




International School of
Arts & Sciences

 Curriculum: US

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	Al Warqaa
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2007
Website	http://www.isas.sch.ae
Telephone	00971-4-2800459
Address	Al Warqa'a 1 - Dubai UAE PO. Box 35901
Principal	Muhieddine Soubra, محي الدين سوبره
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	6 to 9 March 2017

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	82
Largest nationality group of teachers	Lebanese
Number of teaching assistants	2
Teacher-student ratio	1:10
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	26%

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	KG1-Grade 12
Number of students on roll	793
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	N
Number of Emirati students	236
Number of students with SEND	43
Largest nationality group of students	Arab

Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	US
Main curriculum	CCS, California State
External tests and examinations	CAT4/MAP
Accreditation	NEASC Pending
National Agenda benchmark tests	MAP, 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.

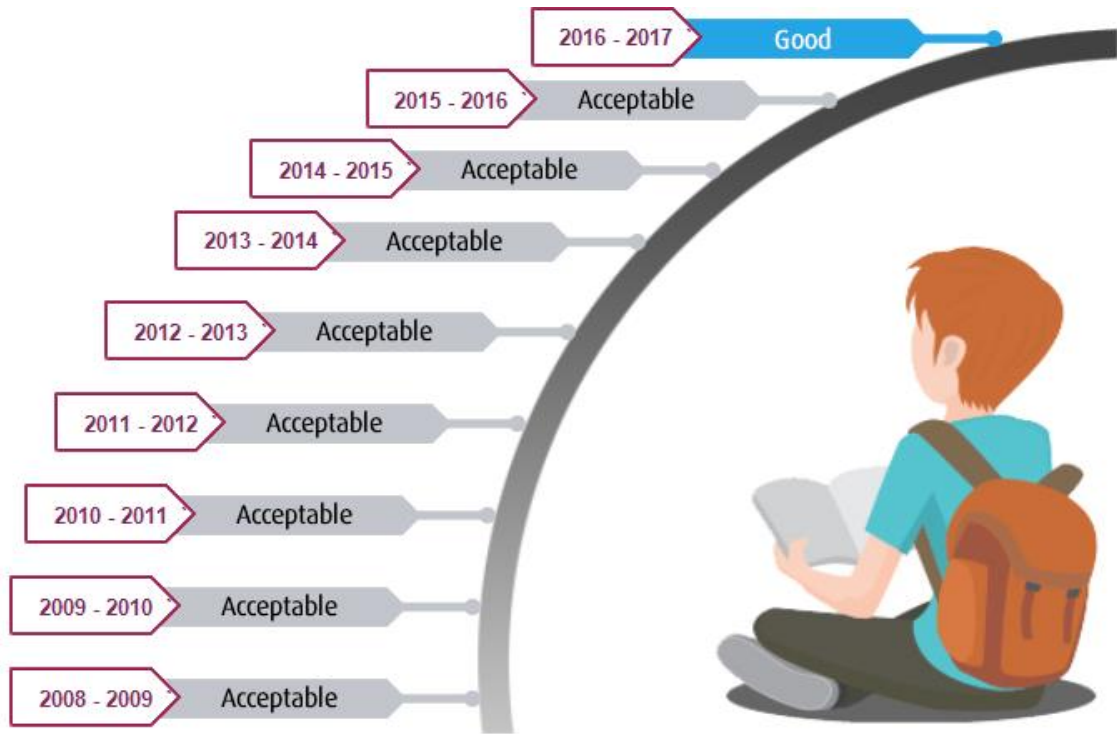
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

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.

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

Inspection journey for International School of Arts & Sciences



- The school opened in 2007 and the current principal was appointed at that time. The school's enrolment during this inspection was 792 students, 30 students fewer than in the preceding year. 26 per cent of the teaching staff are new to the school this year.
- Recurring strengths in recent years have been students' progress in Islamic education, Arabic and mathematics, attainment and progress in English, the quality of the curriculum in the KG, student's personal and social development, and the quality of protection, guidance and support of students.
- Recommendations over the same period have been about improving attainment and progress in all subjects, the quality of teaching and teachers' questioning skills, effective use of external data to provide challenge for all students, the quality of support for students with additional needs, and the accuracy of self-evaluation using reliable data.



Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



International School of Arts & Sciences was inspected by DSIB from 6 to 9 March 2017. The overall quality of education provided by the school was **good**. The section below summarizes the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Student's attainment in Islamic education is good with the exception of the high school where it is acceptable. Progress is good in all phases. Progress in Arabic as a first and additional language is mostly good. Attainment and progress in English are good. Progress in mathematics is good in all phases while progress in science is good in KG and high school. Students' learning skills are acceptable in the middle school and good elsewhere.
- Students' personal development and sense of social responsibility are good across the school. Their understanding of Islamic values and awareness of their Emirati culture are very good, especially with regard to the positive impact Islam has on life in Dubai.
- Teachers generally provide a good level of teaching. Lessons are mostly engaging. Teacher-student interactions are positive and time is used efficiently in almost all lessons. Most teachers use effective questioning to engage students and encourage critical thinking. Assessment systems and the use of assessment are good in KG. In the other phases, better interpretation, further development and consistent implementation of assessment data in planning lessons are needed.
- The curriculum design is good. It is broad and balanced and offers cross-curricular links for students to make connections with their wider world. It is also adapted well to meet the needs of different groups of students.
- The protection and care of all students are outstanding. Programmes and contracts are in place to ensure a safe learning environment. Students are monitored and supervised well throughout the day. The identification of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is good. Additional personnel have been added to the staff to meet the needs of students with SEND.
- The school's leadership, their relationship with parents, the effectiveness of governance and the day-to-day management of the school are good. Governors support the school's improvement by providing appropriate staff, resources and high quality facilities.

What the school does best

- Students' appreciation of Islamic values
- The positive relationships between school and families
- The outstanding facilities and arrangements for health and safety
- The commitment of staff in supporting new initiatives to improve teaching and learning, and their creation of a positive learning environment
- Most teachers' personal knowledge of their students
- The challenge and support for all groups of learners in KG, enhanced by having two qualified teachers, one English speaker and one Arabic speaker, in each classroom.

Recommendations

- Improve the use of assessment by:
 - linking internal assessments more closely to expected curriculum standards and ensuring these are in line with standards shown by external benchmarks.
 - using external assessment data to set specific individual targets for the students and monitor progress towards these more closely
 - using external data as a basis for reviewing the curriculum.
- Ensure the implementation of the curriculum relates closely to the adopted California State Standards
- Ensure that teachers consistently encourage the development of critical thinking across all grades by enhancing the skills of analysis, evaluation and decision-making.
- Develop a more realistic appraisal of the school's performance in the self-evaluation process by effectively analyzing internal and external data sources in all judgements.

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:

- Attainment as measured by the National Agenda Parameter benchmark tests in English, mathematics and science is below expectations.
- The school does not fully meet the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- The school does not fully analyze the data from the National Agenda Parameter tests in sufficient detail. This is partly due to the fact that the school leaders are still familiarizing themselves with both the administration and potential of the tests.
- The school is beginning to focus its attention on how best to align its curriculum to TIMSS and PISA. Some alignment is taking place but their focus is not sufficiently concentrated on specific weaknesses in students' performance in the tests.
- Teachers are adjusting their strategies in the classroom in order to put students at the centre of the learning process. As a consequence, there is a trend towards linking students' acquisition of skills to their application in the real world.
- Students are aware of their performance on the benchmark tests and discussions take place between them and the subject staff to highlight areas for improvement. Students' opportunities for developing their research skills are increasing through the use of technology in the classroom. Their application of the skills to real life scenarios is effective.

Overall, the schools' improvement towards achieving its National Agenda targets is not secure.

Innovation in Education

The UAE Vision 2021 sets the aspiration 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' and provides a basis for evaluating schools in order to deliver a world-class education for all children in the UAE.









Promoting a culture of innovation:

- School leaders have initiated several changes to encourage students to think creatively in lessons, in elective classes and in activities both inside and outside the classroom. Most students demonstrate proficiency with technology and use it to enhance assignments and activities in class. Entrepreneurship is included in the school's strategic plan. It provides some opportunities for individuals and groups of students to interact with sources outside the school to broaden their horizons and to encourage reflection and future planning. The curriculum is being modified to increase opportunities for innovative work, such as the electives in the elementary and middle grades.

Overall school performance

Good ↑

1 Students' achievement

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Good ↑	Acceptable	Good ↑

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

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

4. Curriculum

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

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

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



6. Leadership and management

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


Main inspection report



1. Students' achievement

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

- The majority of children start school with limited knowledge of English. They make good progress and attain levels above curriculum standards. They listen well, sing songs, respond to their teacher and interact with each other during lessons. They use their knowledge of phonics to help with reading and writing. The majority make better than expected progress in all aspects of the English language.
- Attainment and progress in mathematical development are good. A majority of the children have developed a good understanding of numeracy and the concept of number. They are acquiring the key skills of counting, reading and writing numbers, and doing simple operations. They solve real life problems while exploring shape, space and measurement adding a much-needed dimension to their learning in mathematics.
- Children are first introduced to scientific enquiry in KG1. The majority make better than expected progress and attain levels above curriculum expectations. They inquire about their own environment in school and beyond. In KG1 they are beginning to explore and investigate, and by KG2 a majority of children are using their natural inquisitiveness and curiosity to make predictions and reach their own conclusions based on what they observe.

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

- In Islamic education, a majority of students understand the main ideas of lessons and answer correctly. For example, in Grade 2, students demonstrate their good knowledge of the life of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), by drawing mind maps naming his tribe and his family members, including his father, mother, grandfather and uncle. Grade 5 students make good progress in memorizing short surat and types of Ibadat such as prayers, fasting and Zakat.
- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students attain levels above curriculum expectations and make good progress. Internal assessment results are at least good except in Grade 5 and reflect standards as seen in a majority of lessons. Trends are inconsistent. Students have good listening skills and many can read fluently and expressively, although a few struggle. Grade 3 students' knowledge of grammar rules, such as types of verbs, is above expectations. Dictation and handwriting skills are inconsistent and their writing is underdeveloped.
- Students in Arabic as an additional language demonstrate attainment that is above the curriculum expectations. Internal assessment data confirms this. A majority of students make better than expected progress against the learning objectives. For example, students in Grade 3 described a shopping trip to the mall. Students' skills in reading and understanding are generally developed better than their speaking and writing skills.
- In English, the majority of students attain levels above curriculum standards, making better than expected progress on internal assessments and from their individual starting points. External Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test results reveal weak progress and attainment. In lessons, however, attainment is good. This is evident in their oral and written work, which are above expectations for the cohort, the majority of whom are English as an additional language learners.
- In mathematics, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum standards, but the majority make better than expected progress in relation to their individual starting points. Recent MAP results do not reflect this. In lessons, most students demonstrate competence when handling numbers and they make good progress in applying their skills in calculation to solve word problems. Levels of attainment over time are broadly consistently acceptable.
- Most students attain above expected standards in science in internal tests, but a minority reach the expected levels in external assessments. In lessons and their written work, most students are working at expected levels. Progress in the acquisition of knowledge is better than in understanding concepts. Most students are good at researching topics and suggesting ideas for investigation, but make less progress in developing investigative skills. By Grade 4, a few students reach the required standard for planning and carrying out investigations.

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

- In Islamic education, a majority of students make better than expected progress and attain levels above curriculum standards. In Grade 7, students can explain the importance of sponsoring orphans and link this with charities in the UAE. Grade 8 students make good progress in learning about the Prophet Noah. They demonstrate their understanding by writing a summary, presenting it to the class and discussing the story with their teacher.
- Most students reach standards in line with national curriculum expectations in Arabic as a first language. Although a majority make good progress. Students, in the majority of grades, attain acceptable levels in internal assessments. Trends are variable. Students have appropriate reading and listening skills but they are not confident speaking in classical Arabic. Grade 8 students can identify the main theme of a story but they are unable to analyze it in depth. Progress in writing is variable.
- Most students demonstrate attainment in Arabic as an additional language that is in line with the curriculum standards. Internal assessment data are unreliable. A majority of students make better than expected progress from their starting points and against the learning objectives, in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Grade 7 students, for example, can discuss the most important jobs in the UAE. All groups of students make similar progress.
- Internal assessments in English indicate that the majority of students make better than expected progress from their starting points and against learning objectives. They attain levels that are above curriculum standards. This is not reflected in external assessments. However, in lessons and in their recent work, progress and attainment are good. This is also reflected in their written work, portfolios, and explanations of their work.
- Most students' attainment in mathematics is in line with the expectations for their age. Outcomes against external tests are weak but this is due to a lack of familiarity with the expectations for the new examination format. In lessons, the students make good progress against the stated learning objectives and over time. They can apply their mathematical skills, and demonstrate their understanding and mathematical reasoning by justifying their answers.
- Most students attain the expected standards in science lessons, which is better than their performance in external tests. Internal assessments show most students performing above expectations. Grade 8 students understand forces and can perform simple calculations. Although they make good progress in developing practical skills, and in understanding the need to control variables in experiments, they do not reach the expected standard. Their skills in making a hypothesis, planning and conducting an experiment on different types of motion, and then explaining the effect force has on motion, are underdeveloped.

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

- The majority of students make better than expected progress and most attain expected curriculum levels. Students have a broad Islamic knowledge of economic situations. They explain the importance of the development of the economy in Islamic nations. They compare fines and Zakah and the importance of Zaka as a Pillar of Islam. In Grade 11, students discuss the advantages and disadvantages of social media. They understand Islamic morals such as the rights of Muslims and non-Muslims, and relate it to life in Dubai.
- Most students attain levels in line with national curriculum expectations in Arabic as a first language. However, a majority make better than expected progress from their starting points. Results in internal assessments are at least acceptable. Trends are improving. Students' reading and listening skills are developing well, but they do not always speak classical Arabic confidently. Students are developing their writing skills well using a printed booklet with a good range of genre designed by the school. The progress made by students with additional needs is variable. .
- In Arabic as an additional language most students make the expected progress when measured against their starting points and against the learning objectives in lessons. They make acceptable progress in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Students' attainment is in line with the expectations of the school's curriculum. Grade 9 students, for example, show an appropriate understanding of the concept of cooperation among family members. Internal assessment data are unreliable.
- In English, the attainment level of the majority of students is indicated as good in internal assessments. This is reflected in lessons where the majority of students make better than expected progress and attain beyond curriculum standards. They engage in dynamic discussions, thinking critically and drawing conclusions based on analysis of information. A significant percentage of the high school population is new, making attainment over time difficult to measure. The attainment and progress of established students are consistently good over time.
- A majority of students reach levels that are above curriculum standards in mathematics. This is not reflected in the PSAT and SAT assessments because the school is only just beginning to establish an 'examination culture'. However, in lessons, the majority of students make better than expected progress against the learning objectives and are able to apply their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems.
- A majority of students make better than expected progress in the acquisition of knowledge across the three science modules, and in their development of conceptual understanding of stoichiometry and genetics. Most students attain standards in line with expectations in lessons and internal tests, although only a minority do so on external benchmark tests. Students are better at explaining topics than at applying their understanding in unfamiliar situations. The limited number of students that take MAP assessments achieve outstanding results, particularly in biology.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Good ↑	Acceptable	Good ↑

- Most students across the school enjoy learning and are actively engaged in their lessons. They are able to take responsibility for their own learning, although this is not consistent in the middle phase. KG children enjoy learning through singing and exploring their environment.
- Students work well together and support each other in their learning, either in pairs or in groups. They can articulate their learning with clarity, for example in mathematics when they explain how they arrive at an answer.
- Students increasingly make clear connections between their learning and the real world. In Islamic education, for example, they consider the impact of social media on their lives, and in Arabic they discuss jobs and careers in the UAE.
- Most students across the school can use technology for basic research. However, opportunities for developing critical thinking are more prevalent in the high school, particularly in English. Students in other phases are often challenged to think more deeply, but are rarely expected to use analysis, evaluation, and judgement to increase their understanding.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Good

- In all phases, students enjoy school and most have positive attitudes towards others. They show confidence and respond well to opportunities to take leadership responsibilities. They respond well to critical feedback from teachers and from their peers when it is given.
- Behavior is good around the school and students generally demonstrate self-discipline and respect. Most students are courteous to adults and other students. However, a few students in the middle and high schools display inappropriate behavior towards younger students.
- Most students understand the needs and differences of others and readily help each other. Relationships amongst students and staff are friendly and reflect mutual respect most of the time. Students interact positively in class and are eager to respond to their teachers' questions and when working with others during group activities.
- Students demonstrate a general understanding of safe and healthy living. They participate in activities that promote good health. Although there are healthy options in the school's cafeteria, students do not always choose to eat healthy food.
- Attendance is very good overall. Students keenly attend school and are mostly punctual in arriving to school and to classes. They understand that this has a positive impact on their progress. Attendance rates during inspection were lower than usual in the KG and high school.

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

- Students' understanding and appreciation of Islamic values are very good. They listen with close attention to the Holy Qur'an during classes. They have a secure understanding of the impact of Islamic values, for example regarding equality among all people living in Dubai irrespective of colour, gender or faith. Students have strong contacts with the Red Crescent society and collect donations to dig wells in Bangladesh.
- Students greatly appreciate Emirati heritage and culture. In the FS, children understand the national dress code and other heritage symbols such as the palm tree and the camel. In the other phases, students understand many aspects of UAE heritage and culture such as traditional sports and how Emirati people celebrate their special occasions.
- Students also demonstrate a clear understanding and appreciation of their own culture. They speak enthusiastically about their traditions including their national day. Students are also aware of, and enjoy celebrating other world cultures, especially during global day when they dress up and provide and sample other cultures' cuisines.

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

- Students have appropriate understanding of their responsibilities as members of the school. Elementary and high school students have more opportunities to participate in community volunteer work than middle school. Elementary students actively participate in 'Tarmeem', an initiative for collecting used books, while high school students invite senior citizens into the school and prepare a meal for the school's workers.
- Students enjoy their work and are happy to be involved in the different school activities. However, student-initiated projects are less common. Students have limited opportunities to develop enterprise and entrepreneurship skills, although the 'Practicum' programme provides Grade 11 students with opportunities to work with business firms for three days.
- Students and children in the KG take care of their immediate surroundings and participate in activities to improve their environment. Grade 5 students make their own collaborative videos on conservation of energy, while Grade 8 students are actively involved in planting trees on Green Day and clean-up of the area behind the school.

3. Teaching and assessment

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

- Teachers' understanding of the ways students learn is better in the KG, elementary and high school phases. While most teachers across the school are secure in their subject knowledge, they are less secure in promoting critical thinking to enhance students' learning.
- Planning is purposeful, comprehensive and clearly linked to curriculum expectations. Some learning environments support collaborative learning. However, some high school classrooms restrict movement for active learning. Teachers generally make good use of technology and learning resources. They also make optimum use of time, especially in the elementary phase.
- Most interactions between teachers and students are mutually positive, respectful and purposeful. Many teachers use questioning techniques to guide students in solving problems. They challenge students to find their own solutions based on research and discussions with their peers.
- Teaching strategies to meet the needs of individuals and groups of students is variable. In the middle and high school phases, teachers often use whole class question and answer sessions, while in the KG and elementary phases, they use a wider range of strategies. In most cases, teachers plan appropriate tasks for several groups of students, each with a different level of challenge.
- Most teachers are developing their skills in promoting critical thinking, problem solving and independent learning skills in their students with varying degrees of success. Innovation and independent learning skills are underdeveloped. In the best lessons, teachers challenge students with open-ended questions designed to promote further thinking. However, this is not consistent practice, and on too many occasions, teachers pose questions based on factual recall and information.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Internal assessment processes link directly to the school's licensed curriculum in KG. In Islamic education and Arabic, standards are aligned to the MoE curriculum. Elsewhere some subjects lack specific definitions of expected standards for units of work. As a result, and particularly in the elementary and middle school phases, assessments do not always clearly match students' actual abilities.
- The school has used IBT tests, and now uses MAP benchmark tests in English, mathematics and science for all students from Grades 4 to 8, with some additional grades, including KG, taking mathematics. These results are not used to calibrate the school's own internal assessment data. MAP results are shared with students.
- Internal assessment data is analyzed to identify areas of weakness in skills and to enable additional support to be provided for underperforming students. Use of external data is less effective. Tracking of groups is made difficult by enrolments from other schools and is not used consistently to set targets for individual students.

- The use of assessment information to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum, and to modify it where necessary, is inconsistent. In the KG, most teachers use assessment information to plan lessons with a focus on addressing gaps in skills and knowledge. However, there is a lack of consistency in planning and delivery of some lessons in other phases.
- Most teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of their students and give good verbal feedback. Marking of notebooks is inconsistent and does not routinely provide students with detailed feedback and suggestions for how to improve learning. In some areas rubrics are used to support students in assessing their own work or that of others.

4. Curriculum

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

- The curriculum is compliant with the U.S. Common Core and California State Standards, following the national statutory requirements. It is broad based, age appropriate, and aims to develop knowledge, skills and understandings in each phase. It is relevant in that it clearly enables students to make connections between learning and their own lives and the greater world.
- The redesigned curriculum and timetable meet the school's goals more closely. The curriculum is carefully planned so that it builds well on prior achievements in learning. It meets most students' needs, and prepares them to move forward at transition points both in school and beyond.
- Electives are important components of the curriculum. They are expanded in the high school and extended to the middle school. Students show great enthusiasm for elective courses that include the history of the UAE, Mandarin and, increasingly, innovation. All electives support core courses and are directly linked to the UAE National Agenda.
- Cross-curricular links are embedded throughout the curriculum in all phases. Teachers plan lessons to incorporate these links both implicitly and explicitly. The links are identified in many lessons to guide students in understanding the interconnectedness of learning and to develop a deeper understanding of global issues and perspectives.
- The curriculum is reviewed annually by the principal, curriculum director, heads of subjects and sections. It meets the academic and personal needs of most students, but full use is not made of the Common Core Curriculum to further advance students' learning. Scope and sequence documents are not fully aligned to the state standards. Insufficient emphasis is given to the development of investigative skills.
- The UAE social studies curriculum is in place and advanced throughout the school, from integrated units in elementary school to specific courses in the high school. Cross-disciplinary links are developed throughout. Expectations for student progress and attainment are aligned with curriculum standards, although a more coherent plan is being developed focusing on history, geography and UAE values. Assessment continues to be developed, with rubrics in place for student presentations. UAE social studies is extended to the greater community by students taking active roles in community service. There are insufficient opportunities for critical thinking, analysis and problem solving.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Modified curricula in English, mathematics and science form the basis of effective instruction for students with SEND who attend special classes. Planning for the different needs of students in mainstream classrooms is a strong feature in the KG and in many Arabic lessons. However, planning for students with diverse learning needs in other sections of the school is not consistently integrated into lessons.
- Opportunities for enterprise, service and innovation are provided through social studies and many other curriculum areas. Students in high school, and this year's middle school, are offered a range of electives which enhance the curriculum and engage students. The extra-curricular programme, and school links with the community, are expanding to offer a wider range of options for students.
- Social studies, Arabic and Islamic education lessons foster a secure appreciation and understanding of UAE culture. Students develop a strong sense of the values of the UAE society through a range of curriculum and extra-curricular activities. This is supported by the many opportunities students have to participate in national celebrations and cultural events, and to visit many historical and iconic locations.

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

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

- The school's child protection policy is proactive and communicated with all staff, students and families. Areas of responsibility and actions are very well identified. The few incidents of reported bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- Two clinics are staffed and provide excellent care and follow-up for all students. Supervision of students is thorough both within and outside the building, most noticeably during arrival and dismissal. The school is very clean, with additional staff appointed this year to ensure a healthier learning environment. Safety checks are regularly conducted, with the assistance of the Civil Defense on occasion.
- The building is exceptionally well maintained with all required contracts up to date and complete. Records are thorough and easily accessible and kept filed in an orderly manner.
- The school facilities are extremely well maintained and provide an excellent learning environment for all learners and activities. The elevator enables students who may have mobility impairments to access all areas of the school.
- The canteen is very clean and provides nutritional options to the students. The school's health staff work closely with the classroom teachers to provide all students with examples of, and guidance on healthy lifestyle options.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good

- The school fosters positive staff-student relationships marked by mutual respect. Teachers, especially in KG, know their students individually and monitor their well-being closely. A detailed policy promotes and rewards positive behavior across the school. It clearly outlines what is expected of students and the consequences of any misbehavior.
- Well-written policies on attendance and punctuality are contained within school procedures. The school effectively promotes a positive approach with the sound rationale that high student achievement is linked to good attendance. Attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored and recorded daily on the school's web portal. The school works closely with parents and students to ensure that absences and tardiness are promptly investigated and minimized.
- The school is fully inclusive and admits students with a range of diverse needs. There are clear processes to identify students with SEND and those who are gifted and talented. Information is gathered through the use of referral forms, professional reports, formal and informal assessments, observations and parent interviews.
- An individual education plan (IEP) is developed for each student identified with SEND. The plan is created collaboratively with parents by the SEND team. It provides academic goals and targets to guide the instruction and notes the accommodations required to ensure each student can access the curriculum. Structured support for students who are gifted and talented is at the planning stage.
- A school-wide pastoral care system is in place. Teachers and heads of sections take a primary role in promoting and monitoring student welfare. Staff works closely and constructively with students and their families to address concerns. The guidance counselor offers helpful advice and support to high school students in choosing electives, identifying possible careers and applying for university.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good

- Senior management promotes an inclusive ethos through policy and practice across the school. The school enrolls students with a range of diverse needs and provides appropriate support to ensure access to the curriculum. A comprehensive policy outlines the school's commitment to inclusion and the aim to identify and support all students with SEND.
- School procedures ensure the early identification of students with learning needs. KG teachers are proficient at recognizing and addressing children's learning needs. Information from parents, professional reports, school assessments and observations inform the planning of interventions. However, the SEND coordinators have not conducted a full review of the information available on students to improve the current understanding of each student's abilities.
- Parents acknowledge and support the school's commitment to inclusion. They are consulted about all aspects of the provision and attend individual education planning meetings. They receive monthly reports of curriculum progress as well as information on personal and social development, and achievement of targets in IEPs. They can also access up-to-date information through the school web portal.

- Many students with SEND receive individualized subject support in special classes where curriculum modifications effectively facilitate learning and progress. Individual education plans list academic goals and targets to guide special class teaching, but they do not address other areas for development such as behavior, social, communication and life skills and do not inform subject lesson planning. Planning to meet the needs of all students is inconsistent across the school.
- During assessments, students are provided with accommodations as needed. Their progress is measured principally through the achievement of academic individual targets and performance in academic tests. Classroom observations, class work and homework, and regular assessment, provide evidence that most students with SEND make good academic progress.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The school leadership team, led by the principal, effectively provides a clear vision and direction for the school. They are committed to creating an inclusive school. UAE National and Emirate priorities are closely monitored and supported. A distributive leadership model effectively shares responsibility for development and implementation of the school's action plan across all school leadership personnel.
- Leaders demonstrate a good understanding of teaching and learning and communicate their direction clearly to all staff and families. Frequent checks on the quality of teaching and learning assist in developing and maintaining a positive learning environment. Leaders increasingly focus on lesson plans and their correlation to curriculum standards to enhance learning and improve students' progress
- Communication to and from the leadership team is highly effective and supports good relationships through mutual respect and cooperation. Frequent department and grade level meetings held to enhance communication at the classroom level and have a positive impact on teachers' confidence and morale.
- Several initiatives, such as the change in grouping in the elementary grades, and the extended timetable in the high school, reflect good analysis of the school's learning needs. The change of the school's start time reduces confusion and absenteeism. This has a direct impact on students' achievement and indicates that school leaders have a good capacity for further improvement.
- Leaders monitor programmes and individuals on a regular basis to ensure accurate and effective implementation of the school's improvement plan. The improvements in teaching and learning in some phases, and in progress in some subjects, reflect the support leadership provides to teachers and students in the learning process. They also ensure the school is compliant with all local and national regulations and requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- The school's self-evaluation process is effective but does not make sufficient use of internal and external attainment data to identify and address learning needs accurately. This is more effectively managed in the KG, but is inconsistent across the other phases of the school.
- Teachers are monitored on a regular basis and feedback is provided to improve the teaching and learning process in all phases of the school. However, insufficient attention is paid to the progress students make in lessons against stated curriculum standards.
- Improvement planning focuses on the latest recommendations from the previous inspection process as well as the school's own perceived needs for overall improvement. However, the plan is not strategic and does not take account of all available data.
- Leaders have made progress in addressing some of the recommendations from the previous inspection report especially with regard to Arabic and, to some extent, in improving the quality of teaching. They have made improvements in the KG and high school, and in the rate of progress in the middle phase. Insufficient progress has been made in improving the systems for self-evaluation and the use of assessment information.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- Parents and other appropriate community representatives are encouraged to provide input in the school. The school successfully engages parents in supporting the curriculum and special celebrations and events. Effective parental involvement is most visible in the support for SEND students, and in the KG and elementary school.
- Parents value the highly effective methods of communication between the school and home, including the school's portal and phone application. They appreciate the prompt and highly professional responses to inquiries regarding teaching and health and safety issues. Parents repeatedly mention their appreciation for the effective safety procedures provided by the school.
- Parents welcome the change from trimester to quarterly reporting periods. They feel this gives them a more accurate understanding of their children's performance and the ability to monitor more closely their progress. In addition, parents have continual access to their children's performance and school events through the school website.
- Links with the local and wider communities, such as the Red Crescent, business links for work experience, and the partnership with the University Guidance Counselling Centre, enhance students' learning and personal development.

Governance

Good

- The governing board does not have formal representation of all stakeholders. However, they solicit and welcome feedback and suggestions from the school community.

- Governance is actively involved in the effective administration of the school. They receive regular reports throughout the year, and monitor the school's work, holding senior leaders accountable for its performance.
- Governors have provided funding to support the school in improving students' progress towards the National Agenda targets. They have also recruited highly qualified teachers and leaders to effectively address the needs of the school. The governing board closely monitors the school's adherence to statutory compliance.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Good

- The management of the school is highly effective and adjustments made to the start time and reporting periods reflect a clear understanding of the needs of the school. The day-to-day management is highly effective and efficient.
- The process for recruiting staff is well established. Individuals are deployed appropriately to meet the learning needs of all students. The newly-appointed curriculum co-ordinator provides increasingly effective support for teachers and school leaders. Professional development is improving the quality of teaching, but insufficient attention is given to the interpretation and use of internal and external data.
- Classrooms and other learning and recreational areas are well developed, clean and appropriately designed to support effective student learning and safety. A few rooms in the high school limit active and collaborative learning because there are too many students for the size of the classrooms.
- A range of resources, from manipulatives to technologies, is available to enhance the curriculum and support the learning process. Students from KG to the high school use iPads to supplement their learning.

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	
 Parents*	2016-2017	104
	2015-2016	58
 Teachers	37	
 Students	159	

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

- A large majority of students responded to the survey along with a larger percentage of parents than the previous year.
- Almost all respondents are pleased with the quality of education provided by the school.
- Parents express strong support for the leadership and teaching staff.
- A few students express a desire for a more active role in helping to make decisions in the school and more opportunities to develop leadership skills.
- A few parents comment on their children's lack of love of reading Arabic at home.
- A slightly smaller percentage of teachers responded to the survey than in the previous year.
- Almost all teacher responses are positive in all areas.

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