing aspect in all classrooms. Teachers gave written feedback to students. However, it often lacked informative comments on next steps in learning.

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑	Good ↑

- The curriculum had a clear rationale and was compliant with statutory requirements. It was broad, balanced and promoted the development of students' knowledge, understanding and skills. The school used the California State Curriculum to compliment the US common core standards.
- The curriculum was planned and sequenced to build on students' previous learning in key subjects, and it met the needs of most students. It was in the early stages of being mapped vertically and horizontally through the ATLAS program. Most students were well prepared for the next phase of their education or careers.
- Students had a wide range of learning opportunities, which helped to develop and enhance their personal talents, aspirations and interests. This included art, learning technology, French, music, physical education, advanced sciences and advanced placement courses. There were many extra-curricular activities.
- Cross-curricular links were planned in some key subject areas, such as English and science or mathematics and science, but they were under-developed and left to teachers' individual initiatives. Literacy skills were promoted and reinforced through all subject areas. Students had some good opportunities for independent learning and for the development for critical thinking and research.
- The curriculum coordinator, heads of department and teachers reviewed the curriculum regularly to ensure that it met the academic goals and personal development needs of all students, including those with SEND.

- The UAE Social Studies program provided opportunities for students to acquire new knowledge, deepen their understanding of themselves and their environment and develop new skills. Students were able to practice skills learned in other subjects, such as reading and interpreting historical documents and studying maps of the area.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑

- The school made adequate modifications to the curriculum to meet the needs of most students, including those with SEND.
- There were few designated curriculum opportunities for gifted and talented students. Science classes promoted some challenging activities. Opportunities for enterprise, innovation and creativity were limited.
- The curriculum included interesting and relevant programs, which increased students' knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the heritage of the UAE. This included Emirati traditions, culture, and the values that influence UAE society. These were particularly evident in art classes, where students from Grade 3 were learning UAE history through painting, architectural drawings, sculptures and collages depicting UAE culture. In music classes from Grade 4, students learned how to play wind and, stringed instruments, gaining knowledge of Middle Eastern musical tradition and its musicians.
- The school offered eight 40-minute sessions per week for KG 1 and KG 2 children. Classes included all learners. The school's program targeted speaking and listening skills through basic greetings, naming the days of the week and introducing themselves. The program was design by the school to prepare children for Arabic in Grade 1.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑

- The care, welfare and safeguarding of students was good. The school had developed a range of policies and procedures which were clearly understood by staff, students and parents. The health and safety committee delivered intensive training on these policies.
- The supervision of children and students around the school was effective. The school made frequent checks of all premises, facilities and activities undertaken by the students to ensure their safety and well-being. Children and students were well supervised during breaks, on the buses, and during activities.
- The school buildings, especially the new KG building, and equipment were checked for safety and well maintained. Records were thorough and included incident and medical reports.
- The premises and facilities were appropriate for students' learning and needs. A lift and ramps provided disabled students with equal access to different parts of the school. Safety in the KG building was enhanced by the provision of child-friendly equipment, a safety surface for the floor and shaded play areas.

- The school clinic effectively provided personal hygiene and healthy life-style sessions for students. The canteen offered healthy food for students and the school community.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑

- The school was aware of students' needs. Relationships between staff and students were positive and mutually respectful. Consequently, behavior was good overall and the school was orderly. Whole school systems for managing behavior were effective and understood by students.
- The school kept accurate records of students' attendance and punctuality. Systems for monitoring attendance were efficient. Levels of attendance were good. Enquiries were quickly made to individual parents regarding any student absence.
- The identification of students with SEND and those who were gifted and talented had improved. The school admitted students with a range of SEND. There was a well-qualified team of specialist support staff capable of leading and training other staff members. The new systems that were in place were beginning to ensure that individual needs were adequately met.
- Students on the SEND register had appropriate support overall, and good support from the new specialist teaching team. As a result, they made acceptable personal and academic progress. The progress of students with SEND was carefully monitored by the SEND team. Lesson plans identified some modifications. Support varied across the school. Some individual education plans included targets which were too general and lacked clear, specific steps.
- Students received good advice and support for their personal well-being from teachers, section leaders, the attendance officer and the school counselors. The generally good relationships throughout the school gave students the confidence to ask for advice when necessary. Some academic guidance was provided in lessons. Older students received useful career advice.

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

The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities	Acceptable ↑
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- Leadership of the provision of SEND had improved. The team was well organized and knowledgeable, and provided support and training for other staff. Further work was required to ensure that all teachers applied modifications more effectively in lessons.
- Appropriate and improved systems were in place to identify students with SEND. Students' needs were identified and classified effectively. The school was inclusive but ensured that provision could meet specific special needs and disabilities before students were admitted.
- Parents were closely involved in support for their children. They stated that provision and support had improved this academic year. They appreciated the help and advice which they received from the school.
- Lesson plans identified modifications, but they were not always appropriate or specifically matched to individual students' learning needs. Most students received acceptable support from teachers in lessons and good individual support from the SEND team. Some individual learning plans were too general and did not clearly measure progress or identify next steps in learning.

- Students made acceptable progress because overall provision had improved and their individual needs were being met better. In most lessons, teachers had a clear awareness of students' needs. Provision of differentiated tasks was inconsistent. The SEND team regularly monitored students' progress and used a range of assessments to evaluate it.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- Most leaders shared a common vision and were committed to the UAE national priorities. They increasingly demonstrated a drive for inclusive practices, particularly to support students with SEND. The school had appointed new leaders and implemented new approaches to school leadership.
- Leaders knew their curriculum well. The influx of new teachers and the new strategies which had recently been implemented focused on positive outcomes for students.
- Roles and responsibilities were effectively distributed amongst the key leaders in school. They communicated well. Because the leadership team was relatively new, the impact of some of the recently implemented strategies was still not evident. There were inconsistencies in leadership practices at middle management levels.
- Leaders had a clear idea of the key priorities which would lead to further improvement. There were, however, inconsistencies in the school's self-evaluation document. It was over-ambitious and did not fully reflect the school position at the time of inspection.
- Leaders had demonstrated the capacity to improve as some aspects of school life had improved since the previous inspection. This was particularly the case with care and support for students with SEND.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable 

- Self-evaluation processes were developing, as was school leaders' knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders took into consideration both internal and external data to identify key strengths and areas for development.
- Lesson observations increasingly provided information about the quality of teaching, the curriculum and students' learning experiences. Leaders' evaluations were accurate. The information which was gathered informed professional development activities and performance management.
- The new leadership team was developing action plans, as members identified many gaps in previous practice. They were focusing on the identification of key strengths and areas of development. They had implemented some strategies but were not systematically measuring the impact of their initiatives.
- The school had been successful in addressing some aspects of weak practice. However, the absence of a school improvement document that was able to be shared at all levels, and the lack of on-going monitoring of the impact of the new strategies, put these areas of improvements at risk of regressing.

Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents increasingly participated in the life of the school and were actively encouraged to be partners in their children’s learning. The school sought their views via questionnaires and took account of them. Parents volunteered to help with school events, such as the preparation for national and international days and celebrations. • The school used a range of means of communication. Parents received information on school activities. They were encouraged to offer suggestions for improvements. For example, they had organized a book fair to improve reading comprehension in English and Arabic. • Termly meetings and written reports kept parents well informed about their children’s progress. The reports included assessment results for all subjects. Some parents expressed a desire for more detail on their children’s strengths and weaknesses, with more suggestions on next steps in their learning. • The school had strong links with local and wider communities. Students contributed actively to a variety of community activities and other initiatives in the UNESCO program. They also took the initiative to participate in the ‘Young Leadership Development Program’. Inter-school sporting activities, participation in a variety of visits to local places of interest, and a range of international visits also enhanced students’ learning. 	

Governance	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school board included various stakeholders who brought with them a range of different skills and experiences. Parents were still under-represented. • The board held regular meetings with the school’s leaders. Governors held the leaders to account on their performance. The governors had capitalized on the expertise of the new leadership team and had improved their own practice through a training program designed by one of the senior leaders. As a result they had better knowledge and understanding of the school. • Governors provided necessary improvements in resourcing and facilities, such as a new KG building, employing more staff and purchasing more learning resources. This investment in provision had resulted in better outcomes for students and improvements in various aspects of school life. 	

Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Acceptable

- An efficient range of processes and procedures supported the daily operation of the school. All staff and students were fully aware of the school's routines and requirements, and were clear about what was expected of them.
- The school had a sufficient number of well-qualified teachers. Their deployment matched their qualifications and expertise. On-going and regular professional development, and the monitoring of teachers' performance, ensured greater consistency in teaching approaches and methodology. The quality of the teaching staff in the KG was improving, but some teachers did not have sufficient expertise in meeting the needs of young children.
- The premises, including the new KG building, were conducive to effective learning. There was still some overcrowding in classrooms in older parts of the school, which prevented students from engaging in certain activities. The girls' section lacked appropriate washrooms. Generally, facilities were well suited to supporting students' curricular and extra-curricular activities, the work of staff, and social and leisure activities.
- The school was well resourced and equipped. All classrooms had projectors. A few had interactive whiteboards which were in daily use. Not all computers were working in students' learning technologies rooms, leaving some students without individual access to technology. The learning technologies room in the KG was not yet operational. The library was well organized but did not offer a sufficient supply of books for the KG and elementary phases.

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	236
	2014-2015	81
Teachers 	83	
Students 	146	

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

- Of the stakeholders who responded to the survey, responses from parents, students and teachers were positive overall.
- Students enjoyed their life in school and believed that they were safe and well looked after.
- Together with their parents, students believed that the quality of teaching and their learning experience were often inconsistent.
- Students felt positive about the new leadership team. Teachers shared the same view.
- Parents, teachers and students welcomed the new resources and facilities.

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