




GEMS Our Own English
High School

 Curriculum: CBSE

Overall Rating:

Very 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



Contents

School information.....	3
The DSIB inspection process.....	4
Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017	6
Main inspection report	12
1. Students' achievement.....	12
2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills.....	16
3. Teaching and assessment	18
4. Curriculum	19
5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students.....	21
Inclusion	22
6. Leadership and management	23
The views of parents, teachers and senior students	26



School information



General information

Location	Al Warqa'a
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1968
Website	www.gemsoo-dubai.com
Telephone	04-2361335
Address	P.O. Box 3004, Al Warqa'a 3, Dubai.
Principal	Mr. Thomas Mathew Koickal
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	24 to 27 October 2016

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	452
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	40
Teacher-student ratio	1:22
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	17%

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	KG 1 - Grade 12
Number of students on roll	10,105
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	0
Number of students with SEND	64
Largest nationality group of students	Indian

Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	Indian
Main curriculum	CBSE
External tests and examinations	CBSE
Accreditation	CBSE
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT, CAT4



The DSIB inspection process



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

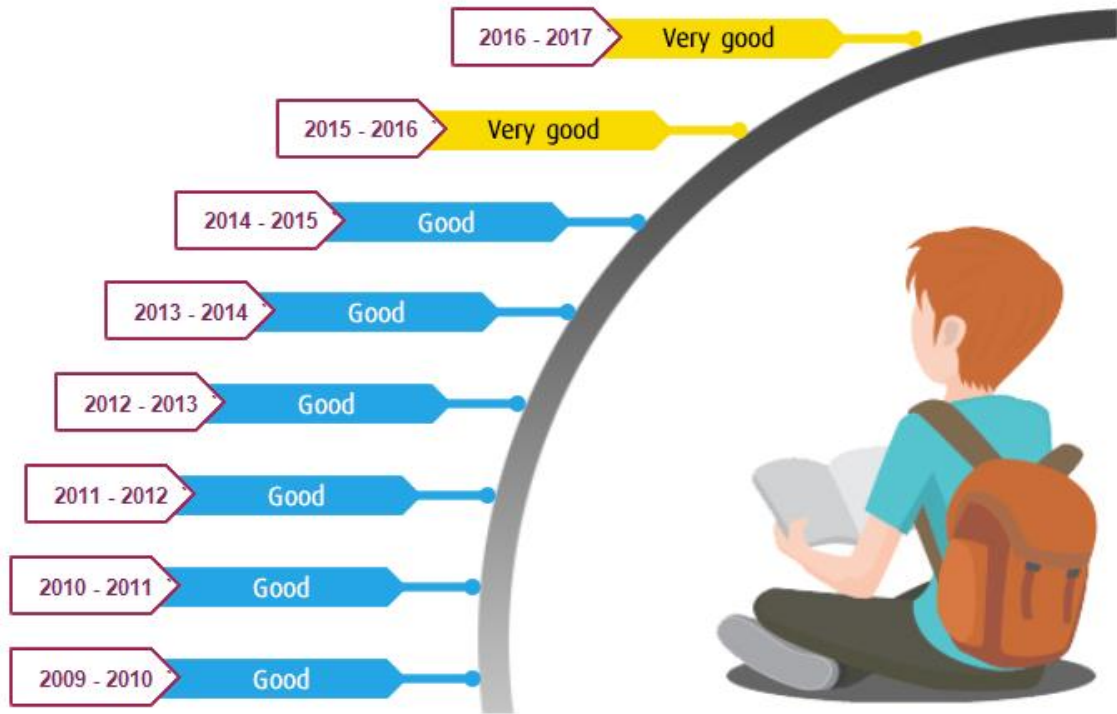
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

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

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 GEMS Our Own English High School



- The school opened in 1968 and is well-established. The executive principal has been in post for 3 years. The school is large, with student numbers that exceed 10,000. Teacher turnover has reduced and is now around 17%.
- The school has been judged to be good overall in DSIB inspections for the past six years. The school's overall rating improved to very good last year. In Kindergarten all classes now have a maximum of 25 children. The school has worked to improve aspects of provision in Arabic as an additional language over the last few years.
- The need for more consistency in teaching, for teachers to set higher expectations, and better progress in Arabic were themes in the last few reports. Last year's report notes the need to improve differentiation of learning tasks, helping students to take responsibility for their learning, and developing learning skills more effectively at Kindergarten and the primary phase particularly.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



GEMS Our Own English High School was inspected by DSIB from 24 to 27 October 2016 . The overall quality of education is **very good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Children in Kindergarten make good progress. At the primary phase, achievement is very good in English, acceptable in Arabic, and good in Islamic education, mathematics and science. Learning skills are well developed overall, particularly at the middle and secondary phases, where students' progress and attainment are very good or outstanding in English, mathematics and science.
- The school helps children in Kindergarten to develop very good behaviour and attitudes, understanding and appreciation of Islam and the local culture, as well as good social responsibility to classmates and adults in their lives. Students at the other phases demonstrate behaviour and attitudes, understanding and appreciation, and show social responsibility in these aspects to an outstanding level.
- At all phases, a proportion of lessons are very good or outstanding. Particularly in the middle and secondary phases, teachers plan and implement lessons which are stimulating and engaging, and match tasks to the learning needs of different groups of students. Assessment is done very well at a whole-school level.
- The quality of the design of the curriculum and how it is adapted to meet learning needs is very good at the primary, middle and secondary phases. These aspects are good at the Kindergarten phase, where there is a need for a more activity-based programme.
- The school's arrangements for promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring safety are of outstanding quality. Staff care for students very well, and support for the academic progress of different groups is good overall. It is very good at the secondary phase, where careers guidance and preparation for higher education is of high quality.
- The principal provides strong leadership and is aided by a very effective senior leadership team. Some leaders at middle level are very effective too. Governors provide support and exercise accountability rigorously. Partnerships with parents and the community are of outstanding quality. Day-to-day running of the school is very effective and the premises are of high quality.

What the school does best

- Students make rapid progress in the middle and secondary phases in English, mathematics and science, and demonstrate very good or outstanding attainment in those subjects. Their learning skills at those phases are very well developed.
- The school ensures that students make outstanding progress in personal and social development. Understanding of Islamic values and local culture is deep and wide, and students act responsibly in their learning, with other people, and in making a contribution to the school and the wider community.
- The curriculum is of high quality, particularly at the primary, middle and secondary phases, where it is well balanced, offering continuity and progression. Particularly at the middle and secondary phases, teachers deliver the curriculum well in lessons. The school's procedures for assessing students' progress and attainment are applied very well in those phases.
- Staff pay close and successful attention to promoting healthy lifestyles, and the school's arrangements for ensuring the safety of all stakeholders are of very high quality.
- The principal and his senior colleagues work well together and provide strong leadership for others, including the wide range of effective middle level leaders. Partnership with parents is developed very effectively.

Recommendations

- To accelerate students' progress in Arabic and improve their attainment by:
 - providing more opportunities for them to practise speaking at length
 - raising teachers' expectations of what students can achieve and increase the level of challenge in learning activities
 - using assessment information to match tasks to the learning needs of different groups of students.
- To raise progress and attainment in Kindergarten and in the primary phase to very good by:
 - sharing best practice from other phases in the school
 - Setting the highest expectations for what children can achieve and customising lesson plans, and opportunities within lessons to ensure students meet those expectations.
 - providing opportunities in every lesson for children to explore, solve problems and be creative, and for students to learn independently and develop skills in analysis and evaluation.

National Agenda Parameter



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

In response to this, each participating school was issued a report on their students' performance in these international assessments and, in addition, they were provided with clear targets for improving their performance. In 2015, KHDA launched the National Agenda Parameter, which is a method for measuring and monitoring schools' progress towards achieving their individual National Agenda targets through the use of external benchmarking assessments.

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

- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- Attainment as measured by the National Agenda Parameter tests in English, mathematics and science is not secure.
- Senior leaders are trained to interpret and analyse data from the National Agenda Parameter tests and tests of cognitive ability. Subject leaders and teachers have also been effectively trained. This ensures that the data is analysed systematically and used well to set targets and challenge teachers and students to monitor and improve performance.
- Detailed analysis of data has led to very effective review of the curriculum. The school systematically identifies areas of weakness and introduces appropriate additional content and focus on development of skills needed for success in TIMSS and PISA international assessments.
- Teachers, particularly in middle and secondary phases, are using more activities to promote critical thinking amongst students. In English there is a strong focus on improving reading for comprehension and debating skills. In science there is increased emphasis on practical work, but less so on developing investigative skills. In mathematics, problem-solving is improving critical thinking. In the primary phase, students have insufficient opportunities for investigation.
- Students have a sound understanding of their own National Agenda benchmark results and CAT4 outcomes. They are appropriately involved in setting targets for future learning. They are often set research tasks for homework and make effective presentations on the outcomes to their peers. They have insufficient opportunities in school for extended, independent work and this hinders their development as independent learners.

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

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:

- Students have demonstrated that they can be innovative in subjects and in other pursuits including projects and competitions. Students show very strong entrepreneurial skills and have a well-developed work ethic. Teachers' development of critical thinking and creativity in students is better in the middle and secondary phases. The classroom curriculum and extra-curricular activities offer students a wide range of opportunities to develop leadership skills and share new ideas. Senior leaders have a clear understanding of how to innovate and improve the school.

Overall school performance


Very good

1 Students' achievement

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills	Good	Good	Very good	Very good

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal development	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good 	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding


3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Very good	Very good
Assessment	Good	Good	Very good	Very good

4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Very good	Very good	Very good
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Very good 


6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership	Very good
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Very good
Parents and the community	Outstanding 
Governance	Very 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

- A majority of children achieve standards in English that are above age-related expectations. This is taking into account that they are learning English as an additional language. By the end of KG2, children have a well-developed understanding of spoken English and speak in sentences that are grammatically correct. They read simple sentences using their knowledge of sounds. The systematic development of higher level early reading skills is hindered by a lack of high-quality reading materials and opportunities to read with an adult. Children make good progress in early writing skills.
- In mathematics, a majority of children attain above curriculum standards. They count to 50, understand the value of numbers to ten and beyond and do simple addition of groups to a good standard. Children know the names of regular two dimensional shapes and understand the concept of a half when applied to a shape. They develop appropriate mathematical language, such as more and less, to compare numbers, which enables them to make good progress. They learn to recognise and write number names. Their ability to apply number operations to practical problem-solving is less developed.
- In science, children are curious about the world around them and make good progress in developing their knowledge about living things. They describe the characteristics of animals and birds and identify differences and similarities. They know where animals live and the names of their young. Scientific skills are not as strong as knowledge, as there are insufficient opportunities for them to observe, predict and explore through structured learning experiences.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards. They can link Islamic concepts to their daily lives through speaking and writing skills. Their knowledge of the Islamic constructs that make up the Muslim's character exceeds expectations. The majority of students understand the prescribed Qur'anic verses and can interpret their meaning. The majority of students make better than expected progress in lessons and over time. Lessons provide suitable opportunities for most students to advance their knowledge.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain levels of skills that are in line with curriculum standards. They take part in short conversations to express themselves. Their writing is still in the development stage. They can write short sentences but with many spelling mistakes. Most students make expected progress in lessons and over time. The learning objectives help them to develop the outcomes, but progress in using the language, in context is slow.
- Internal assessments in English indicate that a large majority of students attain standards above the curriculum standards. Internal data show students are performing above age-related standards, but international benchmark data indicates lower attainment in some grades. After Grade 1, students make better than expected progress on skill development in reading and speaking. By the end of the primary phase, most students are able to apply grammatical features to their written work, using complex vocabulary and sentence structure. They can spell with confidence. Overall progress is very good.
- Internal testing against the curriculum standards demonstrates good overall attainment in mathematics. Results are stronger in upper primary than at lower grades. Lower attainment and progress in lower primary reflects lack of challenge at times, or minimal opportunities for practical work. These factors, among others, lead to recent results in international tests being below the expected levels. The majority of students are developing age-appropriate skills and knowledge above curriculum standards. Progress across the entire phase is good, and the majority of upper primary students make better than expected progress.
- Most students have a broad range of scientific knowledge which exceeds the curriculum expectations. A majority are enthused by science and make better than expected progress in acquiring practical skills and applying knowledge to real world situations, such as healthy eating. They can develop hypotheses but are less adept at planning a fair test of these. Standards in some skills are lower than international standards in benchmark tests.

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

- The majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards in Islamic education. They can establish links with the Islamic values that impact directly on their daily lives. Students understand the Qur'an and can interpret the verses. The majority of students make better than expected progress in lessons and over time. Most students benefit from opportunities to develop their critical thinking and to create a set of cross-curricular links.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain levels of skills that are in line with curriculum standards. They can hold short conversations to express themselves. Their writing is improving. They can write short sentences but with many spelling mistakes. Most students make expected progress in lessons and over time. The level of progress in using the language in context is underdeveloped.
- In English lessons, and in their work over time, most students make better than expected progress and demonstrate attainment above the school's curriculum standards. Although the results from international benchmark tests show attainment is less secure, progress in lessons enables students to make better than expected gains compared to their starting points. This is illustrated in the high quality of extended writing they produce.
- Students possess very good mathematical and numerical skills. For a large majority, knowledge, skills and understanding in mathematics exceed curriculum standards. Within lessons students make much better than expected progress in all aspects of mathematical knowledge. However, progress in enquiry, problem solving and critical thinking is less strong. In internal testing and international benchmarking, a large majority of students attain levels above curriculum and international standards.
- Most students enjoy science and make much better than expected progress. A large majority attain levels above curriculum standards. Students have an impressive range of knowledge and can apply it very well to real-world situations. They are enthusiastic and very competent at practical work, with strong skills of observation. Skills of analysis, evaluation, judgement and identifying strategies for improvement are less well developed in relation to international benchmark standards for these skills.

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

- The majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards. They recognise and understand the ethical standards derived from Islamic culture by establishing links between what is permissible and what is forbidden in their lives. Students understand the Qur'an and can interpret the verses moderately well. Most students make expected progress in lessons and over time. Their critical and analytical skills are not well developed, restricting the overall progress students make.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain language skills that are in line with curriculum standards. Students in Grade 9 can express themselves orally and use the new words in context but without showing deep meaning. Most students make expected progress in lessons and over time. A lack of opportunities to practise and a narrow range of vocabulary limits the progress they make.
- In English, most students achieve above the CBSE expected curriculum standards; a fairly steady pattern over the last three years. Although results from international benchmarks tests are not secure, students' progress is much better than expected at this level when measured against the curriculum standards. In addition, research and questioning skills are well developed. Internal assessment data indicates that most students have knowledge and understanding above curriculum expectations.
- The large majority of students attain levels in mathematics that exceed curriculum standards in external CBSE examinations at Grades 10 and 12. These high standards have been maintained over recent years. Most students make much better than expected progress over the phase, particularly when provided with challenging and appropriate lesson objectives. They communicate their learning confidently, using accurate terminology.
- Most students make better than expected progress in science. This pattern is steady over the last three years, resulting in them reaching levels of attainment above expectations in CBSE examinations. Their knowledge and understanding of concepts as shown in lessons and work books is wide ranging and above the required curriculum standards. Students apply their knowledge well to real world situations. They have excellent practical skills and are very competent in the laboratory, but are less confident in planning open-ended investigations.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills	Good	Good	Very good	Very good

- Children in Kindergarten work well. Students have positive attitudes towards their learning and are engaged and attentive. They willingly follow teachers' instructions, and the majority take responsibility for their own learning. Most students know how well they are learning and are aware of what they need to do to improve. In many lessons in the middle and secondary phases, students demonstrate highly-developed learning skills.
- Most students can work collaboratively and are successful in achieving the lesson aims. They enjoy group activities and participate enthusiastically. They understand their role in the group and how best to contribute. Students communicate effectively with their peers and teachers and when given the opportunity can work independently. In many instances strong leadership capabilities are evident, particularly in the middle and secondary phases.
- Most students can relate their learning to real-life contexts. They are practised at making connections between what they are learning in one class to other parts of the curriculum, in a broader world context.
- There is a strong link between the type of questions asked in class and teacher expectations, and the ability of the students to demonstrate a deeper understanding of their learning.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal development	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Children in Kindergarten have positive attitudes to learning. They respond well to their teachers and are keen to do their best. Their self-reliance is developing well. Students in all phases are highly motivated and take responsibility for their own learning. They show maturity in seeking advice and value the support and constructive feedback they receive from teachers. They have high personal aspirations and show a strong commitment to achieving them.
- The behaviour of students is exemplary in classrooms and as they move around the school. Students are self-disciplined and resolve any difficulties in a mature way. Students are openly respectful and courteous to each other and visitors. Even the youngest children in Kindergarten show high levels of self-discipline for their age.
- The school is a harmonious community. Students enjoy strong and mutually respectful relationships with their teachers. This makes a significant contribution to their academic success and personal development. Children in Kindergarten are kind to others and students relate exceptionally well to each other. They show empathy, genuine respect and a willingness to help others both socially and in their work.
- Students have a very strong understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including a balanced diet, regular exercise and keeping themselves safe. This is reflected in the many celebrations of achievements in sport. Kindergarten children bring healthy food for lunch and older students enjoy selecting from an excellent range of healthy options in the canteen.

- Attendance is good but could be further improved in lower primary. Students arrive on time at the beginning of the school day and are punctual for lessons and other events.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good ↑	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students demonstrate excellent understanding of Islamic values and their role in building UAE society. They are able to link, apply and benefit from this knowledge to their daily lives. They are aware of the importance of Islamic values and their positive impact in all aspects of their lives and future.
- The Heritage and culture of the UAE are appreciated by all students, who understand the importance of belonging to and respecting the UAE history. Students show respect in a practical way by participating in a number of cultural activities and events that reflect their advanced levels of commitment and appreciation.
- Students understand the need for good communication between different peoples. They show understanding of a diverse range of cultures in a range of ways, including through literature, music and art. They join in many school celebrations including Emirati, Indian and other key dates and events which deepen their understanding.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students show a willingness to participate in wider school pursuits and benefit from many opportunities to initiate or lead these activities. Almost all students take responsibility for their school community, for example in the way in which they look after each other. Many take on the role of monitors and they are keen to be involved in projects that will benefit the whole school. These projects are often led by students.
- In class and in other activities, students demonstrate an excellent work ethic, and almost all demonstrate a willingness to learn and follow instructions, settling well into tasks. Many demonstrate the ability to develop and manage projects. Students are highly resourceful and enterprising and have the capacity to initiate projects which will benefit the whole school.
- Students demonstrate a pride in their school and have a very strong focus on improving the environment through participation in clubs, special days and competitions. They support or initiate schemes that have a positive environmental impact through "green" projects, recycling, conservation and the very successful 'Our Own Blossoms' project, in which they grow and sell their own organic plants and vegetables.

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Very good	Very good

- Most teachers know their subjects very well. The teachers in the upper phases have a more comprehensive understanding of how children learn, and they integrate different learning styles into planning, resulting in better progress for students. Many lower primary and Kindergarten teachers are still developing their understanding of how students learn best.
- Lessons are well planned. They work best when sufficiently individualised for specific classes. Lesson planning mostly develops high levels of enthusiasm, curiosity and understanding, particularly in the middle and high school. Plenaries help students to judge their own progress. Enquiry-based practical work in science often supports strong progress.
- Most teachers use effective questioning techniques to develop thinking and discussion. In a very small number of lessons, closed questioning reduces opportunities for developing students' curiosity and understanding. However, teachers usually modify their questions to suit different ability levels. In some lessons, very effective dialogues between students and teachers take place.
- Most teachers modify effectively their activities, expectations and tasks to motivate students at different levels of prior attainment. However, teachers can be restricted by large classes in cramped rooms, reducing the range of teaching strategies and opportunities for stimulating and collaborative group work in younger years.
- In their lesson planning, teachers are increasingly focusing on developing students' critical thinking skills. This aspect tends to be implemented more successfully in the middle and secondary phases and in English and science. Problem solving, enquiry and investigation are developing in most subject areas and are strongest in mathematics and science.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Assessment	Good	Good	Very good	Very good

- Assessment processes are coherent and consistent across the school. They provide valid and reliable measures of students' development against curriculum standards. The school is broadening its assessment methods from those based mainly on testing knowledge to tests that include some assessment of skills of analysis and evaluation. In Kindergarten, procedures and use of assessment need further refinement to accelerate the progress of all children.
- The school uses IBT data alongside CBSE results from Grades 10 and 12 to benchmark students against national and international standards. Internal assessments have not yet been fully aligned to reflect attainment against international standards but this work is in progress.
- Assessment data, including information from tests of cognitive ability, is analysed very well and is used effectively to track student achievement and set targets for improvement. It is also used to monitor and improve progress of classes and is particularly effective in the upper phases. Students identified as underperforming are provided with appropriate support. This is less consistent in primary and Kindergarten.
- Analysis of information is used very effectively to modify the curriculum to improve development of skills needed for success in English, mathematics and science. The use made by teachers of the data to modify generic lesson plans to meet the needs of all groups of students, is not as effective, particularly in Kindergarten, primary phase and in Arabic and Islamic education lessons across the school.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses. Feedback via online systems is very effective, and personalised challenge and support for students is seen most in the upper phases. There are inconsistencies in the quality of feedback on written work, particularly in the primary phase and also in Arabic and Islamic education. Where assessment is particularly strong, students are effectively involved in assessing their own learning and setting targets for improvement.

4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Very good	Very good	Very good

- The school curriculum follows the CBSE guidelines and has a very clear philosophy and rationale. It ensures a sound balance between academic and extra-curricular activities. As a result, students benefit from a holistic education and opportunities for high performance in the external examinations and inter-school competitions. The Kindergarten curriculum is based on a mix of approaches underpinned by the UK Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

- Programmes of work are drawn up through collaboration among senior staff and leaders. The textbooks and activities, based on previous learning of the students, ensure continuity. Students move to the next stages of their education smoothly as they are prepared for the next grade at the end of the present one. Transition is less effective for lower-attaining students.
- An exceptionally wide choice of subject options, including political science, caters very effectively for senior students' academic and vocational requirements. Second language choices can be made from a range of four languages. The extensive range of enrichment activities, including extra-curricular, inter-school competitive sports and a well-planned programme of events, supports personal development and interests very well.
- Cross-curricular links are well established through activities such as 'Earn while you learn'. Students learn about the culture and vision of the UAE in almost all subjects, in lessons, events, displays and assemblies. Facilities such as the Research and Design Innovation Studio, a student-centred laboratory, give students an opportunity to design objects using skills learned across subjects, thus providing a real-life context to students' learning.
- The curriculum is reviewed regularly, taking into account data from internal and external assessments. There is now a clear mapping for the inclusion of the IBT skills required to meet the National Agenda Parameters. Schemes of work which incorporate hands-on activities and collaborative learning to support student learning are developed to complement the curriculum. Opportunities to develop the children's creativity and natural curiosity in Kindergarten are still developing.
- The UAE social studies curriculum effectively provides a balance of knowledge, skills and understanding in UAE history, geography and civics. Teachers use their subject knowledge well to explain new concepts, help students develop secure understanding, and enhance learning. There are meaningful cross-curricular links relevant to students' daily lives. Students generally demonstrate purposeful collaboration, achieving targets co-operatively. The use of technology for teaching and learning is yet to be fully embedded across the school. The school conducts regular assessments for UAE social studies and these are fully integrated with the general social studies assessments.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Very good	Very good	Very good


- The curriculum is suitably modified to meet the needs of all student abilities. Modifications this year include additional academic material to cover the gaps in learning found as a result of external testing. Lesson plans identify appropriate modifications for each group of students, but sometimes within the lesson individual needs are not met. The curriculum for students with SEND incorporates accommodations to support learning.
- Extensive opportunities exist for enhancing students' learning through a wide range of inter-school and extra-curricular activities. To learn entrepreneurial skills, students participate in activities to grow their own crops through hydroponics and aquaponics in an organic garden, and sell their produce to the school community. Students also participate in innovative activities such as "Tap the Scrap", Medical Marvels and Eco Smart School.
- UAE traditions and values are fully integrated into school and classroom activities. Throughout the school, the influence of Emirati culture is seen in student art work, exhibitions and bulletin boards. Students enjoy celebrating Arabic week and National Day. Visits to mosques and other landmarks enrich students' understanding of the local culture.

- Children in Kindergarten 2 make a start to learning Arabic. They acquire a range of everyday words to get them off to a good start for the start of formal Arabic classes in Grade 1.

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

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

- Students are very well supervised, safeguarded and protected by a comprehensive and well-implemented child protection policy. Staff are proactive about policies and procedures, which are rigorously followed, with monthly training for security staff. New back-up cameras have been installed on buses, and a smartphone app allows parents to track the whereabouts of children on the buses.
- Special attention is given to ensure the health, safety and security of students in the school. Safety measures are conducted and reviewed regularly with all stakeholders. The environment is safe and hygienic, with sufficient supervision to ensure standards are maintained systematically and thoroughly.
- The buildings and equipment are exceptionally well maintained, and records are excellent. The medical clinics are well staffed, and electronic attendance is taken by teachers in the classroom. The quality of record keeping is evident and thorough. Minor incidents are recorded and reported to parents promptly.
- The premises and facilities are suitable for all student groups. They provide a very appropriate and cheerful environment for learning, with covered assembly and playground areas. Signs are posted and explained to students detailing safety rules during a wide range of school activities.
- Healthy lifestyles are promoted through a variety of awareness campaigns, and supported by the medical and nursing staff. Safe and healthy living is given a very high profile. Organic gardening, which is integrated into the curriculum.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Very good 

- The school community successfully promotes a strong ethos of mutual respect amongst its students and staff. Children and students understand the school's high expectations of behaviour and older students are good role models.
- The school accurately records students' attendance and punctuality and swiftly contacts parents about unexplained absences. The school promotes the importance of regular attendance but does not analyse the reasons why students and children are absent.

- The school has established clear systems to identify students with SEND and those who are gifted or talented. The school has recently introduced observations of all Kindergarten children when they join the school to help identify any difficulties. The school is developing its expertise in using the CAT4 cognitive abilities test to refine its identification processes.
- The school provides effective support for the majority of students with SEND, especially when they work individually with the special educators. In lessons, where support is inconsistent, teachers are not as skilled at planning personalised learning to enable students with SEND to work on their targets. The school is very successful in enabling students who are gifted or talented to fulfil their potential.
- The school is very effective in promoting the wellbeing and happiness of its students. Staff closely monitor students' personal development. Students can turn to a range of teachers and professionals for support and guidance when they have concerns. The counselling and guidance staff offer older students high quality advice on careers and give valuable help with applications to universities.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good

- The school successfully promotes a very inclusive ethos, and students with a wide range of difficulties are welcomed into school. A member of the senior management team effectively leads and manages the provision for SEND. The school has invested in more staff specialising in SEND. The SEND policy promotes inclusion, but is not fully clear about roles and responsibilities.
- Staff make good use of a range of assessment information and referrals from teachers and parents to identify students' significant needs. Further verification is undertaken by external professionals. Staff write helpful individual education plans which set out clear targets for learning. The school is developing its expertise in using cognitive abilities testing to refine its identification procedures.
- Parents of students with SEND appreciate the considerable support and guidance given by the specialist staff and teachers. Not all parents are fully aware of their children's individual education plan. However, they feel well informed about their children's progress through oral and digital reports. The school successfully encourages parents to become partners in their children's learning.
- Support is most effective when special educators and teachers plan activities which closely match the students' needs and learning styles. In lessons, support is too variable. A minority of teachers are not skilled in personalising learning. The curriculum is modified well to take account of students' abilities so that some students are offered alternative subjects which are more suited to their needs.
- The majority of students with SEND are making better than expected progress in lessons, but there are considerable variations due to inconsistencies in the quality of support. Staff make good use of the school's assessment systems to track and monitor the levels of students' attainment over time and they monitor the students' success in meeting individual targets.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Very good


- The principal, aided effectively by the headmistress, has set out clearly his vision for the school's development. Together with the heads of phases, they provide strong leadership. Staff and students have a wide range of opportunities to take responsibility. There is a strong, shared commitment to implementing the National Agenda, although the leadership of Islamic education and Arabic is not as effective as other departments.
- Senior leaders are experienced and have an ever-increasing knowledge of best practice in education. They have ensured that the school is inclusive, with a strong drive for improvement, and are successful in achieving high standards of student achievement at some phases.
- Relationships in the school and with parents are very positive. A wide range of staff fulfil their delegated roles well and take responsibility for ensuring very good quality outcomes for students. The work of the school is characterised by clear communication about aims, policies and procedures, and an ethos of accountability.
- Senior leaders and many other staff have a proven capacity to innovate to improve the school. They are forward-looking and keen to learn more about best practice. They are problem-solvers, able to surmount hurdles in the way of progress. There are some signs of improvement in the more intractable issues such as improving attainment in Arabic.
- Leaders have been largely successful in sustaining the very good overall quality of the school. A few aspects have improved, while others have declined slightly over the last year.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very good

- Senior leaders and others implement a wide range of processes for school self-evaluation, including surveys of stakeholder views, analysis of data and observation of lessons. As a result, they have a well-developed knowledge of the profile of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The results of self-evaluation activities feed into suitable improvement plans for all areas of the school's work.
- Lesson observation is a key feature of the self-evaluation process. Staff record the results carefully and relay them to teachers to help them improve. The school's systems focus appropriately on the teachers' plans, and their implementation is increasingly using students' progress data.
- A wide range of development plans, which are set out in a clear and appropriate structure, drive school improvement. Progress in implementing the plans is monitored carefully by senior staff and governors.
- There has been significant progress in addressing most of the recommendations of the previous inspection report. Some aspects remain in need of improvement. Many outcomes for students remain at very good or outstanding levels.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Outstanding 

- Parents are welcome and fully involved in many aspects of the life of the school. The school aims for an effective, co-operative and strong relationship with parents to support the children's learning. Senior staff seek and consider parents' views in determining future school directions. The parent group called 'Our Own Voice' has thirty-one representatives and forms an effective avenue for communication.
- Regular communication with parents is in place electronically through the portal, newsletters and magazines. Schedules are clear and published in advance. Parent views are sought on the school improvement plan. Parents of students with SEND are supported through regular contact. There is an effective procedure for dealing with parent complaints.
- Parents receive regular reports electronically regarding their children's attainment, progress and aspects of their social and personal development. Some phase reports are more comprehensive and include a proposed section for students to add goals, strengths, interests and achievements. All reports would benefit from a student self-evaluation as well as a section on next steps in learning.
- The school and families form a strong community. Numerous links with local, national and international communities support students' learning, development and achievements. These include internships, charity work, external visits, visiting speakers and a careers fair. School attendees at external events share their experiences with the school through assemblies and other communication channels.

Governance

Very good

- Parents have a wide range of opportunities to be involved in decision-making. In addition to the well-established parents' group, 'Our Own Voice', governors have instituted a local governing body with parent, staff and student representation. Through these channels, and others such as surveys of stakeholders' opinions, governors take parental views into account when running the school.
- A wide range of personnel from the corporate head office visit the school regularly to gather information on the quality of the school's work and to hold senior staff accountable. Governors' monitoring includes looking at the quality of teaching and learning and analysing examination results. Overall, they have a well-developed knowledge of the work of the school.
- The governors exert a positive influence on the school. They have improved many aspects of provision. However, while they have driven Kindergarten class sizes down to a maximum of 25, class sizes in the other phases remain too large.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Good ↓

- The school runs very effectively on a day-to-day basis. Senior staff receive regular reports on a wide range of aspects of daily and weekly management, and problems are dealt with effectively and in good time. The timetable is well organised and daily procedures run smoothly. Given the number of students in the school, the quiet efficiency of the work of the school is remarkable.
- Teamwork among senior and middle leaders is strong. Almost all staff are appropriately qualified and deployed. Induction procedures for new staff are thorough, and some aspects, for example the graduate recruitment scheme, are innovative.
- High quality, well maintained premises help to create a stimulating learning environment. Several improvements have been made to the infrastructure. However, the numbers of students in some classes remains too high.
- Senior staff have further improved ICT resources to enhance students' learning opportunities. Students benefit from a wide range of other resources. There are shortages in some aspects, for example manipulatives for mathematics in the primary phase.

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	4555
	2015-2016	4644
 Teachers	461	
 Students	1364	

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

- Over half of the parents have responded, a rate similar to last year. Almost all students and all staff have completed the survey.
- The parents who have responded hold very positive views about almost all aspects of the school's work. For example, almost all express satisfaction with the quality of education at the school and feel that their children enjoy school.
- High numbers of parents agree with positive statements about a wide range of aspects of the curriculum, personal and social development, teaching and assessment.
- Most parents feel that school leaders and staff are approachable and open to discussions and solutions, and almost all think that the school is well led overall.
- Almost all parents feel that instances of bullying are rare.
- Students' views are mostly positive. For example, most feel that it is true that teachers are helpful and supportive in the students' learning, and that the school is well led.
- Most students agree that they use a good range of resources, including technology, to support their learning.
- A minority of students feel that it is only a little true, or not at all true, that they are satisfied with the overall quality of education in the school.
- Teachers have very positive views about the quality of the school's work. Almost all feel that professional development activities have helped them to become better teachers.

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