



Emirates International  
private School L.L.C

Curriculum: IB

Overall Rating:

Good



"We are keen to prepare the new generation that is ready to be creative and innovative to help us achieve our ambitions for even greater prosperity"

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



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## School information



General information	
Location	Umm Al Sheif
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1991
Website	www.eischools.ae
Telephone	04-3489804
Address	P O Box 6446, Dubai, UAE
Principal	David Hicks
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	23 to 26 January 2017

Teachers / Support staff	
Number of teachers	181
Largest nationality group of teachers	UK
Number of teaching assistants	3
Teacher-student ratio	1:12
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	27%

Students	
Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-19
Grades or year groups	FS -Year 13
Number of students on roll	2210
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	383
Number of students with SEND	99
Largest nationality group of students	Arab

Curriculum	
Educational permit / Licence	IB
Main curriculum	IB
External tests and examinations	MYP, DP
Accreditation	None
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT, CAT4



## The DSIB inspection process



In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by schools, inspectors consider the six standards of performance that form the basis of the UAE School Inspection Framework (the framework). They look at children’s attainment and progress in key subjects, their learning skills and their personal and social development. They judge how effective teaching and the assessment of learning are across the school. Inspectors consider how well the school’s curriculum, including activities inside and outside classrooms, meet the educational needs of all students. They judge how well schools protect and support children. In addition, inspectors judge the effectiveness of leadership, which incorporates governance, management, staffing and facilities.

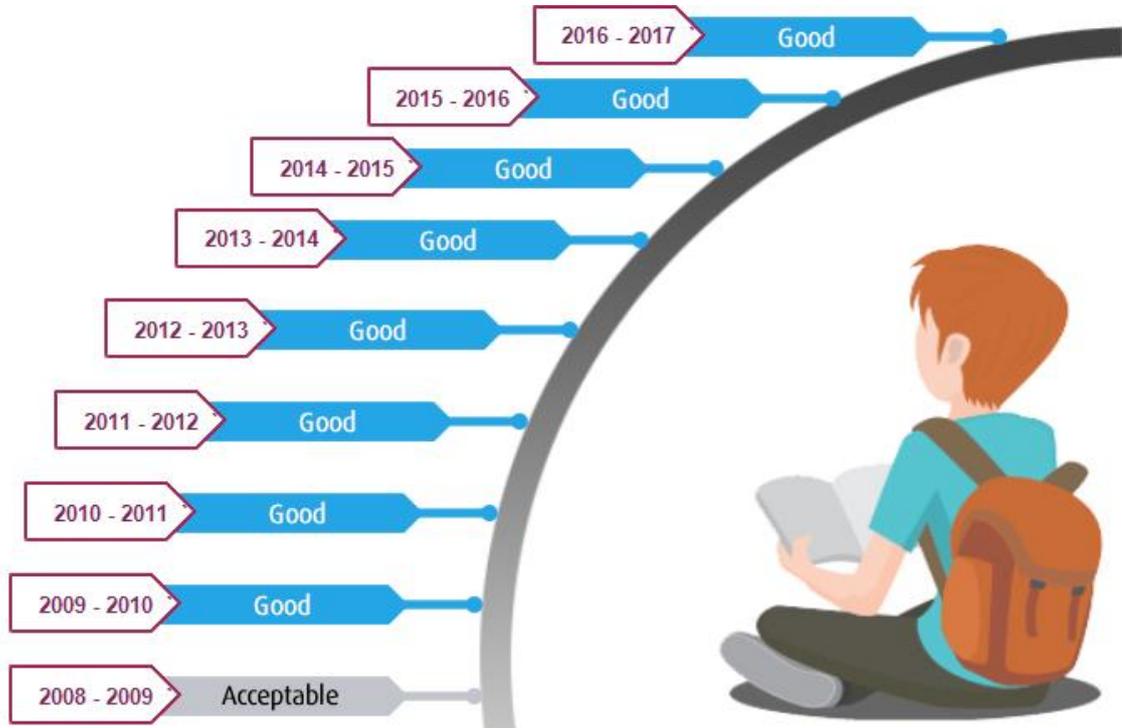
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students’ learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

### Judgements are made on a six-point scale

DSIB inspection teams make judgements about different aspects, phases and subjects that form the work of the school, using the scale below, which is consistent with the framework.

<b>Outstanding</b>	Quality of performance substantially exceeds the expectation of the UAE
<b>Very good</b>	Quality of performance exceeds the expectation of the UAE
<b>Good</b>	Quality of performance meets the expectation of the UAE (This is the expected level for every school in the UAE)
<b>Acceptable</b>	Quality of performance meets the minimum level of quality required in the UAE (This is the minimum level for every school in the UAE)
<b>Weak</b>	Quality of performance is below the expectation of the UAE
<b>Very weak</b>	Quality of performance is significantly below the expectation of the UAE

## Inspection journey for Emirates International private School L.L.C



- The school opened in 1991, and for the past seven years has been rated 'good' in KHDA inspections. There are 2210 students from Early Years to Year 13, which is a five percent increase since last year. The school has a wide range of nationalities, including a large number of Emirati students. 73 percent of the students are in the primary and secondary sections. In the Early Years, a high proportion of new entrants have English as an Additional Language. Teacher turnover this year is 27 percent.
- Previous inspections have recognised the school's strengths in students' personal and social development, high quality teaching and learning in the Early Years, outstanding attainment in English in the post-16 phase and the outstanding partnerships with parents.
- Recommendations over recent years have focused on improving the quality of teaching of Arabic so that students make better progress, improving the rigour of mathematics and science in the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and the Middle Years Programme (MYP), improving the analysis of assessment data; and improving the quality of support for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

## Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



Emirates International private School L.L.C was inspected by DSIB from 23 to 26 January 2017. The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- In the Early Years, children's attainment is good, and their progress and learning skills are very good. In the primary phase, students' attainment and progress are very good in English, but variable elsewhere. In the secondary phase, attainment and progress are variable. In primary and secondary science, progress has improved but attainment has declined. In post-16, attainment and progress in English remain outstanding, but attainment and progress in mathematics and science, and students' learning skills, have declined.
- Students' personal development remains very good in the Early Years, primary and secondary phases, and outstanding in the post-16 phase. Their understanding of Islamic values, awareness of Emirati and world cultures, and their social responsibility remain very good across all phases.
- The quality of teaching is variable across subjects. Overall, teaching is very good in Early Years, and good in primary, secondary and post-16 phases. Assessment is very good in the Early Years and post-16, and good in primary and secondary phases. Assessment in lessons is a weaker aspect, especially the provision of appropriately challenging targets and focused feedback, so students know their next steps in learning.
- Curriculum design and adaptation are good in Early Years, primary and secondary. On-going reviews ensure continuous improvement, for example, increased emphasis on scientific skills. The curriculum is outstanding in post-16, where the International Baccalaureate Diploma programme (IBDP) is well-established, and the International Baccalaureate career-related programme (IBCP) provides a valuable alternative pathway for students.
- Health and safety are good across all phases. As observed during inspection, the school is quick to react once problems are reported, but would benefit from more systematic, proactive vigilance. Care and support for students is good across the school, with particular strength in the extensive career guidance provided for older students.
- Leadership, self-evaluation and governance are good. Senior leaders systematically and accurately evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. Governors have on-going contact with stakeholders including parents and students, and consequently, know the school well. Partnerships with parents are outstanding and parents feel fully informed and involved in their children's education. The facilities, staffing and resources provide a suitable learning environment, enhanced by effective use of learning technologies. The new building provides Early Years and primary students with bright, spacious classrooms and specialist areas.

## What the school does best

- Students' very positive behaviour, attitudes and work ethic, and their highly respectful relationships with teachers and peers.
- The improving progress in Arabic.
- The strong support for older students, especially the improved careers guidance.
- The quality of teaching in the Early Years, resulting in strong learning skills and very good progress in English, mathematics and science.
- The systematic lesson observations, resulting in accurate evaluation of teaching and learning.
- The very inclusive ethos promoted by the school.

## Recommendations

- Rigorously pursue improvements in student attainment, especially in science, and mathematics for all groups of students, by:
  - synthesising the positive work on curriculum alignment, observation of teaching and learning, and analysis of assessment data
  - improving the consistency of teaching by sharing the best practice that is evident in each subject and each phase, and by providing targeted personalised professional development, especially in the use of questioning and differentiation
  - improving the use of assessment in lessons, especially to provide students with more challenging targets and specific feedback focused on their next steps in learning.
- Better utilise the capacity of the middle leaders, including the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), by:
  - giving them time to work with teachers to provide specific subject-focused feedback to improve teaching, use of assessment and student achievement.

## 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 intention 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. In 2015, KHDA launched 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.

**The following section focuses on the impact of the National Agenda Parameter in meeting the school's targets:**

- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- In science, International Benchmark Tests (IBT) reflect attainment that is below expectations in all year groups. This reflects content and skills not previously taught. In English, IBT scores indicate above expected levels, which reflects findings from classroom observations. In mathematics, attainment as reflected in IBT is below the levels found during inspection.
- The data have been analysed in great detail. Subject coordinators, and to a lesser extent teachers, find it useful now that they have been trained in how to understand and use it. On-going support from the assessment coordinator is also appreciated, especially in terms of using the information to improve teaching strategies in the classroom. A good start has been made, but many teachers are still in the process of learning and adapting their practice.
- The school has modified the curriculum to match the requirements of TIMMS and PISA. Content has been changed to cover gaps that have been identified and to further develop key skills such as investigation. Content changes are now in place and teachers show growing confidence in teaching them. This is having a positive impact in supporting the improvement of students' work. Skills development, whilst improving, is inconsistent.
- Teachers, supported by middle leaders, are beginning to modify their teaching strategies to meet the requirements of the National Agenda more closely. In science and mathematics, teachers are encouraging students to be more curious, to pose their own questions and, in science, designing investigations to answer them. In English, there is increasing use of Information Technology (IT) to support learning and this is a strong feature across the school.
- Students are aware of the importance of the National Agenda in the UAE. However, the school does not yet consistently use their reports to make them aware of their own levels of performance and learning styles. The use of technology to support their research and for presentations is a strong feature of their learning. Research is also supported by students' use of books and other print-based resources.

Overall, the school's improvement towards achieving its National Agenda targets meets expectations.



Overall school performance

Good

1 Students' achievement

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

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

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

## 3. Teaching and assessment

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

## 4. Curriculum

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

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

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

## 6. Leadership and management

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

# Main inspection report



## 1. Students' achievement

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

- The majority of children in English attain levels that are above curriculum standards. In relation to their individual starting points and the curriculum standards, the large majority of children make better than expected progress. By FS2, children have a good range of oral vocabulary and express themselves with clarity. The majority of children speak confidently to adults and peers in conversations and when making short presentations. Most have learned a range of phonic sounds enabling them to write simple three-letter words and a few can write basic sentences.
- In mathematics, attainment for the majority of children exceeds curriculum expectations. Practical learning activities help to reinforce children's mathematical knowledge and understanding. As a result, the large majority of children make better than expected progress. In FS2, most children can identify numbers beyond 10 and the majority can accurately write numerals. They can recognise and name a range of simple shapes, and can successfully create repeating patterns using colour and objects.
- In science, attainment for the majority of children is above curriculum standards and a large majority make better than expected progress. In FS1, children can name a range of animals and can identify some of their characteristics. They know conditions needed for seeds to grow. In FS2, children are developing their scientific skills by, for example, predicting the best material to use to make Barnaby Bear a waterproof coat, and observing the outcomes of their investigations. They can record their predictions and their findings in simple drawings.

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

- In Islamic education, the school's internal assessment data, lessons and work books show that the majority of students attain levels above curriculum standards. They display good knowledge of Islamic morals, values and Islamic laws, such as the Pillars of Islam, Friday prayer and Seerah. The majority of students make good progress as measured against the lesson objectives. However, students' memorisation, and linking knowledge to real life is still underdeveloped.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students have attainment levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. They show adequate skills in reading, listening, and speaking. Students' writing skills are improving and the high achievers can write stories describing pictures. Progress overall is good as measured against lesson objectives. Progress is better when students are more interested in a topic, for example in a Year 2 lesson, students enthusiastically joined in discussion about space. Boys and girls make similar progress.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain in line with curriculum expectations. They show adequate skills in reading, listening, and speaking, however students' writing skills are less secure. Students make good progress. They are able to participate in discussions regarding familiar topics, for example in Year 3 students confidently discuss their likes and dislikes. Students with SEND make similar progress to their peers, as a result of the support provided. Boys and girls make similar progress.
- In English, the majority of students attain levels above curriculum standards and make very good progress from their starting points. Against IBT results, all students, including those for whom English is an additional language, show strong progress as they move through the primary school and attain levels that are above national and international standards. Students progress rapidly through class participation and interaction. They critically analyse texts. Attainment and progress have increased over time against curriculum standards.
- In mathematics, the majority of students demonstrate attainment that is above curriculum standards. Attainment against external benchmarks in Years 5 and 6 is above national averages. The majority of students make better than expected progress. Lesson observations and samples of students' work indicate that by the end of the primary phase, boys perform better than girls. Students with SEND make similar progress to their peers. The connection of mathematics to real-life scenarios is developing.

- In science, students' attainment in lessons against curriculum standards is acceptable and progress against starting points is good for all students, including those with SEND. The good progress enables students to make up lost ground after a dip in attainment. Against international benchmarking tests, attainment is weak. Internal assessment is over generous. Older students make rapid progress in catching up on developing investigational skills, as well as their knowledge and understanding. However, this is a little more varied for younger students.

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

- In Islamic education, most students attain levels that are in line with the MOE curriculum expectations. Their knowledge of main beliefs, concepts and values is secure. They are able to explain the concept of Zakat and to whom it should go and how to calculate it. Most students know the biography of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) as a model for all people. Students' progress in lessons, in their recent work and over time, is good. Students' memorisation and recitation skills, and linking knowledge to real life are still underdeveloped.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attain in line with curriculum expectations. They show secure competencies in most of the skills, although writing is below expectations, and their ability to form correct long sentences orally is sometimes limited. Progress is better when students are more engaged and when the topic is related to their real life. For example, Year 9 students enjoy searching the net about Arab scientists. New students are supported with special care, and girls make slightly better progress than boys.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students have attainment levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. Students' listening skills are secure and with support from the teacher most can use basic sentences to talk about themselves. Students' progress is better when the topics they are studying are relevant and meaningful to them. For example, Year 7 students are enthusiastic and enjoy talking and learning about hobbies. Students who are new to the school, are supported well.

- In English, the majority of students attain levels above curriculum standards. Students use critical thinking skills to analyse a range of challenging texts. They use new vocabulary to participate in discussions and to write their own essays. As they move into the final year of MYP, the large majority of students make significant progress and reach higher levels of attainment than predicted. However, Year 10 results in the IBT, have attained consistently low levels. This is also reflected in MYP results from the first year of e-assessments.
- In mathematics, attainment measured against curriculum standards is above age expectations. Performance against international benchmarks is weak across all years, although lesson observations, samples of students' work and internal data support good attainment. Problem solving and critical thinking skills are well-developed. Students' progress is above expectations with little difference between the performance of girls and boys. Higher achieving students do not perform as well as their peers when compared with predictions based on their ability.
- In science, students' attainment in international benchmarking and internal tests is weak, and acceptable against curriculum standards, as demonstrated during lessons and in student work. The school has undertaken rigorous curriculum revision, resulting in students making good progress in improving their knowledge, skills and understanding. In the best lessons, students synthesise and present research findings, and develop good scientific skills. In lessons that lack challenge, progress is slower, basic understanding of scientific vocabulary is insecure, and students struggle to formulate research questions, hypothesise, understand graphs, and carry out and evaluate experiments.

 Post-16		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Good ↑
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics	Good ↓	Good ↓
Science	Good ↓	Good ↓

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Islamic concepts, beliefs and values that are in line with curriculum expectations. Students demonstrate basic levels of understanding of Seerah and stories of the Prophets (PBUT). The majority of students have difficulty reciting and memorising prescribed Holy Qur'an verses and Hadeeth. Most students make expected progress against appropriate learning objectives. However, linking knowledge to real life is the weakest of students' skills.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students have attainment levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. They show confidence and competencies in most language skills. They enjoy debating, but their writing skills are less secure, although some students are able to write extended paragraphs. Progress is better when students are more engaged and when they are able to relate their learning to their own lives such as when writing about women's rights in Year 13. Internal assessment data shows that students are making better progress. New students are given extra support and girls make slightly better progress than boys.

- In English, most students attain levels consistently above curriculum standards, and the large majority perform above international standards on external examinations. Most students demonstrate strong critical thinking, speaking, listening and writing skills. They undertake research and use learning technologies very effectively. All groups of students make similarly strong progress. Lessons using high quality literature from around the world and focusing on topics of moral value and critical issues, inspire full student engagement and consequently high achievement.
- In mathematics, attainment as measured against external examination results, is below expected standards. Lesson observations, evaluation of students work and internal data show good attainment and good progress, with challenging work. Most groups of students make better than expected progress. Content is more challenging in the post-16 phase and students develop their independent learning and research skills well. Trends over time are variable, with a decline in 2016.
- In science, attainment and progress are good overall, as shown by external examination results, but they have declined over recent years. There is variation between the sciences, with attainment highest in biology and chemistry. Projections from external assessments demonstrate that most students make good progress from their starting points, except in physics. Students develop sound knowledge and practical investigational skills, and apply them well to solving problems. They use scientific vocabulary appropriately and their ability to develop balanced arguments is improving in environmental science.

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

- Most students enjoy their studies and increasingly take on more responsibility for their own learning and the assessment of it. Students sustain concentration and are capable of working productively on their own. They respond well to feedback from their teachers and peers. Students from primary onwards, use rubrics to select their own preferred level of challenge in learning activities. They increasingly use assessment rubrics to evaluate their learning outcomes.
- Students interact and communicate purposefully and productively in groups and as individuals. They listen to others' views in discussions and when working together. Most students communicate their thinking well, describing learning and delivering presentations in class and to wider audiences. Children in the Early Years, for example, confidently deliver presentations to their class about aspects of their own culture.
- In lessons students are able to apply knowledge and understanding from different subjects appropriately. In primary, for example, students refine their use of time connectives when writing about a science investigation. In a secondary theory of knowledge lesson, students consider the ethics of capital punishment drawing on prior learning from history, politics and geography.
- Most students can find things out for themselves and use technology effectively to support their learning. In mathematics, students regularly use their problem-solving skills. However, in other subjects across all phases of the school, there are too few opportunities for students to develop critical thinking, innovation and enterprise skills. In primary and secondary science lessons, high quality investigation skills are not consistently promoted.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Personal development</b>	Very good	Very good	Very good	Outstanding

- Students demonstrate a strong sense of commitment and loyalty to the school. They willingly take responsibility for themselves and others, which is a key factor in their successful learning. Almost all post-16 students have an extremely positive attitude to their studies. They support younger students through assemblies, form time and around the school. Students display exemplary behaviour in lessons and around the school, although litter is a problem in the primary phase at break times.
- Students demonstrate very good self-discipline, although they become disengaged where teaching lacks excitement or challenge. Students report that incidents of bullying are extremely rare and any problems are dealt with quickly and effectively. Discussions on the use of social media ensure that students are safe when using the internet. Older students, especially prefects, set a good example for others.
- Relationships across the school are positive and supportive. Students from a variety of backgrounds get on very well with each other. They do not hesitate to give support to others, especially to students with SEND. However, school documentation and lesson observations during inspection, noted a few incidents of lack of courtesy towards staff.
- Students have positive attitudes towards healthy eating and active lifestyles. There is a healthy eating policy in place, and the canteen serves mostly healthy and organic foods at break times. Students enjoy physical activities and enthusiastically participate in the wide range of sporting and other extra-curricular opportunities available to them. Student's emotional and psychological well-being is supported through talks on subjects such as self-esteem and stress management.
- Overall attendance is good, although this is still not showing signs of improvement overtime. Attendance is highest in the primary phase and lowest in the post-16 phase. Students arrive at school on time and are generally punctual to lessons.

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

- Students across the school have a strong understanding and appreciation of Islamic values. They understand the relevance of these values and their impact on everyday life in the UAE. For example, most students can talk about tolerance, hospitality, and respecting women and elders. They comment that they feel comfortable and at home in Dubai, and they can give many examples of how Islam and the UAE helps less developed countries through Dubai Care.

- Students across the school have great respect for Emirati heritage and culture. They can speak in detail about famous buildings in UAE, such as Burj Al-Arab and the Grand Mosque. They confidently share their understanding of Emirati celebrations, such as National Day, Flag Day, Eid Al-Adha and Eid Al-Fitr.
- Students are extremely proud of their own culture, heritage and traditions. They are keenly aware of cultural diversity in Dubai. They fully appreciate and celebrate their own culture, and show great respect and understanding for cultural differences. They are highly respectful of others and able to explain in detail the main features of different cultures.

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

- Students are proud to be part of the school community. They have a clear understanding of their responsibilities as members of the school. The school continues to provide wide-ranging opportunities for students to contribute to the life of the school and wider community. Students of all ages are actively involved in supporting, and often initiating, health, business and environmental projects both locally and internationally.
- Almost all students throughout the school have an exemplary work ethic. They take full advantage of the experiences the school provides to develop leadership and enterprise skills. Students participate in activities and help the school community as well as the larger community of Dubai. Most are enthusiastic and participatory learners, who are innovative when provided with opportunities to discover, explore and research.
- Students demonstrate pride in their school and have a strong focus on improving the environment. Students generally take good care of the school environment, although a problem with litter was observed in the new primary playground. The plant project, where students create and maintain planting areas in the school grounds, creates environmental awareness. Students are also involved in recycling projects, including collecting aluminium cans and paper recycling. They are knowledgeable and can speak confidently about environmental issues.

### 3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Teaching for effective learning</b>	Very good	Good	Good	Good ↓

- The quality of teaching varies across subjects. There are strengths in all subjects and phases but teaching is more consistently strong in the Early Years and in English. Almost all teachers have a thorough knowledge of their subjects and most know how students learn best. They facilitate learning effectively by providing students with a range of engaging activities and regular opportunities to develop skills.

- Planning is thoughtful and structured to ensure a sequence of effective learning steps to support successful outcomes. The learning expectations for lessons are carefully explained to students. Activities are designed to engage and motivate learners, and resources are carefully selected to support students. The Early Years' classrooms are stimulating, multi-sensory and rich with print, contributing to children's very good progress in this phase.
- Teachers' skilfully interact with students to engage them in learning. In the best lessons, questioning can be probing to help students reflect more deeply and precisely, and, since the previous inspection, there are improvements in the questioning skills of teaching in the Arabic department. However, in mathematics and science lessons across primary, secondary and post-16 phases, the quality of questioning is too variable.
- Teachers use a range of strategies to meet the needs of individual students. Learning tasks are generally carefully planned to ensure that students work at appropriate levels of challenge in relation to their abilities. However, too often, in all subjects and across all phases, work is not always well matched to individual needs, and activities do not provide sufficient challenge, especially for high attaining students.
- Teachers encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning. They provide frequent opportunities for students to think for themselves and reflect on their work. Teachers routinely require students to carry out research and work collaboratively. Innovation, problem-solving and critical thinking skills are less frequently promoted in an explicit or effective manner.

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

- The school has put a good infrastructure in place to record students' attainment and progress against curriculum standards, and assessment processes provide reliable information. However, in a few areas, for example where new processes have been developed in primary science, there is a need for further moderation to ensure that teachers interpret rubrics in the same way.
- The school compares the performance of students against a range of international benchmarks, except in Arabic as a second language, where only internal assessment is used. Test and examination results are compared, to establish, for example, how well individual students have performed in relation to their potential, and how cohort results compare with peers, nationally and internationally, across different subjects.
- Students' progress is monitored regularly to identify trends in attainment and progress for individual students and a colour-coding system indicates rates of progress. The progress of different groups of students is also analysed, for example, to identify the progress made by different ethnic groups. This information is available to teachers so that they can use it to adjust their teaching.
- The use of assessment information to adjust the curriculum and plan lessons that meet the needs of all students is varied. It is not as strong in primary and secondary as elsewhere. For example, in mathematics, assessment data is sometimes used to inform lesson planning, but this rarely ensures that all students are adequately challenged. In the Early Years, teachers use questioning well to assess children's starting points and ensure that most children make rapid progress.

- Teachers have a keen awareness of their students' strengths and areas for development. Although teachers provide clear feedback in class, written feedback is variable in quality. Marking is most effective in post-16 and in humanities and Islamic education, where students are given skilful guidance on how to improve their work. This is more variable in other areas of the school and targets set for students frequently lack challenge.

#### 4. Curriculum

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

- The curriculum has a clear rationale based on the full range of International Baccalaureate Programmes. The curriculum reflects the mission of the school, takes account of UAE national priorities and increasingly aligned to external benchmarks to increase rigour in the PYP and MYP. The new building is providing opportunities to creatively consider how the programmes can be enhanced.
- The curriculum is well documented and planned. However, in some subjects, there are areas that still require attention to ensure it is aligned horizontally, that gaps are filled and there is smooth transition from one phase to another, as has already been done in science. In post-16, the curriculum is strong, as it is better established. Global context could be made more explicit, in order to reflect the intercultural richness of the school community.
- A wide range of curricular choices provides students with opportunities to develop their interests and talents. In post-16, the Creativity Activity Service (CAS) programme connects students with leadership and real world opportunities, and this has been extended into the MYP. The IBCP provides a valuable additional route for senior students, and the school is continuously developing the options available within this programme.
- In the Early Years and primary phase, meaningful, planned cross-curricular links are embedded through the transdisciplinary themes and units of inquiry of the PYP. In post-16, Theory of Knowledge requires students to analyse the nature of learning in different academic disciplines, and synthesise this to consider a range of current affairs and ethical issues. In the MYP, there is room to develop additional cross-curricular connections beyond the required Interdisciplinary Units.
- The curriculum is reviewed regularly. In all phases, teachers are well-trained, which ensures that the curriculum meets IB requirements, as well as the academic and personal needs of most students. Additional training to meet specific individual developmental needs will help to meet academic and personal development of students. Departmental reviews at transition points and across a year level ensure that gaps in skills and knowledge in some subjects are filled.
- The MoE standards for UAE social studies have been skilfully mapped across all phases. In the Early Years and primary phase, they are well aligned with the PYP Units of Inquiry, Personal, Social, Cultural and Health Education (PSHE) and the transdisciplinary skills. In secondary and post-16, they are embedded across subject areas, through PSHE and through the Approaches to Learning skills. Teaching includes specifically focused research projects, as well as use of the UAE and Dubai as a context for other learning objectives. Students across phases are knowledgeable about the UAE, its development and key issues.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Curriculum adaptation</b>	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding

- The curriculum is designed to stretch and challenge most students and to encourage deep learning. However, methodologies to meet the needs of groups such as gifted and talented and Emirati students are not yet fully embedded in each lesson. In the best lessons, differentiation motivates and challenges lower ability students, but all the newly available information on ability and aptitude is inconsistently used to plan lessons across the school.
- Students take part in a wide range of high quality activities that go beyond the classroom. The curriculum encourages innovative thinking and students use their skills to plan and undertake work in the school and the community. In a minority of lessons, there are too few opportunities for students to generate their own ideas and to develop independent thinking.
- Most lessons seize opportunities to develop students' understanding of Emirati culture and heritage. The values that underpin life in the UAE are firmly embedded in classroom learning and in the wider curriculum. Students are encouraged to respect and find out about other cultures but also to value the particular qualities brought to their life from UAE society.

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

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

- Child protection is taken very seriously by governors, the school leadership. A comprehensive written policy provides guidance for all staff. All school employees undergo training and are fire-training certified. Students indicate that they feel safe in school. Parents report that communication about security issues is very helpful. Staff receive regular reminders about child protection. Prevention and intervention by teachers is effective in protecting students from personal and cyber-bullying.
- Emergency evacuation drills normally take place once a term, although with a new building, drills should take place more frequently until the fire safety team is certain that students and staff are familiar with exit routes and assembly areas. Fire equipment is labelled and inspected at regular intervals. Fire alarms are well-placed throughout the building and are checked at regular intervals. Closed circuit television cameras are well-placed on the exterior perimeter and security at school entrances is effective. Comprehensive employment records are kept and all staff are thoroughly screened before employment commences. School buses are equipped with seat belts, fire extinguishers and safety kits.

- The buildings are well maintained and very clean. Procedures and protocols for safety are in good order and a list of safety concerns presented to the school was given immediate attention. However, for health and safety to be truly effective, the entire staff would benefit from being proactive rather than reactive and report potential hazards to the school safety team as soon as they are observed.
- The school buildings and facilities effectively support student learning. However, many entrances to the buildings are in need of access ramps for students with special mobility needs. The newly completed building provides many additional high quality learning spaces for Early Years and primary students, including outdoor areas, a dance studio and a library, which is being developed. Comprehensive records about student health and safety are kept.
- The school canteen provides healthy lifestyle choices that are delivered fresh each day. Students also bring their own healthy snacks, which are monitored carefully by teachers. A range of activities is available for students to pursue healthy active living. The school's promotion of healthy lifestyle is built into most aspects of school life and supported by the work of the school clinic. Outdoor play areas are shaded and a fresh water supply is available.

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

- Relationships amongst staff and between staff and students are cordial and respectful. Policies emphasise the positive value of rewarding good behaviour and practices reflect this through awards and celebrations of success. Assemblies effectively encourage a cohesive community within sections of the school. Older students contribute their time and energy to encourage good behaviour and a positive work ethic amongst younger ones.
- Policies for attendance and punctuality are appropriate. Whilst for most students this contributes towards very good attendance, a few older students lack commitment to school, so the policies and procedures are less effective. The large majority of students arrive punctually to lessons, encouraged by a good work ethic on the part of peers and staff.
- Students with SEND are identified early in their school career. The school is able to accurately diagnose almost all students' needs, often supported by reports from external agencies. Gifted and Talented students are identified through a variety of information, especially the newly introduced formal measures of attainment and ability.
- Swift identification of needs is followed by good advice for teachers on how to meet the needs of both very high achievers and those of lower ability, as well as those with very specific learning needs. In the best examples, teachers use their knowledge of how to scaffold learning to both support and challenge, and to ensure that all learners gain the most important concepts from lessons. In some cases, however, teachers find the large amounts of data about students confusing rather than illuminating, so they are unable to use it effectively to modify their lessons.
- The pastoral system works well to support students through their school life. It is well organised and pastoral leaders are trusted by students and parents. The counselling services provide very effective personal guidance and also educate students to manage their own and each other's emotional well-being. The careers guidance service, whilst exceptionally busy, steers and assists students very effectively towards life after school.

## Inclusion

### Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good

- The school offers a commendably inclusive provision that genuinely welcomes students with SEND. School leaders accept the challenge presented by students who have complex learning issues and are developing their ability to ensure that resources and curriculum modifications match students' personal learning needs. Leaders also recognise that successful inclusion can only be sustained by closer cooperation between staff through the phases of the school and through leadership devoting more time to improving classroom practice.
- Students with SEND are identified early and diagnosed accurately using external reports and/or information gathered from within the school. The identification process continues throughout students' school career as more information is gathered about underlying abilities and sometimes temporary turbulence in progress.
- Parents feel fully included in the education process in school. They are encouraged to contribute at every stage, and whilst attainment data is sometimes confusing to them, they have enough information to make informed judgements about their children's progress and welfare.
- In the best lessons, teachers use their training and experience to modify techniques and methods, ensuring that students learn the most important concepts needed to make progress. In the majority of these lessons, the teachers' own knowledge of the students, together with accurate and helpful advice given by the SEND staff, are sufficient to make the modifications needed. However, many teachers are confused by the large amounts of new data available on ability and attainment, so cannot fully utilise it to create very effective personalised lessons.
- Progress for students with SEND is generally good when compared to their starting points. Students who have very complex needs can make rapid progress in the Early Years. Progress is less good across the school when teaching and assessment techniques lack sophistication or consistent application for all students, not just those with additional learning needs. In some lessons, planning to meet varied needs remains under developed, resulting in progress which does not reflect students' capabilities.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The principal and his heads of school work closely together to implement their vision of an International Baccalaureate education, in the context of Dubai and the UAE. They understand and are fully committed to national priorities, and to serving their Emirati and multinational student body.

- There is a large group of middle leaders, leading subjects and programmes. Although many of these middle leaders are new and relatively inexperienced as leaders, most are very knowledgeable about their areas of responsibility, have strong teaching skills and demonstrate high capacity to take on further responsibility. For example, given appropriate time within the schedule, they could be more involved in direct observation and specific developmental feedback to teachers, in order to improve teaching, learning, and student achievement.
- Relationships amongst staff and leaders are professional and respectful, with senior leaders acting as critical friends to different departments. This is effective in general terms, in helping to establish greater consistency across departments and sections, but it does not always provide the departments with specific subject-focused feedback.
- Senior leaders understand what is needed to improve the school, although this is insufficiently or sharply focused on improving student attainment, especially in mathematics and science. They know their teachers well, and evaluation of teaching and learning is accurate, and provides developmental feedback and actions for improvement.
- Recent work on curriculum alignment, close monitoring of teaching and learning, and improved analysis of assessment data has had a positive impact. This has not, as yet, been synthesised to increase consistency and improve student achievement.

<b>School self-evaluation and improvement planning</b>	Good
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- The school systematically self-evaluates, and increasingly collects and analyses internal and external assessment data, as part of this process. Most leaders know their areas well, and accurately identify priorities for development. However, this is not fully synthesised into a focused strategy for improvement that is shared and rigorously pursued by all.
- There is a comprehensive system to evaluate teaching and learning. Senior leaders know their teachers well, and evaluation is accurate. This system could usefully be extended to include more middle leaders, who could provide specific subject-focused feedback.
- School improvement plans are comprehensive, and identify school and national priorities. However, these do not always reflect forensic analysis to discover the root causes of problems, or look strategically enough at priorities and potential solutions.
- The school has made improvements against the recommendations from the previous inspection, especially in regard to students' progress in Arabic, science and mathematics. The focus must now be on converting this improved progress into improved attainment.

**Partnerships with parents and the community**

Outstanding

- The school involves parents in all its activities. The open door policy makes parents feel part of the school and that they share the responsibility for their children’s education. The PCG is active in giving feedback and raising concerns, and meets regularly with school leaders. Parents support the school in many ways, for example, acting as supply teachers, volunteering to read for the children and arranging cultural events and celebrations.
- The school communicates well with parents, and are welcome in school at any time to ask questions about their children. The school uses many means to communicate effectively with the parents, for example, parent-teacher conferences, texting, direct calls and newsletters.
- Information about students' academic progress and their personal development is provided in regular, comprehensive reports. Parents are fully aware of their children’s progress, especially in the primary phase. In the secondary phase, not all parents fully understand the assessment criteria and grading levels.
- The school has extensive links with other organisations and schools, both in Dubai and internationally, for example, IB Regional Council, British Schools in the Middle East, UAE What Works and Dar al Beir charity. The school hosts many events, including Islamic teacher training, an Eco-conference, and the Model United Nations. Students also take part in a range of sports activities.

**Governance**

Good

- The governing body has an on-going presence in the school, is in regular contact with stakeholders, including students, and knows the school’s strengths and areas for improvement well. Governors are committed to an inclusive school and to addressing national priorities.
- Governors hold senior leaders accountable for all aspects of students’ development, including their personal welfare and academic achievements.
- The governing body ensures that the facilities, resources and staffing are adequate to provide an appropriate learning environment and to facilitate necessary improvements and enhancements.

**Management, staffing, facilities and resources**

Good

- The day-to-day management of the school is effective and efficient. Routines are well-rehearsed and understood by most staff, students and parents. Students are respectful of the school routines, with minimal time being lost between lessons even when students travel long distances across the campus.
- Teaching staff all have appropriate subject qualifications, with a good range of experience to support the delivery of the curriculum. Approximately one third of the teaching staff do not have a recognised teaching qualification and the impact of this has not been determined. All Islamic education and Arabic teachers have been approved by KHDA. In the Early Years, the layout of the rooms means that there are insufficient staff to fully supervise all children at all times; in the classroom, the outdoor area and the bathroom. Middle leaders across the school do not have sufficient time to monitor teaching or lead professional development in their areas.
- The premises, especially the recently opened primary block, provide an attractive and stimulating environment for learning. School facilities include a 550-seat theatre, a 25-metre swimming pool, a food science laboratory, drama studios and extensive playing fields. Classrooms are spacious and science laboratories are suitable and sufficient. The outside area of the school provides an attractive space for sport and play with appropriate shade. There is currently no canteen in the primary phase although this is planned.
- Teachers have a range of resources to support their teaching, including interactive whiteboards and projectors in all rooms. Technology is well supported across the school but the libraries are not well stocked. Wi-Fi capacity is sufficient to serve the requirements for research and independent learning, through the 'bring your own device' (BYOD) system.

## The views of parents, teachers and senior students

### The views of parents, teachers and senior students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
<b>Parents*</b> 	2016-2017	232
	2015-2016	333
<b>Teachers</b> 	51	
<b>Students</b> 	67	

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

- Almost all parents who responded are satisfied with the overall quality of education offered, and feel that their children enjoy school. They feel that students are well-behaved and get along together.
- A few parents expressed concerns about the support for students who have English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, an imbalance of too much student independent learning and too little teacher delivery of content, needing better feedback on students' next steps in learning, and several health and safety concerns, especially relating to settling-into the new building.
- Almost all teachers who responded enjoy working at the school and feel positive about the overall quality of education the school provides. They feel that teachers know the students strengths and weaknesses, and that students learn well.
- Some teachers express concerns about the professional development they receive, and about the level of support for students with SEND.
- Almost all students who responded feel that the school generally helps them learn, provides them with a range of subjects and extra-curricular activities, and gives them useful feedback and reports. They feel that they have opportunities to learn about the UAE's heritage and Islamic values, and to become environmentally and socially responsible. They feel that they are given a range of resources for learning, including technologies, and that they have opportunities to take on leadership roles within the school.
- Students expressed no major concerns.

## 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

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)