



National Agenda



Early Years



Special
Educational Needs



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

The Indian High School

Curriculum: CBSE

Overall rating: Outstanding

Read more about the school →



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“The race for
excellence has
no finish line”



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School information

General information



Location	Oud Metha
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1961
Website	www.ihsdxb.com
Telephone	04-3377475
Address	PO Box 106 Dubai, Oud Metha Road, Dubai, UAE
Principal	Mr. Ashok Kumar
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	19 to 22 October 2015

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	11-18
Grades or year groups	Grade 5 to Grade 12
Number of students on roll	5,791
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	N/A
Number of Emirati students	0
Number of students with SEND	313
Largest nationality group of students	Indian

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	435
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	4
Teacher-student ratio	1:13
Number of guidance counsellors	6
Teacher turnover	25%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	MoE
Main curriculum	CBSE
External tests and examinations	ASSET, CBSE, IBT
Accreditation	CBSE
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT

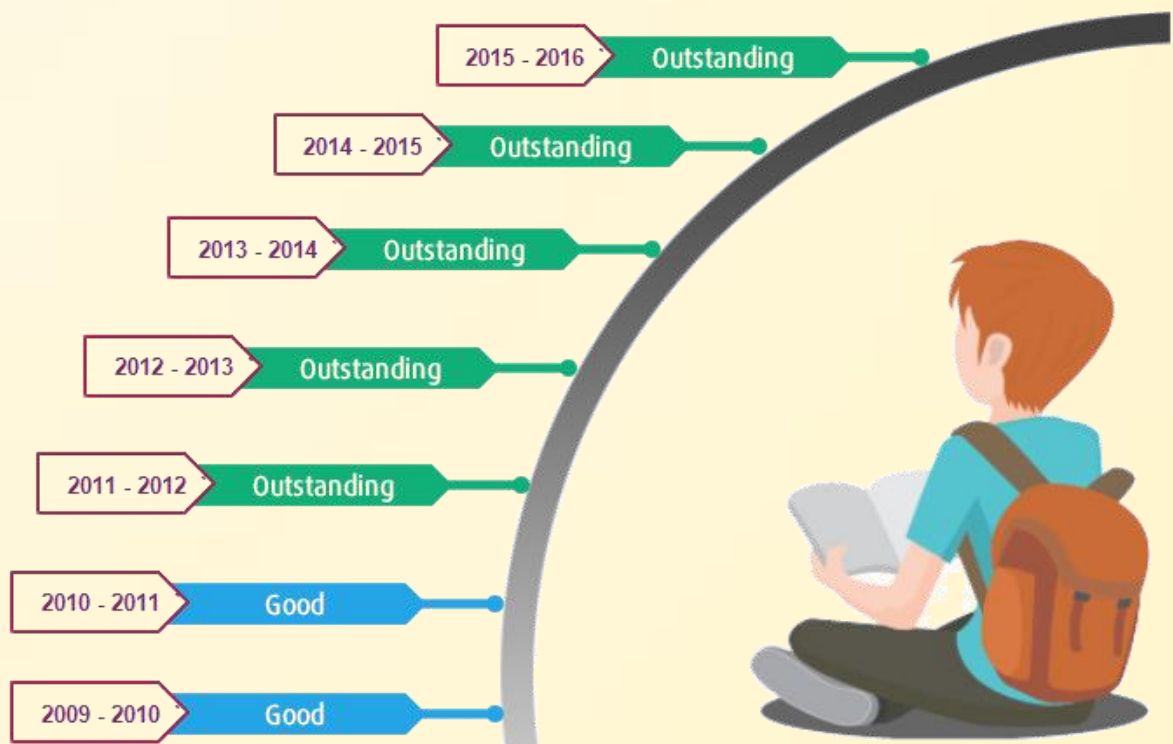


Summary for parents and the community

The Indian High School was inspected by DSIB from 19 to 22 October 2015. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **Outstanding**.

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

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





How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, The Indian High School provided an **outstanding** quality of education for its students.

- Students continued to attain excellent academic outcomes in most subjects. In Arabic, however, progress was slower in the middle school. Middle school students were not as confident as secondary students in their enquiry, critical thinking and use of learning technologies.
- Students demonstrated outstanding attitudes to learning and were committed to being involved with the local community. A deep appreciation of local culture and Islamic values was evident. They cared about their environment and conservation.
- Teachers knew their students' abilities well and offered a range of engaging activities in their lessons, including the use of strategies such as questioning and group work. In Arabic, however, teaching was less dynamic. Teachers checked students' progress regularly and used the information gathered to set individual targets. Feedback in exercise books rarely included next steps in learning to help students improve their work.
- The curriculum was continually improving, with regular reviews and modifications, offering all students more choices and opportunities for learning.
- The school remained a very safe environment for the students, who were supported extremely well by the staff. Rigorous identification of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) ensured that all students felt included in the learning and social curriculum offered across the phases.
- The school leaders were focused and continued to improve students' outcomes. They critically examined the school's performance and were very well supported by the governing body and the community. Facilities and resources for learning were still limited but were rapidly increasing.



What did the school do well?

- Attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science in the secondary phase remained outstanding.
- Students demonstrated outstanding attitudes and behaviour, and an excellent understanding of the local culture and values.
- Teaching was outstanding in the secondary phase.
- Curriculum design and implementation were outstanding across the school.
- The leaders' commitment to the vision and direction of the school was outstanding and created a safe and supportive learning environment.



What does the school need to do next?

- Raise standards in Arabic by increasing the range of teaching methods, with an emphasis on active learning.
- Ensure that the needs of all middle school students are met consistently by improving the effectiveness of personalised learning.



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

- Students had their needs identified early and expertly, and this increased the opportunity for good learning school. The provision for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) was very well supported by the entire leadership of the school.
- The work specifically given to students with SEND had improved in quality and was better matched to their needs. However, particularly in middle school, the fast pace of the lessons and the pressure to answer, report and complete tasks within a short time sometimes resulted in students being left behind or feeling under pressure. For some students this developed resilience but for others it resulted in a greater reluctance to take part.
- The Learning Centre teachers were very helpful in counselling students who were vulnerable or needed practice in skills to help them learn in the classroom. The centre offered good advice and an opportunity for students to develop their social skills, helping them to feel included in the school.
- The school classrooms were very crowded, which limited the types of activities that were possible and resulted in some students' needs not being fully met. For example, many rooms did not provide the best conditions for listening for students who had difficulty hearing or for students who were uncomfortable being very close to others.
- Specialists in the SEND department advised teachers on how best to adjust their classroom arrangements to meet the individual needs of the students. While this was helpful, it did not go far enough in providing sources of information for good practice, academic research and further reading to develop teachers' skills.

National Agenda Parameter



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

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

Main points:

- The school met the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. Progress towards National Agenda targets was above expectations.
- The promotion of the National Agenda was strongly evident around the school, with relevant displays in every school building. All stakeholders were fully aware of the requirements. Students were extremely knowledgeable and spoke with enthusiasm about the aims and benefits of the National Agenda.
- The curricula in English, mathematics and science had all been reviewed to take account of the outcomes of the IBT, ASSET, TIMSS and PISA tests. The resulting modifications ensured that students were being well prepared for the next round of tests. The school had developed its own internal assessments to ensure that students had an adequate skills base to be successful. Teachers had been given training in questioning techniques and research methods to encourage students' critical thinking.
- In English, across both phases, critical thinking was becoming embedded very effectively. However, this was less well established in mathematics and science. There was greater emphasis on problem solving, but this did not always allow students to develop their critical thinking skills. Problem solving in all subjects included real life applications and learning from other curriculum areas. Most teachers used effective questioning techniques.
- All students had access to technologies and these were incorporated into some of the lessons. For example, in English, students made use of the internet when researching aspects of a poem by Wordsworth and in mathematics, students made use of architectural images when exploring geometrical theory. All students used a very good range of resources to aid the development of research skills.

Innovation in education

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

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








Promoting a culture of innovation:

- School leaders understood the national innovation agenda. They demonstrated a commitment to excellence through the on-going implementation of innovative ideas. A broad range of initiatives, including purposeful relationships with external partners, enhanced students' creativity, research and entrepreneurship. Innovators from the school community initiated and implemented a number of new initiatives across the school. Teachers and students were encouraged to take calculated risks and be creative. The leaders and teachers had promoted changes to the school's use of space. Students' learning experiences were enriched through the use of a range of learning technologies, new resources and different teaching strategies.

Overall school performance

Outstanding

1. Students' achievement

		Middle	Secondary
Islamic education 	Attainment	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Good	Good
	Progress	Acceptable	Good
English 	Attainment	Very good ↑	Outstanding
	Progress	Very good ↑	Outstanding
Mathematics 	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding
Science 	Attainment	Very good ↑	Outstanding
	Progress	Very good ↑	Outstanding

	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills	Very good ↑	Outstanding

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

	Middle	Secondary
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Outstanding
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

3. Teaching and assessment

	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Outstanding
Assessment	Good	Outstanding

4. Curriculum

	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding
Curriculum adaptation	Very good ↑	Outstanding

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

	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding

6. Leadership and management

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



Main inspection report

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

Judgements are made on a six-point scale



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

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

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

1. Students' achievement

Middle

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

- Students had good knowledge about the key principles of faith and worship in Islam. They could describe the five Pillars of Islam and the six pillars of faith, well above expectations and were able to explain the Haj and Umrah in detail. They had detailed knowledge of compulsory and optional prayers, and the difference between Zakat and charity. Students knew the biographies of some of the Prophet's companions and followers, for example Abu Baker. They demonstrated high levels of understanding of Qur'anic verses and were able to interpret the general meanings conveyed in the verses. Skills in the memorisation of the Holy Qur'an were in line with curriculum expectations, although across the school, most students had limited understanding of recitation rules and could not apply these correctly to memorise longer chapters of the Holy Qur'an.
- In Arabic, listening was the strongest skill. Students could listen to the target language, understand the instructions and the content, and respond appropriately. In reading, students could read short paragraphs on simple topics such as jobs and hobbies, although at times they struggled with new vocabulary. Speaking, for most students was also a strength, and they could interact using simple vocabulary and short sentences in Arabic. However, they frequently needed support from the teachers to use new language. In writing, students relied mainly on simple, known vocabulary and they were not able to write complex sentences unaided. There were few opportunities for creative writing. In most lessons, students made acceptable progress against the learning objectives, but when teachers' expectations were low, students' progress was also slow. Overall, students made better progress in developing their understanding of Arabic vocabulary and grammar but they lacked the skills to apply it in interactions. Students did not progress well enough in extended speaking and creative writing due to the lack of opportunities for practical application of these skills.
- In English, a large majority of students achieved above curriculum standards and above expected levels in international examinations. They had developed effective skills in language acquisition, comprehension, reading and writing. They demonstrated appropriate levels of literacy, including proper use of presentation skills and grammar.
- In mathematics, most students achieved above curriculum standards and above expected levels in international examinations. The average score for Grade 8 students in international benchmarking tests exceeded international averages. Progress in the application of knowledge to real world contexts was excellent. For example, Grade 8 boys were able to apply their knowledge of three-dimensional shapes effectively when using computer-aided design software to design a swimming pool. Students used mathematical terminology appropriately.
- In science, students achieved above curriculum standards and above expected levels in international examinations. They were starting to develop good problem solving and enquiry skills. They could communicate their scientific knowledge confidently. Most lessons included real-life contexts and excellent cross-curricular links.

- In all subjects, there was little difference in progress between boys and girls. Students with special educational needs and disabilities made at least good progress except in Arabic where progress was slow for most students.

Secondary		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Good	Good
English	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics	Outstanding	Outstanding
Science	Outstanding	Outstanding

- In Islamic education, a majority of students had a good knowledge about the Prophet's life and good knowledge of Islam's etiquettes and values. For example, they were able to explain the mercy of Islam and the value of visiting people in hospital. Students were making good progress in their knowledge and application of worship, for example in prayers, Umrah and Hajj pilgrimages, modesty and the etiquette of clothing. Most students had knowledge of the prayers for difficult times, and older students were developing their knowledge of optional and obligatory practices. However, they had limited understanding of recitation rules and could not memorise longer chapters of the Holy Qur'an.
- Listening skills in Arabic as an additional language were strong and students were able to understand and respond to different messages, instructions and questions without translation. Students' speaking skills were improving. Students used age-appropriate, familiar vocabulary to produce short phrases and sentences in correctly spoken Arabic. The reading skills of the majority of students were above expectations. They were able to identify familiar vocabulary in sentences and read them correctly. Most students were able to write short sentences and paragraphs but they had fewer opportunities for writing creatively. They were quickly developing their listening, reading and responding skills but progress in writing skills was only acceptable; only a minority of students could produce extended or creative writing to an acceptable level.
- Students' overall progress and attainment were outstanding in all English skills. Students demonstrated a high level of competence in comprehension, language acquisition, speaking and writing skills. Students made outstanding progress in the development of critical thinking skills, research skills, and reading and writing skills. As a result, students' achievements were above curriculum standards and above expected levels in international examinations.
- In mathematics, students' achievements were above curriculum standards and above expected levels in international examinations. Students made excellent progress on the introduction of new topics. For example, Grade 10 boys successfully applied new knowledge of trigonometry to given problems. All students demonstrated an aptitude for the subject and used mathematical language and properties with accuracy and fluency.
- Students communicated an excellent understanding of complex and abstract scientific concepts in a variety of ways, demonstrating competence in their use of accurate scientific knowledge. Problem solving, investigation and the use of critical thinking were all developing skills. Most students were working at levels above curriculum standards and their achievements in international examinations were also above the levels expected.

- In all subjects, there was little difference in progress between boys and girls. Students with special educational needs made at least good progress.

	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills	Very good ↑	Outstanding

- In both phases, students assumed responsibility for their own learning. When given the opportunity, they thrived through collaborative work and debates. This was particularly the case in secondary, where learning was facilitated effectively and teachers and students became partners in learning. In the middle phase, students were eager to learn and interact in the lessons but often lacked opportunities for reaching higher level thinking. Across the school students were very enthusiastic and keen to learn.
- The breadth and depth of learning activities contributed to greater collaboration. In most cases, students worked very effectively in groups to complete assigned tasks and, when given the opportunity, students critically analysed and evaluated their own areas for further improvement. They were able to talk about their learning to the teacher and to one another with understanding and clarity.
- In both phases, students consistently demonstrated their understanding of the connections between the lessons and real-world issues. The curriculum was rich. Projects were designed to promote these connections and learning in lessons often incorporated real-world analogies.
- Innovation, enterprise, enquiry, research and critical thinking were key features of learning. Students demonstrated innovative learning by, for example, using tablet technology in the classroom or running their own investigations in science. In the best lessons observed, students' problem-solving skills were outstanding.

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

	Middle	Secondary
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Almost all students behaved very responsibly and were increasingly self-reliant as they moved through the school, becoming willing to accept constructive criticism.
- Students' behaviour was excellent and students displayed a high degree of respect for others. As a result, difficulties were easily resolved and bullying was rare.
- Very positive relationships were displayed between students and their peers, as well as between students and teachers and other adults.
- Students felt safe and respected around school. They were able to discuss the benefits of healthy eating and of physical activity. They believed that it was important to enjoy a healthy lifestyle.
- Attendance was good and students were normally punctual to lessons.

	Middle	Secondary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students had a deep appreciation of Islam and the role it plays in Dubai. They acknowledged and appreciated the multicultural diversity of the UAE. This was very well reflected around school through their art work and their behaviour.
- Students had a great respect for the heritage and culture of the UAE. They were aware of the attitudes to adopt in different contexts, making them very adaptable.
- Students had a very good sense of their own identities and felt fully integrated into the local culture. Through debates, they were able to compare and contrast different cultures and celebrate the different facets of the life in Dubai.

	Middle	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students demonstrated deep understanding and commitment to their roles and responsibilities at the school, and as active citizens living in Dubai. They purposefully and frequently initiated and led activities to benefit the school and the wider community.
- Students demonstrated an excellent work ethic. They were actively engaged in well-planned projects and enterprise activities that had a significant impact on the school and the wider community. They consistently made informed economic decisions.
- Students demonstrated an excellent understanding of environmental conservation and sustainability. They were seriously committed to improving and conserving the school and community environment through a variety of prevention projects and volunteer activities.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Outstanding

- In the middle school, most teachers had excellent subject knowledge. Clear explanations by teachers in the secondary school reinforced concepts and developed the students' knowledge.
- Teachers planned interesting lessons with opportunities for students to contribute orally and work together in practical tasks, group work, role play, projects and research.
- Teachers interacted positively with their students. Many teachers used skillful questioning techniques to encourage extended and critical responses. The better lessons always demonstrated creative discussion.

- Teachers encouraged students to learn well through the use of a wide range of teaching strategies. The teachers knew their students' abilities well and most worked hard to support and challenge them. The use of differentiation to meet the needs of individual students was not yet consistently applied across the school, especially in middle school.
- The development of critical thinking, to complement high-level problem-solving activities, was a school priority. Many teachers used effective questioning techniques that developed the students' critical thinking, independent learning and problem-solving abilities. Teachers asked open questions and offered opportunities to justify opinions.
- In Arabic as an additional language, teaching developed students' comprehension skills to a good level, especially in reading, but provided fewer opportunities for extended or creative writing.


	Middle	Secondary
Assessment	Good	Outstanding

- Internal assessment procedures provided valid and reliable information. They provided data on all aspects of students' academic, personal and social development. Assessment processes were effectively linked to the school's curriculum standards with assessment data used to review curriculum, teaching and learning.
- The school had processes to compare its students' performances with international levels. The school analysed student attainment data from a range of benchmarks, in addition to CBSE Grade 10 and 12 public examinations. This data was used efficiently to make modifications to the curriculum and to teaching and learning processes, as well as to set targets and formulate action plans.
- Detailed assessment information was reliable and well-analysed. The school used the analysis of student performance by grade over a three-year period to identify trends. This analysis was used to set whole school targets and curriculum modifications were made frequently to assist reaching the targets.
- Well-developed assessment system were securely in place, although its use was more effective in the secondary school, where better learning outcomes were evident. In the middle school the use of assessment data to influence teaching and learning was less rigorous, which meant that the needs of all groups of students were not always met.
- Teachers in both secondary and middle schools knew their students' academic abilities very well and often gave helpful oral feedback during lessons. However, written feedback was lacking in projects and most written work, so students were not always guided on how to improve. Self and peer assessment opportunities for students were infrequent.

4. Curriculum

	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The curriculum was based on the Indian CBSE Board and the MoE curricula for Arabic and Islamic Studies. It was broad and balanced, aligned very well with the school and the UAE's vision, and included specific lessons on UAE Social Studies. The curriculum developed a balanced knowledge, skills and understanding among students through flipped lessons and presentations in English classes; questioning and problem-solving in mathematics; and practical and investigative skills in science. However, in Arabic, the resources used for grades 5 to 8 were not matched with students' age and interests.
- Effective communication ensured that there was continuity and smooth progression between phases. The school leadership team identified gaps and organised transition meetings to address them.
- The school offered a wide range of curricular options that suited students' interests and aspirations. The three curricular streams - science, commerce and humanities - provided a wide range of subjects, including fashion design, home science, web design and engineering design.
- Cross-curricular links were planned in most lessons and these enhanced students' learning in all subjects. For example, art was linked with work on 3-D figures in mathematics. There were opportunities for students to participate in a range of cultural activities.
- The school regularly conducted rigorous reviews of the curriculum and modifications were made to enhance learning and meet the needs of all groups of students. The problem-solving skills initiative (IHS PSS) was introduced after the school had identified gaps in learning when modifying the curriculum in the key subjects. The curriculum for Arabic and Islamic education was also reviewed but the impact was still not clear because the link between Islamic education and real life was weak.

	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum adaptation	Very good 	Outstanding

- The curriculum was reviewed and modified based on the analysis of student performance. Challenging and extended learning opportunities for high achievers and support for low achievers were included in lesson plans but were not always implemented effectively. This was particularly the case in the middle school.
- There was a wide range of extra-curricular activities both within and outside the school that promoted students' personal and social development. Internships for students in the commerce stream provided rich work experience.
- Integration of field trips and projects into the curriculum enabled students to acquire a better understanding of the UAE culture and society. For example, learning about the Masdar Institute in Abu Dhabi and the desert region, enabled them to develop a better understanding of the eco-system of the Emirates. Students learned about the flora and fauna of the region and appreciate the importance of water and energy for sustainability.

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

	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Safeguarding was highly effective in the school. Policies were in place and shared with parents and the community. This included training about cyberbullying.
- The school was a very secure learning environment where policies and processes ensured that both staff and students felt safe at all time.
- Buildings and premises were well maintained and expanding. An additional building was planned to open in April 2016 to accommodate the large number of students and reduce overcrowding in lessons.
- The current building had limited access for people with disabilities.
- The canteen offered a range of healthy food. Assemblies, lessons, displays of work and the school radio all contributed to encouraging a healthy life style.


	Middle	Secondary
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Relationships across the school were exceptionally positive. There was a high level of supervision and this resulted in a very well-ordered community but did not prevent students from developing self-awareness. The counsellors contributed positively to behaviour around the school through highly effective programmes for those less able to control their behaviour. Expectations of student behaviour were high. Students helped to ensure that the school remained a very positive place to learn by helping and counselling each other. This included taking responsibility for the behaviour of other students at specific times during the school day.
- Student attendance and punctuality were good, and made possible by an excellent school transport system which served the needs of students and families well. Punctuality to lessons was exceptional with very few examples of lateness and a pattern of immediate readiness for learning was almost always present. The school had systems for checking on reasons for absence and used absence as a possible indicator for intervention to ensure well-being. However, systems for promoting the attendance of a few vulnerable children were not always implemented soon enough.
- There was a range of appropriate and timely identification techniques to identify SEND students; some written by the SEND department staff, were formally used with students, along with information collected from school history and parental referral. Informal techniques were also utilised routinely to identify students who were vulnerable or at risk of under-achievement. The school encouraged teachers to refer students for assistance from the department's professionals and on occasions enlisted the help of external consultants to provide further diagnosis or interventions. The identification process was dynamic, with further analysis of a range of indicators being used to modify diagnoses and the type and level of support required.

- Students' progress was tracked by a talented and motivated learning support team. Systems of support were understood well by staff at all levels. Staff were committed to meeting the needs of all the students but, in some lessons, the practice was not driven by a theoretical knowledge and understanding of the needs of students. Gifted and talented students were recognised in some lessons by teachers who encouraged extension activities and flipped learning, so that these students were given the opportunity to drive learning for the class. This was seen as good practice and encouraged by peer observation of lessons where such practice took place.
- Careers' guidance was excellent and adapted to the personal needs and aspirations of each student. Knowledgeable and skilled leaders delivered advice that steered students to a wide range of further study. The counselling service provided an effective and comprehensive range of interventions when students were showing lack of progress or signs of emotional vulnerability. Teachers were adept in using the system of referrals and vigilant about the progress of students. The strong relationships in the school meant that students were comfortable talking to staff if intervention or advice was required.

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

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

Very good 

- Excellent and ambitious leaders at all levels ensured that the identification of students with SEND was very comprehensive and was carried out in a manner that encouraged early intervention. The department staff was well-trained and appropriately experienced to offer advice on a wide range of special educational needs and disabilities, and this was reflected in increasingly improved outcomes for students.
- Interventions within the Learning Centre resulted in vulnerable students becoming resilient and more able to adjust to the pace of learning in the mainstream classrooms. However, this pace was too fast for some students who needed more time to process information and to practice skills. The counselling sessions indicated greater learning and progress than seen in classroom lessons. Information exchange between counsellors and teachers was not always maximised as fully as it should have been nor did counsellors always follow students into lessons to see how they used their newly learned skills.
- Teachers showed skill in creating personalised tasks for students in their lessons, particularly in the middle school where the need for improvements had previously been identified. In the best lessons, this had a profound effect on learning and outcomes for those students who were able to access their tasks. However, in other lessons in the middle school, the pace meant that learning was still less than optimal for some students.
- Staff were adept at accessing further support from the SEND department for their students. Department heads and supervisors evaluated lessons regularly to ensure quality, using a range of criteria, including increasingly good outcomes for vulnerable students. These observations were linked to staff development priorities. Data indicated that students were attaining lower levels in some subjects and at some grade levels but the data were not comprehensively used to target resources towards improved outcomes.
- While attainment in the school was high, crowded rooms restricted learning styles and this had a disproportionate and detrimental effect on the outcomes for SEND students. This was most apparent in the middle school where experiential learning was limited. Additionally, the poor acoustics in many rooms restricted learning for students with sensory challenges.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Outstanding

- Leaders had a clear and ambitious vision based on a deep understanding of their students and their community. Their strategies were aligned to the UAE national priorities.
- The CEO was very well supported by his senior and middle leadership team who had a wide range of educational experience and expertise. Leaders were fully committed to securing the best outcomes for all students in the school.
- A highly effective monitoring and reporting system ensured effective communication. There was a collegiate approach to school improvement and priorities for improvement were deployed strategically.
- The school leaders continuously sought the views of various stakeholders to review their own performance and were dedicated to improving any underperforming areas.
- Leaders had been successful in sustaining the strengths and making improvements to important aspects of the school. This was particularly the case with some performance indicators in the middle school. However, the Arabic department was making slower progress in meeting its targets.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very good ↑

- Systems were rigorous and based on a clear understanding of the school priorities for improvement. The school used internal and external benchmarks effectively to raise its expectations continuously.
- Lesson observations were frequent and focused. They allowed the school to identify underperforming subjects and also best practice in order to raise standards.
- The school improvement plans were aligned both vertically and horizontally. Regular reviewing of systems allowed the school to monitor the impact of its strategies for improvement. This was particularly the case of the curriculum reviews aligned to the UAE national priorities, where enrichment was a key focus. Arabic remained an underperforming subject and the school continued to monitor this subject closely.
- All recommendations from the previous report had been addressed, resulting in some progress from the previous year in a few performance indicators and the school retaining its outstanding overall performance.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Outstanding

- The school knew its community very well and capitalised on its partnerships. This resulted in high levels of engagement from all stakeholders. For example, the school raised awareness about international benchmarking by inviting parents to sit mock PISA exams. This experiential learning activity allowed the school to disseminate parents' views on this national priority through the newsletter and thus reach the whole community.
- Parents praised the two-way communication between the school and them. A highly effective new dispatch office logged complaints, which the relevant school teams then examined. Parents of students with SEND felt very well supported.

- Regular parents and teacher contact sessions and school diary reports ensured that the progress and well-being of all students were closely monitored. A record of students' performance was accessible on line and allowed the school to set and share goals with the students and their parents.
- Partnerships were diverse and highly effective. They included international and local links, either face to face or on line, in which students interacted with various school partners. These led to rich personal and academic outcomes. Charity work involved students leading numerous meaningful activities.

Governance

Outstanding

- The governing body comprised various members of the community, including parents. Governors had a good understanding of the needs of the community as they regularly sought the views of both parents and students.
- The governing body, through a highly effective reporting process, had a robust understanding of the school's performance and the priorities that needed to be addressed. The governors were unbiased and held the key leaders to account.
- There was a true commitment to improve the school's performance. This was apparent through the impact of the strategies already implemented, including additional buildings that will be open for use in April 2016.




Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Good

- The operational side of the school was outstanding. The school routines were highly effective.
- Staff retention was good and allowed the school leaders to address underperforming subjects systematically over time. Teachers and other staff were deployed strategically and facilitated the effective daily operations of the school.
- The premises were improving but still offered a limited range of facilities for all students. This was a key priority and the new building, which will open in April 2016, should enhance students' learning experience.
- Resources and activities to enhance the curriculum were growing. They included IT facilities and 21st century technologies. However, due to the high number of students, these resources were only targeted at specific groups in school.

The views of the parents, teachers and students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
Parents* 	2015-2016	1041
	2014-2015	1593
Teachers 	306	
Students 	2181	

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

- Overall, the picture from survey results was overwhelmingly positive.
- Most parents and students felt that progress in key subjects was good (this included parents of SEND students) and skill acquisition was positive. This did not apply to Arabic where overall responses were negative. Most students did not enjoy the subject and parents believed progress was slower.
- Most key stakeholders, including teachers, were happy with the quality of education provided at the school and felt that the inspection process was positive.
- Most parents surveyed believed that their children enjoyed school, developed good self-awareness and embraced other cultures.
- More than two thirds of students surveyed were aware of cyber safety programmes to protect them. Nearly all parents felt that their children were safe in school, and both students and parents feeling that the school dealt well with bullying.
- Almost all parents thought that the school was well led. Most felt that the school listened well to their views and almost all stated that reports and meetings kept them informed.

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