



Horizon International
School

Curriculum: UK

Overall Rating:

Good



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

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



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School information



General information	
Location	Umm Al Sheif
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2008
Website	www.horizonintlschool.com
Telephone	0097150-5541351
Address	Umm Sheif, PO Box 51008, Dubai
Principal	Lee Davies
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	14 to 16 November 2016

Teachers / Support staff	
Number of teachers	87
Largest nationality group of teachers	British
Number of teaching assistants	31
Teacher-student ratio	1:11
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	45%

Students	
Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-18
Grades or year groups	FS-Year 13
Number of students on roll	944
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	10
Number of students with SEND	71
Largest nationality group of students	UK

Curriculum	
Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK
External tests and examinations	IGCSE/GCSE
Accreditation	British Schools Overseas (BSO)
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT/CAT4/GL



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.

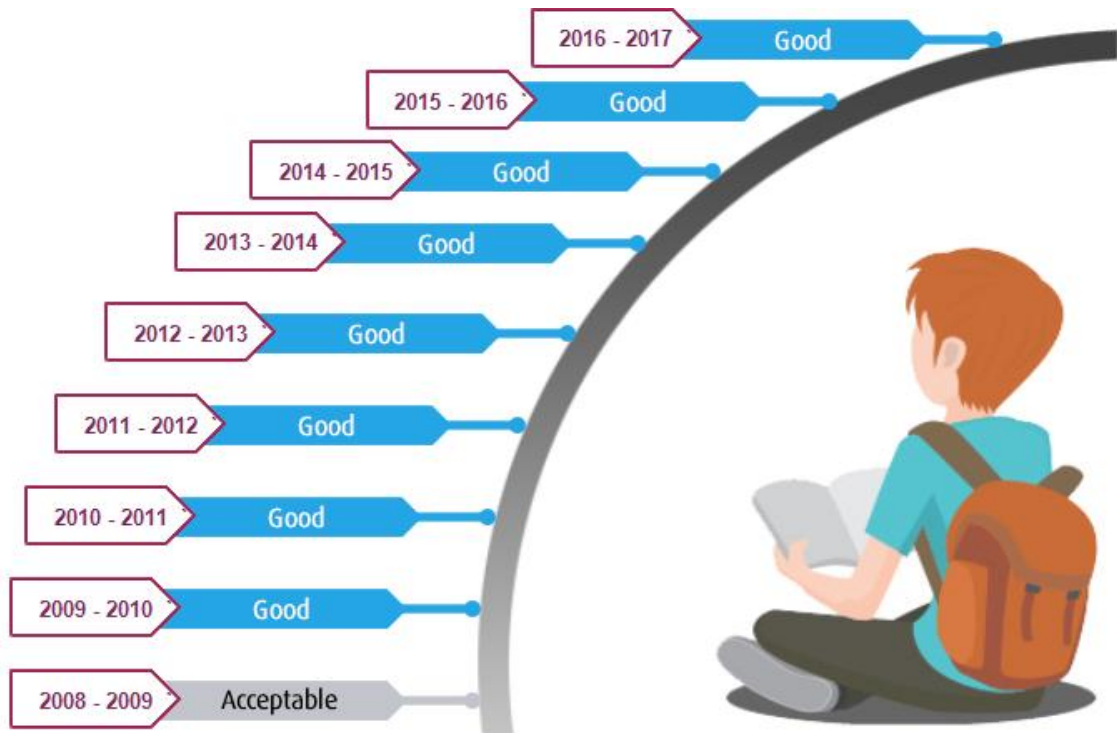
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

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 Horizon International School - LLC



- The School has been growing since it opened in 2008. At the time of inspection there were 944 students aged from three to 18 years, a slight increase from 937 students in the previous year. The principal took up his appointment on 1st August 2016 and there have been several changes in senior leadership internally. Teacher turnover this year was 45 percent compared to three percent the previous year
- Previous inspections have acknowledged the school's strengths in students' personal and social development, health and safety, and partnerships with parents. Previous inspections have also noted the high quality of curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage.
- Recommendations have focused on improving attainment and progress in Islamic education and Arabic, and ensuring consistently high attainment in all subjects. In addition, inspections have identified the need to ensure that support for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) enables them to make consistently good progress.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



Horizon International School - LLC was inspected by DSIB from 14 to 16 November 2016 . The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Students' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science are very good in the Foundation Stage, mostly good in primary and mostly acceptable in secondary. Across primary and secondary, attainment in Arabic is mostly weak and progress is acceptable. Student's learning skills are outstanding in the Foundation Stage and good in the rest of the school.
- Students' personal development is a strength of the school. Relationships are supportive and respectful. Attendance, including during the week of the inspection, is good. Students demonstrate a good understanding of Islamic values, and knowledge of the history and culture of the UAE. Environmental and conservation awareness are very good, as is their sense of social responsibility.
- Good teaching, particularly in the Foundation Stage where it is very good, enables students to make strong progress in English, mathematics and science. In many lessons, teachers use well-designed activities to develop students' enquiry and problem solving skills. However, teachers do not consistently use assessment information to ensure that work is appropriately challenging for all students, and their performance on external assessments is not compared accurately to international standards.
- The curriculum is well planned to promote students' progress and learning, particularly in the Foundation Stage. Lesson planning reflects students' attainment levels and most students with SEND have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). However, planned modifications are not always seen in classroom practice. In secondary, all students benefit from new options and more personalised pathways.
- The school provides a safe and secure environment for students. Health and safety are taken very seriously, and procedures and practices are outstanding. The care and support offered by the school is good. Older students are provided with personalised guidance towards their future academic or career choices.
- The principal has a strong vision for the school, shared by other senior leaders, governors and the majority of staff. The school's strengths and areas for development are known, and commitment to improvement is strong. Relationships with parents and the community are good. Governors are very knowledgeable about, and closely engaged with, the school. Management, staffing, facilities and resources are good.

What the school does best

- The Foundation Stage provides an outstanding experiential learning environment and results in very good attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Students' across all phases demonstrate outstanding personal development.
- The governing board, principal and senior leaders set a clear strategic direction and a strong focus on improvement in all areas of the school's work.
- The school has outstanding arrangements for keeping students safe and promoting healthy lifestyles.

Recommendations

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress in Arabic as a first and additional language, and Islamic education, by ensuring that teaching is of a consistently high quality.
- Improve the capture and use of assessment information by ensuring that:
 - internal assessments are aligned with reliable external benchmarks and external measures of students' abilities are taken into account
 - the information is used consistently across the school to guide curriculum and lesson planning
 - there is a clear demarcation between the identification of those students who are underperforming and those who have a special educational need.
- Improve the effectiveness of middle leaders, by ensuring they have the skills needed to accurately monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on students' learning and progress in their curriculum areas.

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 based on the National Agenda Parameter is meeting expectations in English, mathematics and science.
- The data presented in the National Agenda Parameter benchmark report have not yet been fully analysed in an effective way to drive students' progress.
- The school curriculum provides students with opportunities for research and investigation, particularly in mathematics and science in the FS and primary phase. The English curriculum promotes reading fluency and the analysis of texts, particularly in secondary phase. A structured, schoolwide approach to critical thinking, enquiry, scientific thinking and inference, interpretation and critique is yet to be established.
- Teachers in the FS and primary phase provide many opportunities for students to explore and investigate in well-designed science and mathematics lessons. Teaching in English, in both primary and secondary, this academic year, has an increased emphasis on the development of reading skills.
- Students are keen to learn but are largely unaware of their results on the National Agenda Parameter. They enjoy opportunities to use resources to explore scientific or mathematical ideas, and are eager to more fully use digital learning devices.

Overall, the school's progress towards meeting the National Agenda target 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:

- In the Foundation Stage, students demonstrate independence, investigative skills and creativity. In the primary and secondary, in the best lessons, teachers engage students in enquiry, problem-solving and higher order thinking which supports innovative practice. Each subject department in secondary has developed a plan for enterprise and innovation, including several new initiatives for student leadership. Senior leaders model innovation in their improvement planning, although they have yet to create an explicit vision or strategy for its implementation.



Overall school performance

Good


1 Students' achievement

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

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

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




3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Very good	Good	Good
Assessment	Very good 	Good	Acceptable 

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Very good	Good	Good

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Good 	Good 	Good 


6. Leadership and management

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

Main inspection report



1. Students' achievement

 Foundation Stage	Attainment	Progress
Subjects		
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	Very good ↑	Very good
Mathematics	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Science	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- Children listen to stories attentively during English lessons. They eagerly share their predictions with teachers and peers. Most children in FS2 follow instructions involving several ideas, for example when they play with programmable digital toys in class. Most children demonstrate very good receptive and expressive language skills, and use tenses appropriately. At the end of the Foundation Stage, most children use their phonic skills to read simple words and sentences. They are beginning to write sentences that they can read by themselves and others.
- Most children demonstrate very good numeracy skills. They count numbers accurately from one to 20; sequence numbers; count forwards and backwards; and are able to identify a number before or after a specific number. They are able to add and subtract two single-digit numbers, and solve simple mathematical problems using concrete materials. Most are beginning to understand the language of mathematics, for example, talking about everyday shapes and the size and weight of objects. They are able to recognise and describe 2-D and 3-D shapes and create patterns using a variety of colours and objects.
- During science lessons, children understand that their own cultures and their friends' cultures are both similar and different. They talk about events that occur in their own lives and the lives of others. They make observations about animals and plants. They explore how living things grow and develop under the correct conditions and what happens when these conditions change. They talk about changes and suggest why some things occur. They understand how technology is used in homes and schools, and they use digital toys in the classroom to engage in simple coding activities.

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

- In Islamic education, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum standards. In lessons, and in their recent work, students demonstrate understanding of Islamic concepts and values. They are able to make a few connections to their daily lives. Most students are making acceptable progress over time. They discuss the Pillars of Islam and how these reflect on their attitudes. A few students can go further, by building more securely on their previous learning. However, Qur'an recitation is still under-developed.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum standards. Students' listening and comprehension skills are sufficiently well developed to enable them to answer questions. They are able to engage in short conversations using an extending vocabulary. In lessons, the progress of most students is broadly in line with expectations. Progress in speaking and writing lags behind progress in reading.
- In Arabic as an additional language, fewer than three-quarters of students attain levels that are in line with curriculum standards. In lessons, and in their recent work, students demonstrate basic levels of Arabic knowledge. Limited vocabularies and weak conversation skills are evident across the phase especially in Year 4. Most students make expected progress from their starting points. However, the progress of students with SEND lags behind that of their classmates.
- For around half of the students, English is an additional language. The school's assessment of attainment in English is in line with the results of the external benchmarked tests. Most students have strong oral skills and, from low starting points, their reading develops rapidly. The trend over the past three years, shows reading is improving. The mechanics of students' writing, handwriting, punctuation, spelling and grammar, although weaker than the other skills, is developing at an acceptable rate. The progress of different ability groups is similar, with girls performing slightly better than the boys.
- In mathematics, the majority of students develop number skills, work with shape, measurement or geometry, and use data at levels above curriculum expectations. In the lower primary classes, students carry out practical activities very well, and can easily explain what they are doing when working in groups. External test results show at least good attainment for most students. Students' progress in lessons is consistently good. The greatest progress is made in lessons with appropriate levels of challenge and many problem-solving activities. All groups of students progress equally well.
- In science, the majority of students demonstrate levels of scientific knowledge and skills that are above curriculum standards. Practical skills are developed well in many lessons, together with the making and justifying of scientific predictions. The concept of fair testing is becoming embedded, as is students' understanding of the reliability of scientific data. However, higher order investigative skills, such as analysing and hypothesising are currently less evident. Nevertheless, a majority of students make better than expected progress when measured against learning objectives and over time.

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

- In Islamic education, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum standards. In lessons and in their recent work, students demonstrate adequate knowledge of Islam and can make a few connections to their lives as Muslims. Most students make expected progress. Older students develop a reasonable understanding of Islamic concepts, as they explore and draw conclusions. A few students can go further, and engage, for example, in in-depth discussions of contractual issues. However recitation from Hadeeth and the Holy Qur'an is under-developed.
- In Arabic as a first language, the attainment of most students is below curriculum standards. Speaking skills are weak. Most students have difficulty in responding to direct dialogue because their vocabularies are very limited. A few students are able to express themselves in short sentences. Although only a few students are able to read and fully comprehend a short text, skills in reading are better than those of speaking and writing. Most students made sufficient progress in lessons to achieve the learning objectives.
- In Arabic as an additional language, less than three-quarters of students attain levels in line with curriculum standards. In lessons, and in their recent work, students demonstrate simple levels of understanding of Arabic sentence structure. Writing skills are weakest, particularly in Year 7. Nevertheless, most students make acceptable progress in relation to their starting points and the learning objectives. However, the progress of students with SEND is below that of their peers.
- In English, internal assessments indicate higher attainment than the external benchmark test results or the end of Year 11 external examination results. By Year 11, students have well developed speaking and listening skills, and their reading has improved from their starting points. Many are able to accurately evaluate the strategies writers use for effect, citing evidence from poems, plays and novels to support their opinions. Writing across a range of genres, using appropriate features, is developing well. Spellings, punctuation, vocabulary extension and grammar are developing too, but at a slower pace. The progress of different ability groups is similar. Girls are making slightly better progress than boys.
- In mathematics, IGCSE results at the end of the last academic year were good overall. However, the results of external benchmark tests and other assessments vary widely across year groups. Most students' understanding of algebraic calculation, geometry and probability is in line with curriculum standards. Progress in lessons is strong for some students, while others are still building foundational skills. The recent changes to the student population have had a negative impact on the overall progress of students in this phase.

- In science, IGCSE results and external benchmark tests indicate that attainment is below curriculum standards. In contrast, evidence from lessons and work scrutiny suggests that the attainment of most students is in line with curriculum standards. The progress of the majority of students, both in lessons and from their starting points, is better than expected. Students are becoming more adept at carrying out experiments. They are able to manipulate and control variables, and gather data in order to test a hypothesis. They are beginning to record, extract and critically analyse information so that conclusions can be drawn in more sophisticated ways.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills	Outstanding	Good	Good

- Students are keen to learn and, in all year groups, demonstrate the ability to engage with their learning in a sustained manner. This is particularly true in the Foundation Stage, where children engage enthusiastically in many independent learning activities. In all phases, students respond well to teacher feedback. Most students know their strengths and weaknesses and make efforts to improve.
- Students communicate well when working in pairs or in small groups, and most collaborate effectively with their peers in a wide range of learning activities. They work purposefully and most enjoy sharing their ideas and learning with one other. However, a few are willing to sit back and contribute little when working in groups.
- Children in the Foundation Stage make meaningful connections between their new learning and their prior knowledge. They sometimes use this knowledge to make connections across subject areas, thereby consolidating knowledge in new contexts. Connections between areas of learning are less evident in the primary and secondary phases.
- Students are capable of demonstrating innovation and enterprise skills, However, the opportunities to carry out independent research is limited by restricted access to digital resources in lessons. The school is in the process of addressing this issue.

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


	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Most students have very positive attitudes. They enjoy being at school and most take responsibility willingly. They are keen to learn and respond well to their teachers' encouragement and feedback. They listen attentively to the contributions of their peers and express mature views.
- Students behave very well. Almost all are polite and respectful. They are self-disciplined and do not need constant teacher supervision. They respond well to other students and adults. Most show increasing self-confidence as they progress through the school.
- Relationships between staff and students are excellent. Students show sensitivity towards the needs of others. Students from all backgrounds interact well and they value the friendships of classmates of different nationalities.

- Students have a clear understanding of the importance of a healthy diet. They benefit from opportunities to learn about nutrition at various points in the curriculum. Most participate in a wide range of physical activities, both before and after school, that promote healthy living. These include a wide variety of team games, swimming and gymnastics.
- Students' punctuality and attendance are good. They are very aware of how regular attendance influences their academic performance.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good

- Students have a clear but not fully developed understanding of how Islamic values influence the community in which they live. They appreciate that life in the UAE is different, but their varied knowledge of Islam limits their deeper understanding.
- While students fully respect the culture of the UAE, they lack an in-depth knowledge of the culture and heritage. They know key facts about buildings, cities, modern business and dress code, but do not appreciate the influence of history. However, students participate in a variety of activities intended to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the history and traditions of the UAE.
- Students have a good awareness and appreciation of their own cultures. They understand that there are similarities and differences between cultures, and see the school as one community, regardless of the wide variety of national backgrounds of their peers.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good 	Very good	Very good 

- From the Foundation Stage, students learn to become responsible members of the school community, and help to keep their school clean and tidy. Many students are actively involved in charitable fund raising, for example, older students organise fund raising for cancer research. They develop good leadership skills and are developing very good citizenship skills.
- Students have a positive attitude to work. Through a variety of projects and enterprise activities they become increasingly self-reliant and develop key innovation skills. For example, the 'Fly Books' project provides the opportunity to enhance reading as well as to support charity.
- Students care for their school and for its environment. They are increasingly aware of the efforts of the UAE government to promote conservation of energy and environmental sustainability. Students understand the merits of solar power in relation to pollution. They take part in competitions to promote understanding of conservation issues.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Very good	Good	Good

- Teachers have a secure knowledge of their subjects. In many subjects, particularly in the Foundation Stage, teachers make good use of their knowledge to provide students with stimulating and challenging work. This enables students to engage in thoughtful discussions, for example, in English and geography. However, there is inconsistency in the matching of work to students' ability levels in primary and secondary, particularly in Arabic.
- In the best lessons, the work is suitably challenging for all groups of students. However, teachers do not always take account of students' attainment levels in planning. As a result, progress is slower because the work set is too easy for some but too hard for others.
- In many lessons, skilled questioning is used well to challenge students' thinking and probe understanding. This is a strong feature of teaching in the Foundation Stage, but less consistently seen in the other phases. In the most effective lessons, a hierarchical framework of suggested discussion points is used to shape learning when students are working in groups.
- The most effective lessons provide a range of activities that enable students to learn from each other as well as from the teacher. However, in a minority of lessons teachers are unclear about how best to promote this form of learning. In these lessons, there are not enough checks on students' progress so that misunderstandings can be identified and corrected.
- There are examples, in all phases, of teachers providing opportunities for the promotion of critical thinking skills. The application of research and reasoning skills is built into the learning activities in these lessons. However, this is not consistent across all subjects.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Assessment	Very good ↑	Good	Acceptable ↓

- Checks on students' attainment and progress are carried out throughout the school year. In the Foundation Stage, effective assessment procedures provide accurate information on children's learning and progress. In English, the assessment of students' reading and writing skills is also effective. However, schoolwide procedures for assessing students' progress against the expected curriculum standards, are only partially in place, which is particularly significant in secondary.
- The school uses several curriculum-appropriate external assessments to benchmark student attainment and compare it to students internationally. The CAT4 cognitive ability test is also used to accurately identify the learning needs of each student. The school is extending the use of these measures to all year groups in order to better inform lesson planning.
- The school is in the process of moving from assessing through National Curriculum levels to assessment against curriculum standards. During this transition period, a consistent approach to assessment criteria and the analysis of assessment information has yet to be achieved. As a result, information on students' attainment and progress is not always accurate.

- Assessment information is used to group students in ability sets so that teaching can better meet their learning needs. In the most effective lessons, teachers make further use of this information to adjust their teaching strategies to meet the needs of different groups of students. This is more often seen in the Foundation Stage than the other phases.
- Teachers generally have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of individual students. But this is insufficiently benchmarked against assessment criteria. Ongoing feedback about where students are in their learning is a feature of many lessons. Evaluative written feedback in books provides sufficient information on how the work can be improved and so guides their next steps in learning.

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Good	Good

- The curriculum has a very clear rationale and vision and is aligned to the National Curriculum in England. The curriculum contains a good balance of the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills. The Foundation Stage curriculum has undergone a revision to enable the continuous learning provision to be fully integrated into the school day.
- Curriculum planning in English and science, ensures that there is continuity and progression in learning, both within and across phases. However, there are a few examples of unnecessary duplication in mathematics in the primary phase. Planning formats are consistent and take account of the needs of all groups of students. Provision in the Foundation Stage is closely linked to the EYFS Early Learning Goals, in all development areas.
- An interesting and extensive range of learning opportunities are available to children in Foundation Stage across all areas of learning. Much of this learning is based on the children's interests, thereby ensuring high levels of motivation. Choices have also been extended in the secondary phase through a widening of the GCSE provision. The development of innovation is a high priority in all of these areas.
- Well-planned cross-curricular links are a strong feature of learning in the Foundation Stage. In other phases, there are references to learning in other subjects but these are irregular. The recent initiative to promote reading across the curriculum is a good example of an initiative that could be developed further in order to practice and consolidate skills.
- School leaders conduct regular reviews in order to develop the curriculum in all phases. An ongoing example of this is the introduction of the new curriculum standards in the primary and lower secondary phases. School leaders are at an early stage of aligning the planning and assessments to the more demanding standards of the new National Curriculum in England.
- UAE social studies features in all four phases of the school. It is integrated in the Foundation Stage and secondary, and taught as a discrete subject in primary. Teaching provides a balance between the acquisition of facts and the development of skills. Assessment in social studies is aligned to the Ministry of Education standards.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum adaptation	Very good	Good	Good

- In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum is effectively modified to meet the needs of almost all children. It provides them with a wide range of opportunities for independent experiential learning, at their own pace. Across the school, lesson plans show that account is taken of students differing attainment levels, and most students with SEND have an IEP. However, planned modifications are not always seen in classroom practice. In secondary, all students, especially those with SEND, benefit from new options and more personalised pathways.
- Critical thinking is built into lesson plans using protocols such as Thinking Hats, Bloom's Taxonomy and Approaches to Learning but is not always implemented. In the most effective lessons, teachers skilfully engage students in enquiry and problem-solving, and use questions to probe deeper understanding. In secondary, each department has developed a plan to highlight opportunities for enterprise and innovation.
- In the Foundation Stage, links with Emirati culture are being developed through the Arabic cultural area, including daily stories from the visiting Arabic teacher. In primary and secondary, some links are evident in displays of students' work but less so in lessons.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The school takes all matters related to the safety and security of students very seriously. A comprehensive child protection policy is in place. All staff receive child protection training and any issues are dealt with swiftly. There are effective procedures for safeguarding students against any kind of abuse, including bullying and cyber bullying. Students know what to do if they have a concern.
- The school ensures that its environment is hygienic and safe. Students are supervised at all times within school and on school transport. All medicines are stored safely and securely in the school clinic, and medical records are kept properly. Buses are well supervised and the site is secure. Students' safety is given high priority by all school staff.
- All equipment, including air conditioning units and security systems are well maintained. Detailed records are kept of regular maintenance, together with records of any incidents and subsequent action. Fire extinguishers are date-registered. The clinic provides students with excellent health services and up-to-date health-related records are kept on every student. The preparation areas in practical areas are secure and items are safely stored.
- The school premises, resources, and equipment are suitable for the learning needs of all students, including those with SEND. Although ramps are in place to allow smooth access for wheelchairs around the ground floor, there are no lifts to enable students with physical mobility issues to access the first floor. A permanent lifeguard is on duty in the swimming pool and there is a separate entrance for community use.

- Healthy living and healthy lifestyles are a key priority for the school and are integrated into almost all aspects of students' school life. Healthy lunchboxes are promoted and checked. The school nurses provide regular health checks and promote healthy living through advice on exercise and diet.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Care and support	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓

- Most staff have established constructive relationships with students. As a result, students have the confidence to ask questions and seek support. Effective systems for behaviour management contribute to a positive climate for learning. Occasionally, particularly in Arabic lessons, behaviour is not managed well and a few students show a lack of respect to staff.
- The school has clear procedures and places great emphasis on the need for regular attendance and punctuality. Parents are actively discouraged from taking their children out of school for holidays during term time.
- Procedures for the identification of students with SEND are clearly stated in the school's inclusion manual. These procedures are, in the main, effective in ensuring that those with additional needs are recognised. However, procedures are not sufficiently refined to accurately evaluate the barriers to learning and the level of support individual students require.
- Teachers are fully aware of which students are identified as having SEND and those who have particular gifts and talents. However, this awareness does not lead to consistently good curriculum modification and support in lessons. Students make at least good progress when supported by staff with specific SEND expertise.
- The wellbeing of students is central to the aims of this inclusive school. Staff know their students well and use this knowledge effectively to monitor and promote students' personal development. Older students confirm that they are provided with personalised advice and guidance towards future career or further education choices.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good

- All school leaders promote a positive climate of inclusion. Good attention is given to employing staff with relevant qualifications and experience. The Head of Inclusion is a member of the senior management team and is in a strong position to influence decision-making. Regular monitoring of teaching leads to appropriate training. However, this has not, as yet, led to consistently good support for students in all subjects.
- The school uses an increasingly wide range of systems to support the identification of students with SEND. In the main, this is effective. In the past some confusion has arisen between those who are low-attaining or underachieving and those whose needs create barriers to learning. The expertise of newly appointed staff is beginning to improve the accuracy of assessment.

- In the main, the school successfully involves parents in the setting of targets and the planning of support and interventions. Occasionally, parents' views of what their children can and cannot do, are not fully taken into account. Regular communication ensures that parents are aware of what their children are learning and how best they can support them at home. Parents are included in review meetings.
- Modification to subject options in the secondary phase enables students with SEND to access learning towards recognised qualifications. While teachers in all phases are fully aware of students' individual targets, they do not all understand how to make skilful modifications to curriculum planning or provide appropriate support that leads to consistently good progress. Progress is at least good when students receive support from the inclusion department specialists.
- Systems to measure and track student progress are not fully understood by all staff. There is no clear system that links the tracking of progress towards individual targets with progress from different starting points as measures against curriculum standards. Evidence in lessons and in students' work indicates that most students make good progress towards individual targets, but this is inconsistent across subjects and classes.


6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good


- The recently appointed headmaster has brought a clear vision and strong sense of direction to this inclusive school. These are shared by the new senior leadership team and by the majority of teachers. There is a clear commitment to raising students' attainment and progress in all curriculum areas. Leaders are fully committed to the achievement of the UAE National Agenda objectives.
- Leaders demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the National Curriculum in England. They are actively focused on the quality of teaching and fully understand what constitutes good and better teaching. In a purposeful learning environment, students are provided with a wide range of learning and enrichment opportunities. These effectively support their academic and personal development.
- Leadership responsibility is distributed to staff at all levels, together with increased accountability for the quality of provision and students' performance. However, the effectiveness of middle leaders in driving improvement in their areas of responsibility is inconsistent. Relationships between staff across the school are courteous and professional. While morale is generally positive, a minority of teachers feel there is scope for improving communication.
- Senior leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and know what needs to be done in order to improve. This is reflected in school action planning. The determined and innovative approach being taken to tackle any obstacles, demonstrates the school's capacity for further improvement.
- In a very short period of time, leaders have been successful in improving important aspects of the work of the school. Although these improvements are too recent for the full impact to be seen in student outcomes, purposeful leadership is having a positive impact on teaching, learning and the learning environment. The school is compliant with all statutory and regulatory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good 

- Effective procedures for evaluating the school's performance form the basis of the school's improvement planning. There is evidence that action already taken is improving the school, for example in the security of the site and provision in the Foundation Stage. The school's self-evaluation is overgenerous in a few aspects because too much weight has been placed on internal assessment information and the time needed for changes to become embedded has been underestimated.
- Checks on the quality of teaching and learning by senior leaders are effectively managed. This monitoring guides the review process and the identification of teachers' professional development needs. Middle leaders are to be more fully engaged in the monitoring of teaching and accountable for its impact on student outcomes. The professional development provided for staff is linked to the school's improvement priorities.
- The school improvement plan provides a clear overview of the main improvement priorities. The plan specifies the action to be taken to improve provision and performance and takes account of UAE national priorities. However, in a few instances, the information on students' attainment and progress has not been accurate enough to provide a secure basis for improvement planning.
- Progress in tackling the recommendations in the last inspection report has been hindered by the large number of staff changes in the course of the year. Since taking up their appointments, the new senior leadership team have set about tackling these recommendations and they feature as priorities in the school improvement plan. It is too early to evaluate the full impact of the action being taken.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good 

- Parents appreciate the restarting of the PTA, and the headmaster's weekly open-house forum. The recent changes both in senior leadership and teaching staff has unsettled, and to some extent, polarised parents. Most support the high quality of new teachers, the increased focus on learning, and the improvement in general communication. However, there are concerns about information gaps, the quality of Arabic lessons, and staff morale.
- The school's recently appointed communication coordinator has established new systems for providing parents with information and parents now receive regular newsletters and updates. Parents who attended the meeting with inspectors were unaware of the National Agenda.
- Termly reports are clear and inform parents about students' attainment, progress, behaviour and their next steps in learning. These are supplemented through short parent-teacher meetings. There is currently no student input into either reports or meetings.
- The school is building connections with the local and international communities, including other neighbouring schools for sporting and cultural events. Students have opportunities to participate in initiatives such as the Ecoventure trip to Sri Lanka. The new partnership with the Deloitte Employability Initiative will be used to enhance the vocational options for older students.

Governance

Very good ↑

- The governing board includes representation from all stakeholders. Through regular visits and reports from the headmaster, governors have a very good knowledge of the school's performance. They were instrumental in the changes in senior leadership, which have led to significant improvements in the provision and quality of education offered at the school.
- Governors regularly monitor the work of the school and particularly the quality of leadership. They demonstrate a high level of commitment to the academic and personal development of all students, for which they hold the school's leaders accountable.
- The governing board have a positive influence on the school's leadership and direction. Governors ensure that appropriate staffing and adequate resources are available to address weaknesses. For example, significant investment has recently been made in improving the security of the site. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Good

- The day-to-day management is effective and the school runs smoothly. A few parents express concerns about several last minute changes to end-of-day timings, which create difficulties for them with pick-up and child-care arrangements.
- The school is appropriately staffed with well-qualified senior leaders and teachers, and competent teaching assistants. The senior leadership team and a large proportion of the teaching staff are new, so systems and procedures are changing and developing. The in-house professional development programme is aligned to the school's priorities and new initiatives. However, this is not yet personalised for teachers' individual development needs.
- The school premises provide bright, spacious classrooms and a range of specialist facilities. Younger students benefit from an environment that is highly conducive to experiential learning. Primary classrooms provide a range of attractive learning areas for key subjects. Older students enjoy well-equipped specialist facilities. The re-allocation of rooms to create distinct primary and secondary wings is effective.
- The school is well-resourced across subjects and phases. All classrooms are equipped with electronic boards. In the Foundation Stage, students use the electronic boards and tablets independently. However, in both the primary and secondary phases, student use of technology to support learning is inconsistent.

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	71
	2015-2016	224
 Teachers	42	
 Students	35	

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

- Almost all parents and students who responded to the survey are satisfied with the quality of education the school provides. Almost all parents say that their children enjoy school and feel safe, both in school and on school buses. A large minority of parents express concerns about bullying. Most students feel that they are well supported and that there is always someone there to help them if the need arises.
- Most parents and almost all students think that the school is well led and that school leaders are very approachable. Students feel that their views are listened to and that they make a meaningful contribution to the life of the school. A minority of parents feel that the school does not promote literacy in Arabic or develop an understanding of the importance of Islamic values in Dubai society.
- Teacher responses to the survey are mostly positive and almost all are satisfied with the quality of education and the support the school provides for students' well-being. Most enjoy working at the school. A large minority indicate concern about opportunities for targeted professional development.

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