



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

Dubai Scholars Private School

Curriculum: UK

Overall rating: Good

Read more about the school



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“Don't look
behind to
see who is
following you,
but look forward
to be ahead”



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

Contents

School information	2
Summary for parents and the community	3
Main inspection report	10
1. Students' achievement	11
2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills	15
3. Teaching and assessment	17
4. Curriculum	18
5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students	19
Provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	20
6. Leadership and management	21
The views of the parents, teachers and students	24

School information

General information



Location	Al Qusais
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1976
Website	www.dubaischolars.com
Telephone	04-2988892
Address	PO Box 2819, Al Ghusais Dubai
Principal	Aparna Yashpal Verma
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	8 to 11 February 2016

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-18
Grades or year groups	Foundation 2 to Year 13
Number of students on roll	1,614
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	0
Number of students with SEND	23
Largest nationality group of students	Indian

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	106
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	14
Teacher-student ratio	1:15
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	20%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK
External tests and examinations	IGCSE, Edexcel AS and A-level
Accreditation	None
National Agenda benchmark tests	GL / IBT

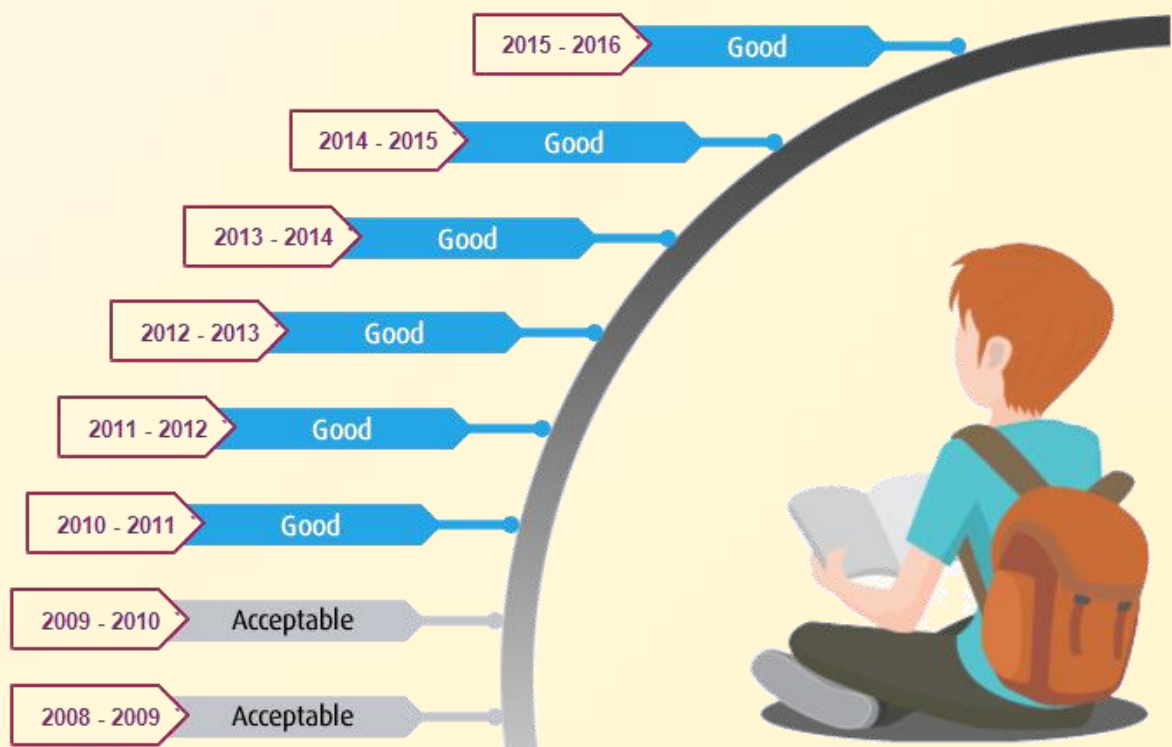


Summary for parents and the community

Dubai Scholars Private School was inspected by DSIB from 8 to 11 February 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **good**.

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

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





How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, **Dubai Scholars Private School** provided a **good** quality of education for its students.

- Attainment in English, mathematics and science was acceptable in Foundation Stage (FS). Attainment and progress were good at the primary phase in all subjects. In secondary phase attainment and progress were outstanding in English and very good in mathematics and science, they were good in Islamic education but acceptable in Arabic as an additional language. Students generally had well-developed learning skills.
- The school's approach to developing students' personal and social skills, and their innovation skills was very successful. Students showed outstanding behaviour and attitudes to others and to their learning. They had excellent awareness of Islamic values and Emirati and world culture.
- Lesson planning was usually very good, although less so in FS and lower primary phase. Most teachers used assessment information well to plan work that was well matched to students' general abilities, but insufficient to meet students' special needs.
- The quality of the curriculum was good overall. It was reviewed annually and careful curriculum planning permitted clear progression in knowledge and skills. Curricular options offered students choices to develop their talents and interests. The learning needs of higher-attaining students were better met in secondary and post-16 phases than at the others.
- Staff implemented arrangements for the health and safety of students effectively, and provided good care and support. Some aspects of health and safety at the FS were in need of attention.
- Governors, senior leaders and those at other levels worked together effectively to provide good leadership. Morale among staff was high. The daily routines were carried out well.



What did the school do well?

- Students in the upper primary phase made good progress and had positive attainment in the core subjects. Attainment and progress in the secondary and post-16 phases in English, mathematics and science were mainly very good, with some outstanding learning.
- Learning skills were well developed overall, and very good at the post-16 phase.
- Children in FS and students throughout made generally outstanding progress in their personal and social development. They were self-confident, articulate and caring. They were able to put their highly developed sense of morals and values into action in their everyday lives.
- The quality of teaching, assessment and curriculum was good, as was staff implementation of suitable arrangements for health, safety, care and support of students.
- Leadership had some visionary aspects, and had successfully placed a strong emphasis on the personal and social development of the students. Leaders were increasingly effective in improving the curriculum and aspects of teaching.



What does the school need to do next?

- Create vibrant learning environments in all areas of the school, particularly in FS and Years 1, 2 and 3 by:
 - ensuring that all classrooms are bright, stimulate thinking and provide space for collaborative learning
 - refurbishing and organising areas for learning that are safe, secure and support creative and critical thinking
 - enabling access in all classrooms to resources which inspire independent learning and practical investigations.
- Strengthen the inclusive nature of the school by:
 - differentiating work and questioning within classrooms to match the targets set in individual education plans for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
 - providing appropriate levels of challenge in all subjects for the different groups of students, including those with gifts and talents, in order to raise expectations and attainment to exceed international standards
 - preventing 'chorused' responses to teachers' prompts and questions, especially in lower primary, so that students can be held accountable for their learning.
- Involve all leaders and teachers in analysing assessment data, work scrutiny and information from learning walks to:
 - inform the school self-evaluation process and identify ways in which all lessons could produce consistently high attainment for students
 - create opportunities in every lesson for students to evaluate their progress and identify next steps in learning
 - implement a rigorous programme of professional development and induction to promote high-quality teaching and to enable students to apply their learning in meaningful contexts.



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

- The majority of students with SEND made acceptable or good progress in academic subjects, in their communication skills, and in their personal development.
- Parents received regular reports about their children's progress. They were encouraged to contribute information about their children at termly meetings. This feedback from parents contributed to informing some of the targets in their children's individual education plans.
- There was regular communication between parents and the SEND team. Parents could contact the school to arrange to meet SEND teachers and class teachers if they had any concerns about their children's education or progress.
- Parents received advice and guidance regularly at formal meetings with the SEND teachers. They also could inform themselves through phone calls, the school communicator where the week's academic work was listed, and school diaries where homework and guidance were recorded.
- Parents were satisfied with the educational provision for their children. They appreciated the progress that their children were making in various subjects and in their personal development.

National Agenda Parameter



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

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

Main points:

- The school met the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. The attainment data was not sufficient to make a full judgement on the progress towards meeting National Agenda targets.
- The school had taken positive steps to promote the awareness of the National Agenda across the whole school community. Governors were very aware of the requirements of the National Agenda and were committed to support the school in meeting these requirements.
- The school had reviewed and aligned its written curriculum to meet the requirements of TIMSS and PISA.
- Teachers had begun to develop and use a variety of strategies, for example, open-ended questions, prediction and hypothesis, and independent research, to develop students' critical thinking and enquiry skills. The teaching team was not skilled in the use of these strategies. As a result, teachers' effectiveness in developing critical thinking and enquiry was limited.
- Students had access to only a small range of resources in school to enable them to develop their research skills. Students used extra-curricular activities to access and use a wider range of resources, particularly information technology (IT), which was evident in the presentations of their research.

Innovation in education

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

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



Promoting a culture of innovation:

- Leaders at all levels had been involved in devising a strategy which promoted a culture of innovation. They were enthusiastic. They had created opportunities for teachers and students to work together to identify how the skills of innovation might be developed. Senior students had been invited to identify how they might contribute to the improvement of the school in different, creative ways. The on-line and school learning environment were being reviewed to judge how they might be adapted to support the agenda. Extra-curricular activities and projects offered students the chance to consider what innovative practice might be, particularly in the field of environmental sustainability.

Overall school performance

Good

1. Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
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	Good	Acceptable ↓	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good ↑	Acceptable	Not applicable
English 	Attainment	Acceptable ↓	Good ↓	Outstanding	Not applicable
	Progress	Good	Good ↓	Outstanding	Not applicable
Mathematics 	Attainment	Acceptable	Good ↓	Very good ↓	Very good ↑
	Progress	Acceptable	Good ↓	Very good ↓	Very good ↓
Science 	Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Very good ↓	Good
	Progress	Good ↑	Good	Very good ↓	Very good ↓

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

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

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

4. Curriculum

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

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

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

6. Leadership and management

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



Main inspection report

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

Judgements are made on a six-point scale



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

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

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

1. Students' achievement

Foundation Stage

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

- In Foundation Stage 2, most children attained levels in line with curriculum standards. They demonstrated appropriate levels of knowledge and understanding in language and literacy development. The majority made good progress in developing their communication skills and in reading and writing independently. Assessment information indicated that the majority of children made better than expected progress in the acquisition and application of English language skills and emergent literacy. High achievers made acceptable progress.
- In mathematics, most children attained in line with expected curriculum standards. They demonstrated an acceptable understanding of fundamental mathematical knowledge and skills. The majority showed a good level of attainment in numeracy. Problem solving skills applied to real-life situations were still emerging. Assessment information indicated that all groups of children made acceptable progress in their mathematical knowledge and understanding.
- Most children in science attained in line with curriculum expectations. They showed appropriate levels of scientific concepts and emerging enquiry skills, such as observing and using scientific vocabulary. Opportunities for discovery and critical thinking were still at an early stage in most lessons. The majority of children made good progress in their scientific knowledge, understanding and skills. When given the opportunities, their investigation skills were good.

Primary

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

- The majority of students, in Islamic education, demonstrated levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that were above curriculum standards. They had a good knowledge of Islamic morals and etiquette and of the Holy Books. They had memorised verses of the Holy Qur'an and could apply recitation rules. They made connections to their own experiences and between subject areas. Students in Year 3 spoke about supplications of the Prophet (PBUH) and how to apply them in their daily lives. Year 6 students wrote about the values of forgiveness with evidence from the Seerah, and linked them to their personal lives. This aspect was less secure in lower primary.
- The majority of students in Arabic as an additional language had attainment levels that were above expectations. They showed good reading competencies. Speaking was less effective, though students in Year 5 demonstrated a level of spoken proficiency in Arabic to explain in detail how to cross roads. Progress had improved during the last three years, and showed even better improvement when tracked from the first to the second term in the last year. Girls and boys were making similar progress.
- In English, when internal assessments were externally moderated against English National Curriculum standards and placed alongside benchmarked international test results, attainment was well above average for about half of the students in the primary phase. When coupled with students' knowledge, understanding and skills, and the quality of their work, this indicated good attainment. Students generally demonstrated listening and speaking skills that were well above expectations. They used these skills with confidence when discussing books. They read a wide variety of good literature and were preparing to write. Progress was good for most groups of students, accelerating significantly in the later primary years. It was less so for students with SEND.
- Following recent alignment of the school curriculum for mathematics with the National Curriculum for England, students' achievement was generally just above the standard expected. International benchmarking tests indicated that most students were performing in line with international expectations. Students were able to acquire mathematical knowledge and recall complex formulae. For example, students in Year 5 could multiply proper and improper fractions but were not able to apply the knowledge in different contexts. The assessments used to measure students' starting points in learning at the start of each year, had been different for each year group. This resulted in inconsistent measures of progress. Overall, progress was stronger in the upper primary years.
- In science, attainment and progress, measured against the school's learning objectives, showed that by the end of each year a majority of the students were above age-related standards. A few were below these standards. Students were beginning to develop appropriate enquiry and investigation skills based on the scientific method. They were able to express their ideas and understanding clearly. Particularly in the lower primary, they often used the correct scientific, language. The progress of students with SEND was acceptable or better. Attainment over the past three years had been improving.

Secondary

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 ↓	Very good ↓

- In Islamic education, the attainment level of the majority of students was above expectations. Students had well developed knowledge and understanding of beliefs, Islamic morals and Sharia law. Their Qur'anic memorisation had improved. The quality of recitation was still developing. Students in year 7 showed a good understanding of the health, physical and spiritual benefits of prayer. Year 10 students produced a piece of extended writing on modesty and its implications for the local community. In relation to students' starting points, the majority of students were making better than expected progress in most areas. In lessons, most students made at least good progress against appropriate lesson objectives, particularly in Islamic morals and Sharia law.
- The attainment levels of most students of Arabic as an additional language were in line with the curriculum expectations. They showed secure competencies in reading and listening, but they were less effective in speaking and writing. Progress was acceptable compared to lesson objectives. It was better when students were encouraged to practice speaking and to reflect it in their writing, for example in Grade 9 when they were discussing a letter about how to apply for a new job. Girls and boys were making similar progress.
- In English, internal assessments, when externally moderated against the standards for the English curriculum and compared to benchmarked international tests, indicated attainment well above average by Year 9. In this phase a greater proportion of students exceeded expectations than in primary. Results in IGCSE had been extremely high year-on-year. Students' knowledge and understanding of rich literature and of writing conventions were very well developed from Year 7 onwards. Students could explore issues creatively and infer meaning beyond the literal in poetry and in other genres. Progress in lessons and over time was excellent, more so for girls than boys. The most able could develop logical arguments and cite textual sources routinely in support of their points of view. Those students with SEND were making good progress.
- When measured against curriculum and international standards, attainment and progress in mathematics were generally strong. All students had attained grades A* to B at IGCSE in recent years. Performance in Years 7, 8 and 9 was not as good. Students attained more highly when they were enabled and challenged to apply their mathematical thinking in context. Those in Year 8 identified the necessary statistical calculations when explaining the results of a survey which they had conducted on the impact of the Dubai Metro. Such approaches secured very good progress, particularly for girls. Students made better progress when the success criteria were explicit and work was differentiated to match their needs.

- In science, attainment and progress measured against the school's curriculum standards showed that a large majority of students was above age-related standards. IGCSE results for June 2015 had been outstanding, with all students in biology, chemistry and physics achieving at least a B grade, and many achieving A*. Students were developing effective enquiry and investigation skills. They were most engaged in their learning and hence making better progress when participating in such activities. They were able to express their ideas and understanding clearly, using the correct scientific terms. They could relate their learning to real-life situations, and were beginning to make some connections between subject areas. Their practical and investigative work was not as well developed as it might. Students with SEND made acceptable progress.

Post-16

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students demonstrated secure knowledge, understanding and skills that were above curriculum standards. The majority of students demonstrated good understanding of Islamic morals, Sharia Law and Seerah of the Prophet (PBUH). Most students recited the Holy Qur'an using appropriate recitation rules. In relation to their starting point, however, they showed little progress in memorising the Holy Qur'an. Year 12 students had conducted independent research and demonstrated an in-depth knowledge and understanding of Islam's position on gambling, and of its mental, social and financial effects. They could make connections with gambling as a global issue, and suggest some remedies.
- The A-level mathematics course was completed within one year by a small cohort. Results were consistently very good. Time pressures prevented the practical application of mathematical concepts such as the-double angle formula. Opportunities to extend mathematical thinking and apply it to research-based tasks were restricted. Students used their free time to develop their knowledge to meet requirements for university admission. They were not secure enough in using the skills that would enable them to become proficient mathematicians for attainment and progress to be judged outstanding.
- In science, the majority of students attained above the A-level curriculum standards. A large majority demonstrated the required knowledge, skills and understanding and made better than expected progress, for example they completed A-level 2 in one academic year. They were able to express their ideas and understandings clearly. When challenged, they were able to justify their thinking with sound reasoning. There had been a progressive improvement in attainment levels of students in science over the past three years reflecting very good progress.

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

- Invariably, students were well engaged in their learning. They were highly motivated, enthusiastic and eager to learn. Many took responsibility for their own learning and evaluated it in order to improve. Others did not, and remained too dependent on their teachers, especially in some classes in the lower primary years.
- Students collaborated effectively. Whether working in pairs or in larger groups, they exchanged views very well. They often showed excellent skills of communication. Interactions were helpful and purposeful. Dialogue with teachers and fellow students was relaxed and respectful, which contributed to students' outstanding personal development.
- Connections between different areas of learning and the wider world helped students to see the relevance and application of their studies. Students did not readily apply their mathematical understanding to real-life contexts. Practical skills were not used sufficiently in science. When presenting ideas to various audiences, students could use sophisticated skills of connected communication, particularly those in post-16.
- Apart from those at the post-16 phase, students had less proficiency in their investigative and analytical skills than in their abilities to communicate. Their higher-order skills of enquiry were not developed well enough. Consequently, they were not applied sufficiently in science and mathematics. Students used basic resources well, including IT. They demonstrated critical thinking and rational judgement in English, especially when analysing texts.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students had very positive and responsible attitudes, and they paid full attention during assemblies and presentations. They demonstrated strong self-reliance when they were managing their own discipline in the mornings, and during the break times. They thrived on critical feedback.
- Students were consistently self-disciplined and responded very well to others. They resolved difficulties in mature ways, older students offered valuable advice to the younger ones about bullying and cyber-bullying. They assisted teachers in FS. They showed exemplary behaviour throughout the school.
- Students were sensitive and empathised with the needs and differences of others. They always helped one another, and listened to their fellow students. As a result, relationships amongst students and with staff were very respectful and considerate.
- Students demonstrated excellent understanding of safe and healthy living. They consistently made wise choices, and frequently initiated and participated in activities that promoted safe and healthy lifestyles. They supported activities such as Breast Cancer Awareness Day which promoted the importance of women's physical and mental care. In FS, the understanding of safe and healthy living was still emerging.
- Attendance was outstanding and students were punctual in arriving at school and in going to lessons throughout the school day. They were aware of the importance of good attendance.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good ↑	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students had a very good appreciation and understanding of the values of Islam. At all stages, they showed an awareness of the importance of these values to the local community. In the primary and secondary phases, students took part in activities in the mosque and demonstrated an understanding of the role of the mosque for Muslims. In FS, children took part in Hajj activities.
- Children were very respectful of the UAE national anthem. During morning assembly, Year 4 students sang it with enthusiasm and due reverence. In all phases, students made clear connections to UAE heritage and culture in their learning in a range of subjects.
- Students demonstrated a well-developed understanding of their own cultures, and appreciated other world cultures. During various celebrations and assemblies, they celebrated different festivals. Students in primary made Eid cards. Secondary students participated in intercultural days.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students were very responsible. They contributed actively to the life of the school and wider communities. They volunteered to raise funds for immigrant workers and for countries facing natural and man-made disasters. They undertook responsibilities in school through organising activities and celebrations. They showed care and consideration for others through supporting students with SEND at Al Amal Special School.
- A good work ethic prevailed. Through the students' council students initiated many projects to encourage good values. Similarly, through well-planned projects and enterprise activities that had significant social impact, students acquired key skills of innovation and were creative, for example through their cafe project and the mental health week. Their involvement in such activities enabled them to make informed financial decisions.
- Very good understanding of environmental sustainability was evident among students. They actively looked for ways to care for and to improve their school environment. They were successful in their projects such as waste management and gardening in the school. They presented shows and gave talks at assemblies to raise environmental awareness.

3. Teaching and assessment

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


- Teachers made effective use of their good subject knowledge to motivate students. In Islamic education and Arabic as an additional language, teachers' subject knowledge was better than their understanding of how students learn. In English, they frequently used students' excellent grasp of vocabulary and understanding of language to facilitate enjoyment of literature. Teachers of mathematics and science did not use enquiry approaches enough.
- Lesson planning was usually very good, although less so in early years and lower primary phase. Most teachers used assessment information well to plan work that was well matched to students' general abilities, but insufficient to meet students' special needs. In English, teaching was appropriately challenging; high demand brought high achievement in secondary phase. Teaching generally proceeded at an appropriate pace and used time well.
- Good class management, based on excellent relationships between teachers and students, was typical. Students were expected to take responsibility and to be serious learners. They usually became quickly engaged. Teachers used questions and dialogue to probe and assess students' developing knowledge and understanding as they moved up through the school. They generally used responses from students to adjust teaching and to accelerate progress, especially in secondary English.
- An appropriate mix of individual, small group and whole-class work provided students with variety in their learning. In the early years and lower primary classes, learning often depended too much on teachers' commentaries, which did little to stimulate or probe students' understanding. Where students shared ideas and learned from one another, as well as from their teachers, then teaching was most effective.
- In a minority of lessons in all phases, teachers provided students with opportunities which promoted some degree of critical thinking. In English, the application of reasoning skills was built into many activities involving scrutiny of texts, especially in upper primary and secondary. The development of these skills contributed to the high standards attained by post-16 students in science and mathematics.
- In Arabic as an additional language, teachers used good subject knowledge to inform their planning and teaching. They knew students' starting points, but did not routinely build from these during class work. Question and answer strategies and discussions were often used well. Independent learning was present only in the better lessons.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good

- The school's assessment policy described a set of rational, reliable processes based on both formative and summative assessment practices. Procedures for implementing them were not fully developed. The summative assessments were linked to the objectives of the National Curriculum of England, and provided an appropriate measure of students' progress.

- Using the National Agenda Parameter guidelines, the school had introduced approved tests, in primary and secondary phases to measure students' attainment against international benchmarks. These were in addition to IGCSE and A level as measures of students' performance in Year 11 and in Years 12 and 13. The introduction of these tests had already provided additional data for the improvement of learning.
- The school analysed assessment data from internal assessments and together with baseline testing used the results to monitor students' progress. The tracking of progress in FS was good. Generally, the summative data reported to parents provided an indication of their children's attainment. It contained aspects that were not related to curriculum learning objectives, and so was not reliable in this dimension.
- The school had begun to use assessment data effectively to modify the curriculum. Modification was carried out in the short term, where end-of-unit tests had identified strengths and weaknesses. In addition, adjustments were made when external examination results identified that aspects of the curriculum needed to be developed or taught in a more appropriate way, sometimes over more than one academic year.
- Teachers had an appropriate awareness of students' strengths and weaknesses. In lessons, they provided students with focused challenge and support. They often provided additional support outside the classroom. Students regularly participated in both self- and peer-assessment. The use of formative assessment to provide constructive and effective feedback to students was under-developed.

4. Curriculum

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

- Much work had been undertaken to ensure that the curriculum offered was broad, balanced and coherent. It had been aligned with the National Curriculum of England. Islamic education complied with MoE requirements, but was too dependent on the use of textbooks for delivery.
- Careful curriculum planning permitted clear progression in knowledge and skills. With the exception of Islamic education, each subject offered opportunities for problem solving, enquiry, and skills-based learning. In FS, all plans had been aligned to the early learning goals and guidance provided for transition into Year 1. In general, students were well prepared for the next stage of learning.
- Curricular options offered students choices to develop their talents and interests. Performing arts was a strength. Every child had the opportunity to develop different performance skills. Personal health and social education were timetabled for all year groups supporting personal development. Older students learned environmental management. They were required to choose an additional language at IGCSE.
- Cross-curricular links were identified in each subject and included in teachers' daily plans. When links were made explicit in the lessons, they deepened students' thinking. For example, in mathematics, when students were encouraged to assume the role of architects, a vigorous and productive debate ensued about which mathematical theorem to apply in building design.
- The curriculum was reviewed annually. All leaders evaluated its impact in lessons. They undertook learning walks and sought the views of students and teachers. They took these into account when planning improvements.

- The subject of UAE social studies had been skillfully woven into the curriculum of Humanities. Lessons were meaningfully planned and aligned to the MoE social studies curriculum providing sufficient opportunities for students to strengthen their social responsibility and 21st century skills.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good	Good

- Teachers modified curriculum topics and tasks for different groups of students to an acceptable degree. They used differentiated worksheets at times and tried, with some success, to match learning tasks to the range of ways in which students liked to learn. The learning needs of higher-attaining students were better met in secondary and post-16 phases than at the others.
- Students at all phases were highly motivated by a rich and extensive variety of opportunities to engage in sports, arts and community activities. After-school and weekend pursuits complemented the timetabled activities, developed students' creativity and enhanced their social contributions. Students extended their caring attitudes to those less fortunate. They visited patients in hospital and participated in an extended scheme to teach English to immigrant workers.
- The curriculum included a wide range of learning experiences which helped students to acquire at each phase an age-appropriate understanding of UAE culture and society. Knowledge about Islam was promoted well. Older students delivered lessons on Islamic values to younger ones.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Acceptable ↓	Good	Good	Good

- All staff knew how to keep themselves, students and other staff members safe. They knew the procedures to follow if an issue of child protection were to arise. Students felt safe and confident enough to confide in a class teacher or the school counsellor if they had any concerns.
- Policies and procedures were clearly communicated to staff, parents and students. They included safeguards for protecting students from bullying, including cyber-bullying and other potential dangers of the internet and social media. Policies were reviewed regularly and all staff received training following changes.
- Potential risks were noted and action taken to eliminate or reduce them. Teachers carried out a thorough risk analysis and assessment when planning for sports activities or visits to places of interest outside school. Regular fire drills and evacuation procedures were carried out. The school conducted regular and thorough checks of the accommodation and of the school buses. Any incident affecting a student's health, safety or well-being which might arise was systematically logged, as well as details of any resultant action.

- In general, the premises were well suited to the educational needs of all students, including those with SEND and children in FS. However, the inspection identified some issues in FS which needed attention.
- Medical staff were vigilant in their care of students. They carried out routine checks and kept detailed records. Relevant medical information on students was shared appropriately with teachers to safeguard students during the school day. Nurses and doctors provided advice, support and classroom instruction about healthy lifestyles and good diets.

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

- Relationships between staff and students were very positive, purposeful and mutually respectful. Behaviour was well-managed. Systems, rules, and a code of behaviour were supported by the student council and respected throughout the school.
- Rigorous procedures were in place to ensure good attendance. Parents were contacted should a student be absent for two days without good reason or without authorisation.
- The SEND team, in conjunction with parents, class teachers, external agencies and students where appropriate, identified and prioritised the educational and development needs of students when they were enrolled and during their time in school. The school did not have a list of gifted and talented students, and at the time of the inspection, had identified only one student. There were no challenges, projects or other activities in academic subjects. However, the school did cater for groups of talented students in dance, sport and public speaking.
- Specific, additional intervention and support was provided by the class teacher, often to a group of students with similar needs and often including those with SEND. Targeted provision was also provided. The SEND coordinator and class teacher shared the responsibility for giving extra support once individual education plans had been developed by all interested parties. One-to one instruction was also given as required. Outside agencies were involved in diagnosis and support for additional needs as necessary.
- Students were routinely monitored by teachers and the counsellor. The information was used to provide effective personal support and advice. All students who wished to discuss any personal, social or family problems received confidential counselling and support from the guidance counsellor and teachers. The school provided a range of activities to guide and support senior students in making suitable choices for work or for further study in university courses.

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

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

Acceptable

- The SEND team was well-qualified, skilled and committed to ensuring quality provision for students with SEND. As a result, their targeted instruction with students and their professional development work with teachers was beginning to make an impact on learning outcomes.

- The team had put in place a range of assessment procedures to identify the learning needs of some students with SEND. They also prepared individual education programmes in consultation with parents and class teachers. These procedures resulted in more targeted instruction for students, especially those receiving individualised instruction in the resource centre.
- Some class teachers had become more confident at identifying their students' priority learning needs and at making modifications to the curriculum and teaching strategies. Many were not yet making the necessary adjustments to their lesson planning.
- Students below Grade 7, in FS and primary, made acceptable or good progress. Outcomes were acceptable in English and mathematics, and in communication and behaviour. These improvements were brought about as a result of the individualised instruction which they received and the appropriate modifications and support provided in the classroom.
- There was no identification of students with SEND beyond Grade 7, which meant that the special learning needs and disabilities of students in the older classes, were not being met.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The principal provided motivational leadership which was well complemented by the input from other members in the senior team, who supported her effectively. Senior leaders were committed to the UAE National Priorities and were keen to improve key aspects of the school's work, including provision for students with SEND.
- Senior leaders and those at other levels had, collectively, a good knowledge of the curriculum. They were increasingly developing awareness of best practices in teaching, learning and assessment. The learning culture in the school was strong. Leaders and other staff were working together to sustain and improve students' learning. They had been very successful in promoting the personal and social development of FS children and other students.
- At all levels there was effective teamwork and high morale. The principal communicated well and delegated roles effectively. The school was implementing a system of staff appraisal to ensure that those with responsibilities were held accountable for outcomes.
- Most leaders were aware of the key areas of the school which they needed to improve. They had been effective in improving various aspects of the curriculum, teaching, attainment and progress. Their focus on FS had been successful. They were aware that they now needed to implement similar curriculum and teaching approaches in Years 1, 2 and 3.
- Leaders had worked together well to improve the quality of some key aspects of the school. They had been willing to learn about best practice in other schools. They had brought time for Arabic as an additional language into line with requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior staff employed a wide range of processes for gathering information on the work of the school, including data from external examinations. They had a well-developed knowledge of the general strengths and aspects in need of improvement. • Senior staff and middle leaders carried out observations of lessons and gave feedback to teachers. The observations led to evaluations of teaching, but did not sufficiently focus on or judge the progress which students made. • The school's improvement plan set out a range of appropriate actions, timelines for achieving its goals, and an indication of the resources needed. It did not set out the criteria for judging success in a sufficiently detailed or specific way. • The school was making progress on addressing all of the recommendations from the previous inspection report. The greatest impact had been in FS. Among other things, the quality of teaching and learning post-16 had improved. 	




Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any concerns or suggestions made by parents were generally acted upon. Parents expressed a willingness to be fully involved in supporting school improvement priorities. • Parents were kept well informed of their children's learning and development. The monthly communicator provided details about homework and assessments. It was backed up by the daily planner that enabled parents and teachers to communicate about children's needs and achievements. Information on the school web portal enabled parents to track progress. • Every term, parents received report cards which provided information about their children's progress and personal development. The results of assessments were detailed. Comments conveyed information about personal development. Parents were not clear about how their children had performed when measured against others, either locally or internationally. • The recently formed parents' council had worked with the school to develop partnerships in Dubai and across the Emirates. Parents came together with their families to support both the school and local charitable causes. The annual sports day and concert were a very good opportunity to strengthen community links. 	

Governance	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The governing board had wide representation but only included one parent representative. It met regularly and received reports from staff about the school's work. Governors did not systematically gather views from parents or students. Board members kept up to date with key points in the school calendar, including a general look at the results of examinations and external tests. The board was aware of improvements at FS, and of the need to implement similar improvements in the primary school. Scrutiny of examination data and the quality of lessons was an area for further development. The governing board had been helpful in encouraging a more rigorous process of staff recruitment and selection, and had sanctioned the supply of additional technology resources. Together with senior leaders, board members were beginning to have an impact on the overall performance of the school. 	

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The daily management of the school was very efficient. Motivating assemblies ensured that each day's work started on a high note. Lesson timetables were appropriate. Routines for care and support were implemented effectively. Staff had appropriate qualifications for teaching their subjects. Around half had studied the principles of education and the best ways to teach. Senior staff organised external speakers to carry out professional development and training. The school also encouraged its own staff to share good practice with colleagues. The premises supported teaching and learning to an adequate level. Specialist facilities included a swimming pool, science and computer laboratories. Some aspects of facilities in FS were in need of urgent attention. The school had a good range of resources which were relevant to the National Curriculum of England and other guidelines such as MoE requirements. Senior staff had augmented the supply of resources in some areas, for example the FS library and in physical education. New laptop computers had been acquired. They as yet had not been fully utilised by students in lessons. 	

The views of the parents, teachers and students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
Parents* 	2015-2016	534
	2014-2015	608
Teachers 	102	
Students 	100	

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

- Around one-third of parents responded to the questionnaire, a drop from the previous year. Almost all teachers, and all students who were given the opportunity, responded.
- Overall parental responses indicated high levels of satisfaction with the quality of education in the school.
- Most parents, teachers and students agreed that the level of attainment was good.
- Almost all parents reported that their children enjoyed school.
- Parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the range of subjects and extra-curricular activities offered.
- Islamic values were seen to be strong, and parents reported that Islamic education was taught well.
- Parents were pleased with the safe and secure environment provided by the school. They felt that any incidents of bullying were dealt with effectively.
- Almost all felt that they were well informed about their children's progress and that the school was well led and managed. Teachers were overwhelmingly supportive of all aspects of the school.
- Students were generally satisfied with the education, personal development and support which they received.
- A small minority of students raised concerns about the quality of mathematics teaching and the availability of technology.

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