

# Inspection Report



Arab Unity School

2014-2015



إكسبو 2020  
دبي، الإمارات العربية المتحدة  
DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

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## School information



### General information

Location	Al Mizhar
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1974
Website	www.arabunityschool.com
Telephone	04-2886226
Address	P.O. Box 10563, Rashidiya, Dubai, UAE
Principal	Mrs. Sunita T. Budhwani
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	16 <sup>th</sup> - 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2015



### Students

Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age range	4-17
Grades or year groups	Foundation Stage 1 - Year 13
Number of students on roll	3300
Number of children in FS1	260
Number of Emirati students	96
Number of students with SEN	116
Largest nationality group of students	Pakistani



### Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	231
Largest nationality group of teachers	Asian
Number of teacher assistants	17
Teacher-student ratio	1:30
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	30%



### Curriculum

Educational Permit	UK
Main Curriculum / Other	UK
Standardised tests / board exams	Cambridge/ IGCSE
Accreditation	



# Parents' Report

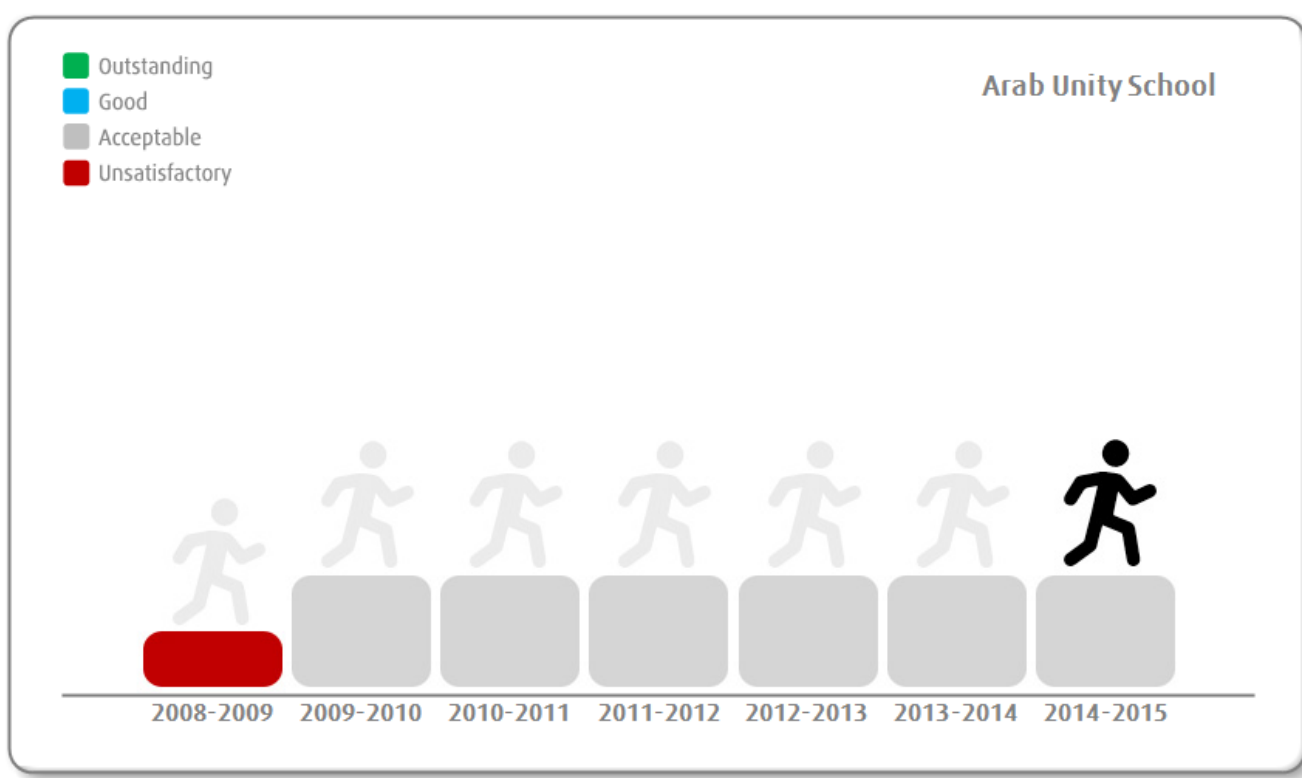




Dear Parents,

Arab Unity School was inspected by DSIB from 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015, and 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 aspects of the school's performance and standards. Inspectors looked at children's attainment and progress in five key subjects, their learning skills as well as their personal and social development. They judged how effective teaching was across the school. Inspectors considered how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside the classroom, 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 a range of evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observing children learning in lessons, looking at their work, talking with children, meetings with staff, parents and governors, and reviewing the parents' and teachers' surveys.

The key strengths and areas for improvement to be made by the school leaders, governors and owners are:

### Strengths

- Good teaching and learning skills in the Foundation Stage, secondary and post-16 classes resulted in good attainment and progress in the of majority subjects.
- Students' demonstrated good personal and social development throughout the school.
- Teachers and staff looked after students well. Children in the Foundation Stage received good support for their personal and social development.
- Students in the post-16 classes were supported well by the design of the curriculum and the advice they received to plan their future careers.
- The school helped parents to play an active part in their children's learning.

### Areas for improvement

- Ensure that senior leaders effectively check how well the teaching helps students to make good progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching in the primary phase by improving teachers planning and ensuring students' understand what they are learning.
- Improve the way in which teacher's check how well students are learning and how they use this information to modify what they teach in order to fully meet the needs of all students, and particularly those with special educational needs.
- Improve how the curriculum is planned to make sure that what students are taught extends their knowledge, deepens their understanding and provides them with the skills they need to progress.
- Ensure that the governing board carefully checks that the school is improving the quality of education it provides for all students and complies with all statutory requirements.

We warmly encourage you to read the full school inspection report.

The school is required to submit to DSIB an action plan identifying the steps they will take to address the areas for improvement. We have advised your school leaders to share this with you.

We trust that the information provided will help you understand, and encourages you to support, your child's school.

Yours sincerely,

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau  
Knowledge and Human Development Authority

## A closer look at Arab Unity School



### How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, Arab Unity School provided an **'Acceptable'** quality of education for its students.

- Students' attainment and progress were mostly good in the majority of subjects and acceptable in some phases. In the Foundation Stage children made good progress in learning to read and write and in their number work. The development of scientific knowledge and skills were weak. In the primary phase students' knowledge and skill did not progress at a fast enough rate in most subjects. Older students made good progress and attained good results in external examinations; this prepared them well for their future careers. Students enjoyed learning, most communicated their ideas successfully when responding to questions. Across all phases, students had opportunities to develop their critical thinking skills.
- Students' personal and social development were good. Students had positive attitudes, they were respectful, and made healthy living choices. They explained well the impact of Islamic values on modern life and society in Dubai and the UAE. Their understanding of other cultures around the world was weaker. Students were active community members and had a positive approach to their work.
- In the Foundation Stage teachers' expectations helped children to make good progress in English and mathematics. Teaching in science was weaker. In the primary phase teachers were beginning to make better use of the strategies developed from recent training but this had not yet resulted in students improved attainment and progress. Teachers in upper secondary and post-16 classes had good subject knowledge and the quality of interactions within the class supported effective learning. Analysis of assessment data was used appropriately to identify the priorities for school improvement. Student attainment and progress data was not used effectively to modify lessons to meet the needs of all students.
- The curriculum provided opportunities in all age ranges for the development of knowledge and to a lesser extent, skills. The school had successfully widened the range of subjects which could be chosen by post-16 students, so that they could follow an academic or vocational career pathway. The curriculum was not adapted sufficiently to meet the needs of students with different abilities, especially those with special educational needs and high ability students.
- Students were kept safe in school through effectively-managed systems to maintain the premises and effective supervision routines. Children in the Foundation Stage received good support in developing their social and personal skills and high quality careers guidance was offered to post-16 students.
- Leaders were committed to improving the school. However they did not all have the knowledge and skill needed to know how well teaching was helping students to make good progress. Comparisons between how the school was doing in external tests and those attained internationally lacked accuracy. The school had an active parents association which was involved in helping the school set the priorities for improvement.


## How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?



- The progress of students' with special educational needs was acceptable but was better in 'support hour' sessions than in lessons.
- A few teachers ensured that effective planning resulted in some students making good progress in lessons.
- Support teachers were effective in helping students with special educational needs. Support provided by subject teachers in lessons was inconsistent.



## 1. How good are the students' attainment, progress and learning?

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
 Islamic Education	Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Acceptable
	Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Acceptable
 Arabic as a First Language	Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
 Arabic as an Additional Language	Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Not Applicable
	Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Not Applicable
 English	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Good	Good
 Mathematics	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Good	Good ↑
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Good	Good
 Science	Attainment	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Good	Good ↑
	Progress	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Good	Good
		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills		Good	Acceptable	Good ↑	Good


↑ Improved from last inspection

↓ Declined from last inspection



## 2. How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal responsibility	Good	Good	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Good	Good


## 3. How good are teaching and assessment?

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

## 4. How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum quality	Acceptable 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good 

## 5. How well does the school protect and support students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety	Good	Good	Good	Good
Quality of support	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good 

## 6. How good are the leadership and management of the school?

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



# School **Inspection** Report

## Overall school judgement

**Acceptable**

## Key strengths

- Students' attainment in the majority of subjects in the Foundation Stage, secondary phase and post-16 classes was good.
- Students' personal and social development throughout the school was good.
- The quality of teaching, and the development of students' learning skills resulted in good progress.
- Well-managed systems ensured that students and staff were safe in school.
- The well-designed curriculum in the post-16 classes effectively met the needs of students.
- There was good support provided for children in the Foundation Stage, and also for students in post-16 classes particularly that relating to careers guidance.
- There were effective links developed with parents and the community


## Changes since the last inspection

- Children's attainment and progress in science in the Foundation Stage had declined.
- In the primary phase, students' attainment and progress in Arabic as a second language had declined to an acceptable level.
- The attainment of students in the post-16 classes in mathematics and science had improved to good.
- The learning skills of students in the secondary phase had improved to be good.
- The quality of the curriculum and assessment had declined in the Foundation Stage.
- Curriculum design and support for students in the post-16 classes had improved and were good.
- The quality of leadership in the school had declined to acceptable.
- The schools' links with parents and the community had improved.

## Recommendations

- Improve the quality of leadership and the accuracy of self-evaluation by ensuring:
  - leaders at all levels have the skills and knowledge to effectively monitor the quality of teaching and accurately evaluate the impact of teaching on students' learning
  - leaders use a wider range of evidence when evaluating the quality of teaching, including regular scrutiny of students' work.
- Improve the quality of teaching in the primary phase so that it is at least good and results in good attainment and progress by ensuring that:
  - teacher's plan lessons that clearly ensure that students of different levels of ability learn and make progress
  - teachers provide lessons that meet students individual needs and of all identified groups of students, including those with special educational needs
  - all teachers clearly explain to students what they are expected to learn in each lesson
  - all teachers have a better understanding of how to challenge ask questions and plan activities that effectively develop students' critical thinking skills.
- Improve the consistency and effectiveness of assessment processes across the phases in order to:
  - ensure stronger alignment of internal assessments with curriculum standards especially in the Foundation Stage and primary phase
  - enable teachers to use data analysis to modify the curriculum to better meet the needs of different groups of students across the phases
  - provide students in all phases with more extensive and useful guidance from teachers on their next steps in learning and on how to improve their outcomes.
- Improve curriculum planning to ensure that what students are taught builds on what they already know, deepens their understanding and extends their skills.
- Ensure governors rigorously check whether the actions taken by the school are having a positive impact on measurable learning outcomes for students in all phases of the school.
- Governors must ensure that the school is fully compliant with the Ministry of Education regulations regarding Arabic as an additional language.

 Improved from last inspection

 Declined from last inspection

## 1. How good are the students' attainment, progress and learning?

### 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	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- Children who entered school with English as an additional language soon gained the confidence to communicate with each other and their teachers. They listened well to instructions and stories and happily chatted in English with each other. A few children used their knowledge of phonics to read unfamiliar words but the majority made better progress when they read words by sight. Writing skills were good and many children were writing sentences with most of the core vocabulary spelt accurately.
- In mathematics most of the children were able to count to 10 with apparatus and a few were able to count objects without using a 1 to 1 correlation. The majority of the children could record simple addition and a few could record subtraction with the help of apparatus. Progress slowed for higher attaining children because they were not always sufficiently challenged in lessons.
- In science, most children were able to look at pictures of animals and compare the differences in their colour, shape and skin patterns. Most understood that some animals worked on farms and others were wild. Progress slowed because there were very few opportunities for children to develop the skill of investigation.

### Primary

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Good	Good
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' recitation skills were in line with the expected standard. They had a good understanding of the five pillars of Islam and the Islamic morals and values. The progress of the majority of students was above expectations in their knowledge of etiquette and morals. Students' recitation skills were less well developed.
- The majority of students demonstrated good attainment in listening and understanding in Arabic as a first language. Students could speak skilfully in extended sentences using correct terminology. They also made good progress in writing and could write at length using paragraphs. The majority of students could accurately read the texts contained in the curriculum text books.



- In Arabic as an additional language, students' listening skills were effective and their speaking skills were acceptable. Most students could articulate Arabic sounds and were decoding and reading sufficiently well. Students' writing skills were limited to copying and writing basic short phrases and sentences using familiar words.
- The majority of students' written English was generally accurately spelled and punctuated. Most students were developing a wider written vocabulary but were not yet able to write at length. The majority of students could read with some understanding although in the lower primary classes this was mainly at a literal level. By Year 6 they could discuss the plot, settings and theme of a story. Progress was most rapid towards the end of the phase.
- Most students made acceptable progress in most areas of mathematics. They had acceptable standards in calculation, measurement and shape. By Year 4 students were able to convert a simple fraction into an equivalent and add whole and fractions of numbers. By Year 6 students solved problems associated with ratio and decimals. In external tests their attainment was similar to that expected when compared to curriculum standards.
- Students demonstrated the expected understanding of scientific concepts such as the impact of forces on speeds of objects, conductors and insulators, and parts of an electric circuit. They were not always able to make use of the hands-on activities to improve or deepen their understanding of the concepts. Their progress was often hindered by the lack of challenge and the weak teaching methodologies that did not adequately focus on linking practical work to scientific theory.

### Secondary

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	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good


- In Islamic Education, the majority of students had a good knowledge and understanding of Seerah, Hadeeth and Islamic concepts. They developed a good knowledge of the prophet's biography, understanding the Hadeeth and Fiqh. However, their recitation skills were less well developed.
- Most students showed acceptable levels of understanding in Arabic as a first language. They were able to read texts that were set at an appropriate level. They made steady progress in free writing across a range of themes although for the majority, with a limited range of vocabulary.
- In Arabic as an additional language, students progressed in line with expectations. They showed faster progress in learning vocabulary and reading, than in the rest of the language skills.
- By Year 11, the majority of students studying English were reading from a greater variety of genres and could respond critically to texts. Writing was beginning to be organised into paragraphs to provide a clear structure of ideas. Sentences were beginning to be more varied, increasing the interest to readers. The key features of different forms of writing, for example, persuasion, were known and beginning to be applied.

- In mathematics students made good progress in developing a range of mathematical skills. Outcomes by the end of Year 11 were above international standards. In Year 8 students expanded brackets to provide solutions in algebra. By Year 9 students used a clinometer accurately to find heights of buildings and by Year 11 students demonstrated good thinking skills when developing their own solutions to questions of probability.
- In science students made good progress in their ability to experimentally determine the refractive index of glass and the reactivity series of metals. Most students, especially the high achievers, did not get enough differentiated opportunities to enable them to extend their understanding and progress beyond the good level.

Post-16		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a First Language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an Additional Language	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good 	Good
Science	Good 	Good

- In Islamic Education, most students had an age appropriate knowledge of Fiqh and Islamic concepts. They understood Hadeeth in line with expectations. However, their understanding of the Sahriaa and Islamic values was not deep enough. Their recitation skills and their ability to apply what they learnt to their own lives were still at an early stage of development.
- In Arabic as a first language, students' oral skills were acceptable but not sufficiently well developed to allow them to talk extensively when making presentations. They made steady progress in developing comprehension and free writing skills but with a limited choice of words.
- By Year 12, students could speak English fluently, in a range of appropriate styles and with a developed vocabulary. They could read for inferential meaning, citing evidence from the texts. Writing developed rapidly, accurately punctuated with an extensive vocabulary. Sentences were varied and engaged the readers. They structured their writing for effect and purpose.
- Attainment had risen over the past two years in mathematics. Progress in lessons was good for all groups. Most students were able to reach good standards in mathematics 'A' level in one year of study. They were confident mathematicians and by the end of Year 12 had good knowledge of a variety of formulae. By Year 13 students successfully used methods of integration by part related to trigonometric identities.
- In science students made good progress and were able to use challenging laboratory experiments to solve problems, such as their use of titration to calculate concentrations of unknown solutions of hydrated Copper (II) Sulphate. The lack of research and independent investigation opportunities hindered students' ability to reach outstanding levels of attainment and progress.



	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Learning skills</b>	Good	Acceptable	Good 	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most students enjoyed learning and were keen to engage in the tasks set for them. They usually persevered well and most successfully co-operated and collaborated in groups when given the opportunity. Older students had a better idea of what they needed to do to improve their work than younger students.</li> <li>• Students communicated effectively with their peers and teachers. Most students were confident, eager to answer questions and happy to explain their ideas and solutions to problems to the class. Increasingly in the secondary and post-16 classes they were given better opportunities to work together on a range of tasks. In the primary phase students were not sufficiently involved in group decisions.</li> <li>• Older students in particular, made connections in their learning and used previous knowledge effectively, as in mathematics and English. For example students used mathematical equipment related to engineering when accurately measuring the heights of buildings. This was not a strong feature of learning in the primary phase.</li> <li>• Technology was used frequently by teachers to support learning, but was seldom used by students in classroom lessons to develop knowledge and understanding. Across the school students did not receive sufficient opportunities to develop their critical thinking skills. However, good examples were seen in older classes in English where students assumed the roles associated with car manufacture and in mathematics when students solved probability problems.</li> </ul>				

## 2. How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Personal responsibility</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students had positive attitudes to working with teachers and their peers. They responded well to feedback, which was intended to help them improve their learning and behaviour.</li> <li>• Almost all students behaved well and demonstrated a high degree of self-control. They were courteous to adults and to other students. Occasionally in boys' classes, noise levels were high, hindering collaborative working.</li> <li>• Student relationships with peers and teachers were positive, respectful and cooperative. Students were frequently observed offering assistance to other children, both in the classroom and in the playground.</li> <li>• The desire to live a healthy lifestyle was a goal that most of the students appeared to understand and embrace.</li> <li>• Student attendance was good and almost all students were on time for lessons.</li> </ul>				

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

- Students demonstrated a strong understanding of the impact of Islamic values on modern life and society in Dubai and the UAE. They could discuss the importance of the Mosques, Friday prayer, and that of modest dress when visiting places such as the malls.
- The children in Foundation Stage and primary classes could talk in detail about the way of life of a Muslim. In other phases, they had a good understanding of the Emirati culture and its impact on others. They could explain, for example, the importance of taking part in initiatives to help others.
- Students appreciated the richness of their own culture and were proud of their country of origin. However, their understanding of other cultures around the world was not well developed.


	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students were active in reaching out to the wider community. They collected funds for various charitable causes that were both local and international. Members of the student council were particularly supportive of their peers' concerns and problems.
- Students demonstrated good work ethics. They collaborated well as they implemented their various projects. Although community activities were most often initiated by the school, students succeeded in meeting their objectives independently with a minimal level of supervision.
- The environmental awareness of students was a developing aspect of their learning. They showed appropriate knowledge of ecological challenges and participated in a few projects to preserve the environment, such as the eco-club and the 'Best out of Waste' initiative.

### 3. How good are teaching and assessment?

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

- Most teachers had sufficient subject knowledge, this was particularly strong in the upper secondary and post-16 classes. Teachers in the Foundation and primary Stages did not always know how young children and students learn best. For example, teaching in the Foundation Stage was often too directed, not providing children with sufficient opportunity to make choices and explore their own interests.
- Teachers' planning had improved and was generally detailed and consistent across years, phases and subjects. Learning objectives were defined but, in the primary phase in particular, often too vague. Success criteria were not shared consistently, therefore, students did not know what was expected of them or if the standard of their work met expectations. The use of time and resources were acceptable. However, short 35 minute lessons in the Foundation Stage did not allow children enough time to choose activities or practice what they had learned.
- Interactions between students and their classmates and teachers were strongest in the secondary and post-16 phases. The quality of teachers' questioning was a good feature of the Foundation Stage; often open-ended and probing. In other phases and subjects it was variable. In the primary phase, teachers preferred to ask individual students, individual questions with insufficient use being made of talk partners. Generally, teachers kept the pace of lessons brisk, but as a consequence, reflection by students and high quality outcomes were lost.
- Activities to meet the needs of different groups of students featured mainly in the form of different worksheets and seldom targeted different groups such as students with special educational needs. Challenge was particularly strong in mathematics and English in the post-16 phase but elsewhere it was inconsistent; many teachers did not ask enough of the more able students.
- Opportunities for critical thinking were made for students in the secondary and post-16 phases in a few lessons in science and in English but were not consistent features of most lessons. Students studying English were given regular opportunities to develop their skills for independent learning. Research, both in the classroom and as part of homework, was a feature of a few lessons but enquiry learning was limited across phases and subjects.
- Teaching of Arabic as a first language was acceptable overall and strongest in upper primary classes.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Acceptable 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable


- Internal assessments were adequately linked to the curriculum expectations in the secondary and post-16 phases. The alignment of these assessments with the schools' curriculum standards was weaker in the Foundation Stage and primary classes.
- Leaders had a good understanding of the National Agenda for improvement and a suitable range of processes to enable them to compare students' outcomes with international standards through IBT, Cambridge Checkpoints, IGCSE, and A levels. Analysis of data was not always accurately evaluated against the benchmark expectations of external tests or the KHDA framework guidance. As a result, the school had an inflated view of how well students were doing particularly against their own curriculum standards.

- The school had introduced new methods to enable student progress to be measured over time. In the Foundation Stage, assessment procedures were in place, but they did not accurately track and record progress against the curriculum statements.
- The information gained from the analysis of data had only limited impact on teaching practices and curriculum improvements and therefore on students' attainment and progress. The modification of the curriculum, driven by assessment data analysis, was carried out at department level but did not always make its way into the classroom.
- Teachers' knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses was acceptable. Teachers across the phases did not know their students well enough to consistently provide appropriate tasks that challenge students sufficiently. Written feedback given to students in their workbooks and feedback included in their report cards was of limited value because guidance on how students could improve their work was not sufficiently detailed.

#### 4. How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?


	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum quality	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The curriculum mostly provided opportunities in all age ranges for the development of knowledge and to a lesser extent, skills. All subjects were given an appropriate amount of time except for Arabic as a first language which was under the required amount of time in post-16. The expectations of the schools stated curriculum were mostly followed but not always in sufficient depth. Even though skills were mapped out throughout the curriculum, they were not a strong feature in lessons.
- Planning between phases and in all subjects helped students to make a smooth transfer and settle quickly into new routines. However, the curriculum was not structured to always ensure that in all subjects students learned smoothly and progressively year on year across each phase. The previous learning of students was not always recognised and taken fully into account.
- Themed weeks over the year were effectively planned for the whole school with a focus on a range of subjects including an integrated business week and an environmental week. These helped to broaden the curriculum and provided students with a greater understanding and enjoyment of what they were learning. Educational field trips were planned to enrich students' learning experiences including a visit abroad for students to take part in a community service project.
- Cross-curricular links were planned in the Foundation Stage around themes organised to provide greater enjoyment and meaning to learning. There were developing links in subjects across the other phases which included occasional use of tablet computers and laptops. In the majority of subjects across the school, the curriculum did not provide sufficient opportunities for independent learning, research, critical thinking or challenge for students especially for those that were more able.
- Results from external benchmarks were used when reviewing the curriculum. The resulting changes made to the curriculum increased the opportunities for students to develop problem-solving and reasoning skills. However, some of the modifications were not successful enough to meet the needs of all groups of students especially for lower achieving students and those with special educational needs.
- In Arabic as a first language, the curriculum relied mainly on the Ministry of Education textbooks, electronic visual presentations and extra-materials such as short stories and novels which provided enrichment in a few lessons.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The curriculum had been effectively modified in some areas to support the interests and learning styles of groups of students, for example, boys, gifted and talented students and Emiratis in order to provide more stimulating learning opportunities. The curriculum was not adapted sufficiently to meet the needs of students with different abilities especially those with special educational needs and more able students. There was not enough flexibility and innovation in teaching and learning to allow students to learn in their own ways and at their own pace.</li> <li>Children in the Foundation Stage were able to follow their interests through the choice of activities which supported their academic and social development. Students were offered an appropriate range of options for IGCSE at the end of Year 9. The school had successfully widened the range of subjects which could be chosen by post-16 students, so that they could follow an academic or vocational career pathway. The school was rightly proud of the high standard of provision in media studies.</li> <li>The school offered a variety of extra-curricular activities to enhance students' personal and academic development. Students celebrated their achievements in sports competitions and older students formed a debating and dramatic club. After school activities such as the music band, the school magazine and volunteering for charity work extended students' learning and interests.</li> <li>The curriculum was extended and enriched in the Foundations Stage by the provision of learning in Arabic as a first language.</li> </ul>				

### 5. How well does the school protect and support students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety	Good	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school provided students with the care required so that they were protected and safe at school, which included child protection, anti-bullying programmes, and protection while using the internet.</li> <li>Students had a secure and healthy environment at the school and whilst being transported on the schools' buses. Students were well supervised by adults, who were vigilant in their efforts to ensure that students were healthy and safe.</li> <li>Careful records were kept and maintained regarding the medical services, the buses, fire drills, security, and child protection.</li> <li>The school's facilities provided a suitable environment for student learning. The buildings and grounds were in a good state of repair.</li> <li>The school's employees continued their work to build a culture which emphasises the importance of living a healthy lifestyle.</li> </ul>				


	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Quality of support	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers had very good relationships with students and were aware of their personal and social needs. Children in the Foundation Stage received good support, settled quickly to school life, behaved well and were confident independent learners. Behaviour was generally managed well but some teachers struggled to control noisy behaviour in a few of the boys' classes.</li> <li>The school had appropriate systems to promote good attendance and punctuality, however students' poor punctuality in lessons was not always addressed by teachers.</li> <li>Students with special educational needs were welcomed into the school. There were clear and effective procedures for identifying needs both when children joined the school and when parents or teachers raised concerns. The special educational needs department made good use of a range of assessments and tests to identify needs and took account of the information provided by parents.</li> <li>The support for students with special educational needs was appropriately managed. Support was most effective when students were guided by support teachers both in lessons and in withdrawal groups. This consisted mainly of support with reading, writing and mathematics rather than focussed intervention programmes. Most teachers were not skilled in planning activities or using effective strategies to support students with special educational needs in the classrooms, as a result, they made acceptable rather than good progress.</li> <li>Students valued the guidance and support they received from their teachers and the confidential advice from the counsellors. They were able to turn to adults for help with academic, health, personal and social issues. High quality careers guidance was offered to post-16 students. The wide range of information available through career fairs, presentations and visits to local universities enabled students to make informed choices about higher education.</li> </ul>				

### How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?


	Overall
The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior leaders promoted and demonstrated a commitment to providing the best outcomes for special educational needs students and had invested in more support teachers, but other learning resources were limited. Class teachers had received training to help them understand how to meet the needs of special educational needs students but they applied their knowledge inconsistently in lessons.</li> <li>The school made appropriate use of a selection of summative assessments and tests to identify need but was not skilled in classifying students using the KHDA categories. The school took account of the information provided by parents. Most interventions matched the needs of the students but these were mainly put into practice by support teachers and not classroom teachers.</li> <li>Curriculum modifications were inconsistent. Although a few teachers adapted their plans to meet the needs of students others did not modify their lessons effectively or make use of individual education plan targets to plan appropriate learning activities. Appropriately designed learning objectives were not shared with students; therefore the opportunities for students to understand and be engaged in checking how well they were learning were limited. Support teachers were effective in supporting students, especially in withdrawal sessions; although activities consisted mainly of consolidating learning from previous lessons rather than intervention programmes.</li> </ul>	

- The special educational needs coordinator knew the parents of students very well. Parents valued her willingness to support families through workshops, phone calls and meetings. Parents were involved in reviewing individual education plan targets. The school informed parents of their child's progress through parents' meetings. Most parents sampled were very complimentary about communication, support and guidance but some parents were reluctant to acknowledge that their child had special educational needs.
- Students' progress overall was acceptable but there were inconsistencies. Students made the best progress when in withdrawal groups. In some lessons teachers did not have the skills to develop activities and strategies to help students make their next steps in learning; as a result progress was slow.

## 6. How good are the leadership and management of the school?

	Overall
The effectiveness of leadership	Acceptable 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Principal and most senior leaders were committed to providing a quality of education that would extend opportunities for the majority of students. To fulfil this vision they had set a direction for staff including the creation of detailed systems and processes.</li> <li>• All teachers were clear about their roles and responsibilities. Senior staff worked in teams to evaluate the work of the school. Senior and middle leaders understood that they were accountable for the performance of students. They were committed to supporting teaching staff and checking that school systems were followed. This did not consistently lead to improved outcomes for students particularly in the Foundation Stage or primary phase.</li> <li>• The relationships between most leaders were professional but this did not consistently lead to effective sharing of knowledge or skill. Leaders did not ensure that students were clear about what was expected of them in all lessons.</li> <li>• Leaders at all levels were aware of the improvements that were needed to move the school forward. Senior leaders were involved in planning actions for improvement but they did not all have the skills or knowledge that was needed to ensure effective implementation at classroom level and therefore demonstrated limited capacity to bring about rapid improvement.</li> <li>• Leaders had brought about improvement in some aspects of the schools work particularly in the post-16 phase of the school. They had not yet been successful in bringing about improvement in provision or outcomes for students in the primary phase or in maintaining all of the strengths identified in the Foundation Stage at the last inspection.</li> </ul>	

	Overall
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school had established a range of processes for checking the quality of the work of the school and evaluating the impact of school improvement planning. For the most part this had provided a realistic view of what still needed to improve. However, a lack of understanding of how curriculum and international benchmarks meet inspection expectations had led to an overly optimistic evaluation of the quality of provision and outcomes for students, particularly in the Foundation Stage and primary phase.</li> <li>Performance management systems were detailed and set out clearly in the schools policy. Monitoring records were variable in quality and reflected the different levels of knowledge and skill of those involved. Insufficient use was made of all available evidence when evaluating the quality of teaching and too little account was taken of the impact of teaching on learning. This led to an over generous view of teacher performance. Training for teachers linked to performance management targets were not resulting in rapid improvement.</li> <li>Improvement plans addressed the recommendations of the last inspection. Most success criteria included links to improvement in students' learning and to meeting national agenda targets. However, targets relating to curriculum standards in the primary phase were not challenging and at best were targeted at reaching acceptable attainment in mathematics and science.</li> <li>The school had begun to address all of the recommendations made at the last inspection but with limited success in the primary phase.</li> </ul>	

	Overall
Parents and the community	Good 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through the school's 'Parents as Partner's' initiative, the school had developed a proactive parents association, which elected grade representatives to liaise with teachers and represent parents in discussions with the senior leadership team. Parents were also involved in supporting the school at social events and through the parent engagement day.</li> <li>Parents reported that communication between the home and the school had improved this year. A range of opportunities, including regular coffee mornings with the senior leadership team and the parents' portal, which gave information on and support for student learning, kept parents engaged and informed. Seminars and an orientation day at the beginning of the school year were organised for parents but were not always well-attended.</li> <li>Parents appreciated the student reports, which contained grades, class averages and a section on the students' personal and social development. Reports for children in the Foundation Stage contained text describing progress against subject skills and offered some helpful guidance for future learning. As yet, this format had not been extended to the other three phases. Parent and teacher consultative meetings were valued and teachers used the occasion to discuss the summative tests and explain how student learning might be improved.</li> <li>The many educational experiences that arose from links with the community were wide ranging. They included field trips, visiting speakers and community service within the school, in the local community and abroad. Closer to home, the students cooperated and competed against other schools in a variety of events. They participated in local environmental campaigns, the Model United Nations and supported children in the Manzil School for special educational needs.</li> </ul>	






	Overall
<b>Governance</b>	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The advisory board appropriately included representation of all stakeholders. The views of all stakeholders were sought and considered. For example, those expressed by members of the parent council relating to the well-being of students. The board were able to discuss in detail the actions outlined within the school improvement plan, but had less understanding of the impact the actions were having on outcomes for students.</li> <li>• Governors kept a watchful eye on the school but relied heavily on the information gained from questions to the Principal and senior staff. The information provided did not have the accuracy needed for governors to have a clear view of how well the school was improving or to effectively hold the school to account.</li> <li>• Governors had not made sure that all statutory requirements had been met in full. The school was not fully compliant with the time allocation for the teaching of Arabic as a first language in the post-16 phase. Governors had contributed to improvement in post-16, for example, the introduction of wider curriculum options of vocational subjects, but had not been successful in ensuring that the school had improved the key weaknesses identified in the primary phase.</li> </ul>	

	Overall
<b>Management, staffing, facilities and resources</b>	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school operations ran smoothly most of the time. The timetables made adequate use of available areas but substantial time was wasted during the school day as students and teachers moved from location to location around the campus.</li> <li>• The school had a sufficient number of teachers with teaching qualifications but only a few with experience and appropriate understanding of the UK curriculum. A few teachers were undergoing training to improve their knowledge. Most teachers were appropriately deployed across the school in accordance with their expertise and experience.</li> <li>• The premises and learning environment were appropriate for teaching, learning, curricular, and extra-curricular activities. The school was making better use of the new building including the new library and the two computer laboratories. Furniture was kept in operational condition in the classrooms and elsewhere.</li> <li>• The school was equipped with resources that supported at least acceptable learning. These included three libraries, computer laboratories, science laboratories, and general activity rooms.</li> </ul>	

## What are the views of the Principal, parents, teachers and students?

Before the inspection, the views of the Principal, 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		Percentage
 <b>Parents*</b>	<b>This year</b>	657	31%
	<b>Last year</b>	380	22%
 <b>Teachers</b>	195		86%
 <b>Students</b>	476		83%

- Almost a third of parents responded to their survey, while most teachers and senior students responded to theirs. Opinions were divided on a number of important aspects of the school's provision and outcomes.
- Most parents and teachers thought that the school provided a good quality of education, but only a majority of senior students agreed with them.
- More than a few parents and more than half of the senior students expressed dissatisfaction with the range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school.
- More than a fifth of parents and more than 60 per cent of senior students disagreed that the school listened to them and acted on their opinions.
- Teachers who responded were largely positive in their opinions about the school's provision and outcomes. Almost a quarter of them disagreed that students' behaviour was good, and more than a quarter indicated that the school's leaders did not listen to them.
- A majority of students indicated that they were not making good progress in learning Arabic as their first language and about 40 per cent of them believed that their progress in learning mathematics was less than good.
- About 40 per cent of senior students disagreed that the school dealt well with instances of bullying.
- More than a third of the senior students disagreed that the school had prepared them well for the next stages of their education.

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

## What happens next?

The school has been asked to prepare and submit an action plan to DSIB within two months of receiving the inspection report. This should address:

- recommendations from DSIB
- areas identified by the school as requiring improvement
- other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school
- priorities arising from the school's unique characteristics.

The next school inspection will report on changes made by the school.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

## How to contact us

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)