


# Inspection Report

2016 - 2017

**دبي**  
Knowledge المعرفة



**JSS PRIVATE SCHOOL**

 Curriculum: CBSE

Overall Rating:

**Good**



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

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum

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## School information



### General information

Location	Al Wasl
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2011
Website	www.jsspsdubai.com
Telephone	00971-4-3446419
Address	P.O. Box 126721, Al Safa, Dubai
Principal	Mrs. Chitra Sharma
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	17 to 20 October 2016

### Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	180
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	32
Teacher-student ratio	1:12
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	22%

### Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-17
Grades or year groups	KG 1-Grade 12
Number of students on roll	2009
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	0
Number of students with SEND	75
Largest nationality group of students	Indian

### Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	Indian
Main curriculum	CBSE
External tests and examinations	IBT, CAT 4
Accreditation	CBSE
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT/CAT4



## The DSIB inspection process



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

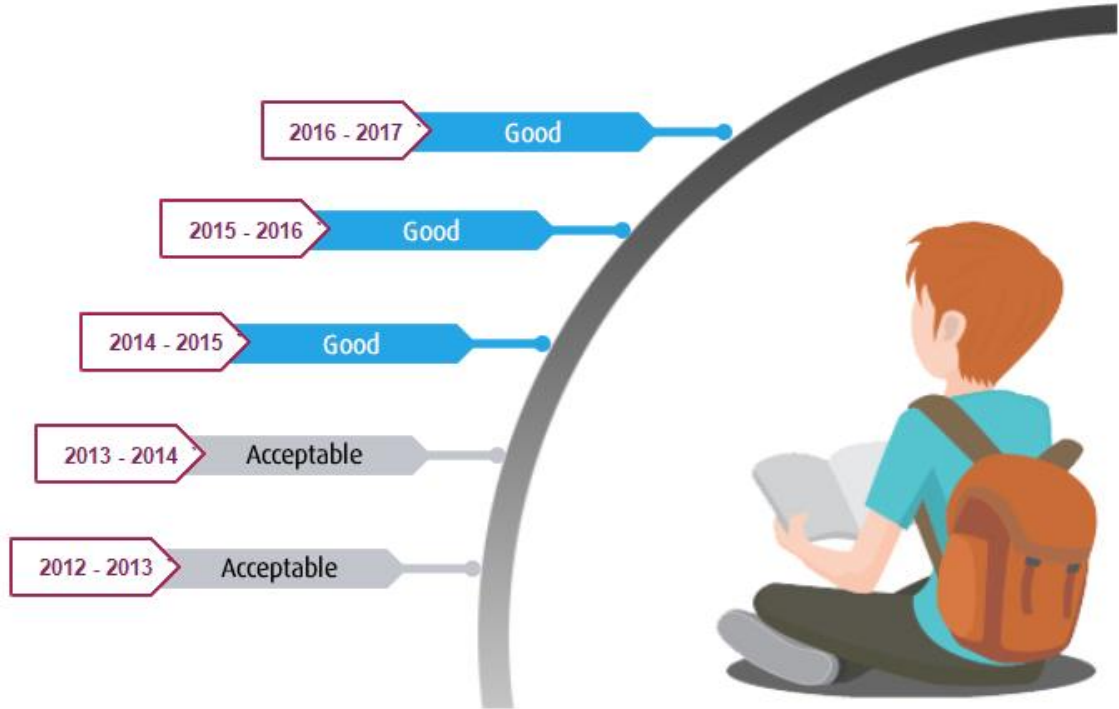
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

### Judgements are made on a six-point scale

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

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

## Inspection journey for JSS PRIVATE SCHOOL LLC



- JSS Private School opened in 2011 and has been growing in student numbers and strength of provision. At the time of the inspection the school had 2,009 students, aged from four to 17 years an increase of 417 students from the previous year. The principal has been in post since the school opened. Teacher turnover at the time of the inspection was 22 per cent; the same percentage turnover as the previous year.
- The three previous inspections have acknowledged strengths in students' personal and social development, their protection and care, the quality of leadership and links with parents and the community.
- Recommendations over the same time frame have focused on improving teaching and learning to meet the needs of all learners, strengthening the assessment systems, tracking students' progress, and improving attainment and progress in Islamic education and Arabic.



## Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



JSS PRIVATE SCHOOL LLC was inspected by DSIB from 17th to 20th October 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 are mostly good. Almost all students are keen to learn and work independently without constant teacher intervention. This is a particularly strong feature in the early years and senior sections of the school.
- Across the school almost all students behave very well. They are keen to learn how Islamic values impact on life in modern Dubai. Students in the senior section contribute widely and effectively to this area of the school and to supporting younger children's understanding and appreciation. A very good understanding of environmental issues as well as lively approaches to social responsibilities are seen throughout the school.
- Almost all teachers have good knowledge of their subjects. They have positive relationships with their students. However, questions that encourage students to think deeply about their answers or help teachers to check students' understanding are still not evident or used skilfully in all lessons.
- The school provides a range of extended activities for students. Careful consideration is given to providing a curriculum that will help students be successful in international tests as well as nurturing them as global citizens.
- Security, health and child protection are given due importance and understood by everyone in school. The school provides students in the kindergarten and secondary phases with very good personal care. This includes a very good level of support for students as they make their choices for their future lives and education. Support for students with special educational needs is good.
- The principal leads the school well. The school has developed a very clear understanding of what it needs to do next to provide students with a high quality of education. Communication among all staff, parents and the governing body is effective and leads to collegiate working at all levels. The governing body provides effective direction. School leaders provide opportunities for all staff to contribute to school improvement.

### What the school does best

- Students' personal and social development across the school is very good. Older students lead the younger ones by example.
- There have been overall improvements across the Kindergarten.
- All school leaders have a very clear vision and direction for the school.
- The secondary students' appreciation of Islamic values and respect for the heritage and culture of the UAE is outstanding.

### Recommendations

- Improve teaching and raise students' attainment and progress across all phases by:
  - making effective use of assessment information in lesson-planning, particularly in the primary and middle phases, so that the learning needs of all students are met
  - ensuring school leaders use assessment data and carry out rigorous work-sampling in order that individual students' progress is carefully tracked, resulting in a positive impact on learning
  - developing classroom assessment practices and marking to provide feedback so that students understand what they need to do to improve their work.
- Heads of department and teachers should raise the quality of all lessons so that the focus is consistently on analysis, thinking and real-life applications.

## 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 their targets:**

- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- Attainment based on the National Agenda Parameter tests meets expectations in science. It is below expectations in English and mathematics.
- The school is analysing the data provided by both IBT and CAT4 in 2016. This analysis has not been linked to the school's National Agenda action plan. It is beginning to provide senior leaders and teachers with the strengths and weaknesses of individuals and groups of students. However, the information is not being used for intervention and impact on teaching and learning.
- The school has made changes to the curriculum that now broadly aligns to the requirements of TIMSS and PISA. These changes include the addition of STEAM activities, problem solving in mathematics, the 'I wonder' worksheets in science and Venn diagrams to compare and contrast in English. The curriculum does not have a set of common internationally-benchmarked standards that the school expects the students to achieve.
- Teaching strategies include a range of activities and projects to promote the students' critical thinking and understanding. Questioning does not just check knowledge recall. Teachers also ask questions that have a variety of possible answers or that require students to evaluate multiple observations. The teachers are beginning to use some independent inquiry strategies where students are becoming more responsible for their own learning.
- The students rely too much on the teachers for their learning although there are signs of change. Students' research skills are developing although they require support to determine the extent of the information needed, and how best to analyse and evaluate their findings. They are more confident and effective in presenting the findings of their research.

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



## Innovation in Education

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









## Promoting a culture of innovation:

- The Kindergarten's mindfulness and well-being set the tone for STEAM challenges and Learning Centres in the primary phase. This leads to an extensive range of student-led activities such as 'creators as consumers' in the middle and senior schools. Skills in technology are developing further through the use of iPads in the KG and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) in the senior school. Focus areas linked to the curriculum, such as the Mathematics Working Wall in the primary phase and the Wordsmith Programme in the middle phase, generate opportunities for students to show initiative. Investigations, critical thinking, problem solving and understanding of enterprise are being embedded in the middle and secondary phases through methods that enthuse staff and students, and engages parents.

## Overall school performance

Good

### 1 Students' achievement

		KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	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	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑
English 	Attainment	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Very good ↑	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Science 	Attainment	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good

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

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

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

## 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

## 4. Curriculum

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

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

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


## 6. Leadership and management

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

# Main inspection report



## 1. Students' achievement

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

- Almost all groups of children in the Kindergarten make very good progress in developing speaking, listening and early reading skills, including independent reading, with fluency and expression. These skills underpin the children's ability to improve even further their critical thinking skills and collaborative working. In KG 2 classes children improve their emergent writing skills by using and applying phonics. They can narrate, present, write simple stories and respond to questions from teachers and peers. A minority of higher-attaining children in KG2 are developing their fictional writing which often include descriptive words and more complex grammar.
- In mathematics the strong focus on teaching of number enables children to demonstrate better than expected progress related to curriculum standards for their age. Children are able to estimate and measure then record the outcomes on tally sheets, with support. In KG2, children are able to practise using money in the role play shop. They can also create records and describe patterns.
- Scientific enquiry is beginning to permeate in all areas of teaching and learning and to have an impact on children's learning skills. Teachers are developing knowledge and skills in enquiry-based learning and demonstrating this through targeted questioning that inspires creative thinking. Effective planning for the use of classroom resources and the learning environment is offering groups of children opportunities to explore and investigate different materials and to record their findings.

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

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrate expected levels of attainment as measured against the Ministry of Education curriculum standards. Students' attainment over the past three years remains broadly in line with expected levels. Most students show secure knowledge of the Pillars of Islam and an ability to recall short prescribed verses from the Holy Qur'an, such as the Alfatiha and Iklas. Their knowledge of concepts such as Tawheed is still developing in the lower grades of this phase. Overall, most students make expected progress against appropriate learning objectives with no apparent differences in the progress of boys and girls.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain levels that are in line with expectations. They show adequate skills in reading and listening, with the use of high frequency words a strong feature. Although writing skills are less secure, most students find it straightforward to follow guided writing processes. Progress has improved to good compared to individual starting points of the students because they enjoy learning about aspects such as sport. Boys and girls make similar progress over time.
- In English, primary students reach good levels of attainment when measured against national and international standards. In lessons, progress in reading is improving significantly as a result of greater focus and application and attainment is approaching age-related expectations. In Grade 1, students can write letters of the alphabet neatly and combine words into simple sentences. By Grade 5, higher ability students write explanations and descriptions in detail. Students are articulate, express ideas clearly and write short stories. Most students make steady progress irrespective of their learning needs and gender.
- In mathematics, attainment, as measured by both internal assessments linked to curriculum standards and through international benchmarking, is good. In lessons, students make good progress across the range of mathematical topics studied, with particular improvement shown in number and its application. Knowledge, skills and understanding are developing well, with good progress in real-world tasks and problem-solving activities. Attainment continues to improve over time. The majority of students in the phase are starting to make more rapid progress than would normally be expected at this stage.
- In science, attainment and progress as measured against the school's curriculum standards show that the majority of students are above age-related standards. International benchmark tests, however, show significantly lower levels of attainment. Students are beginning to develop inquiry, investigation and simple research skills. Through their STEAM activities, they are able to make some links between their other subjects and with real-life situations. Attainment has remained consistent over the past three years.

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

- In Islamic education most students achieve expected levels of attainment as measured against the Ministry of Education curriculum standards. Students' attainment over the past three years is also acceptable. Work scrutiny indicates that most students have secure knowledge of key events relating to the lives of the prophets and messengers. Their knowledge of the Pillars of Faith, however, is acceptable. Recall of knowledge and definitions of key words from verses of the Holy Qur'an is of an adequate standard although there is evidence of improving progress over time in many aspects of knowledge.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain levels that are acceptable according to curriculum expectations. They show secure competencies in most of the skills, although writing is below expectations. Their ability to form correct, more complex sentences is sometimes limited in the lower classes. Overall, progress is good especially when students are relating what they learn to real life. For example, Grade 8 students enjoy learning about the wide use of the Internet. Considerable help is given to students who are new to the school and to the subject. This enables students to make good progress.
- Students' attainment in English is good. Evidence from lessons and students' books shows that progress over time in reading and writing is very good. Students write fluently and use a broad range of vocabulary accurately for different purposes. Students differentiate between fact and opinion and by Grade 8 they can extract information and analyse it thoughtfully. In all phases students speak confidently in discussions. Students with SEND make sufficient progress because teachers ensure that their individual needs are met.
- In mathematics, attainment is good with the majority of students achieving above curriculum standards. The highest age-related attainment is in the first grade of the phase. The students' use of number is stronger than their understanding and application of space and shape. Students are able to apply knowledge in the classroom and in test situations. Problem-solving skills are improving and students relate critical thinking to real-world problems. Progress of all groups of students is generally good, although girls show higher levels of attainment than boys.
- Attainment as measured against the school's curriculum standards indicates that the majority of students are above age-related standards. International benchmark tests show significantly lower levels of attainment. Students are beginning to develop effective inquiry, investigation and simple research skills through a range of stimulating science activities. They are able to draw conclusions from their investigations based on their knowledge and understanding. Attainment has remained consistent over the past three years.



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

- In Islamic education, most students display expected levels of attainment as measured against the Ministry of Education curriculum. Attainment over the past three years has remained acceptable. Most students have appropriate understanding of optional and obligatory practices, of worship and prayers, although their knowledge of the Holy Qur'an is developing well with the majority showing skills in recitation. Good rates of progress in skills and knowledge are made by most students against learning objectives in class. Generally, boys make slightly better progress than girls.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students reach levels of attainment that are in line with expectations. They show confidence in most of the skills. Writing skills are the least well-developed although a minority of students demonstrate appropriate skills in structuring complex sentences. Progress overall has been good in relation to the linguistic starting points of each student. Girls make slightly better progress than boys.
- Attainment in English as measured in CBSE examinations in Grades 10 and 12 is outstanding. When measured against national and international standards, it is good overall. Students are well-prepared for examinations and they make very good progress. They write fluently for different purposes. They have good reading and analysis skills when studying texts. In lessons, students are confident speakers. They use tablets and laptops to research and plan, and they negotiate with one another intelligently to reach agreements. Students' books show that, despite some simple grammatical errors, writing progress is very good over time. Students with SEND make good progress.
- In mathematics, while Grade 12 external examination attainment is acceptable, Grade 10 examinations, internal assessments linked to curriculum standards, and international benchmarking are all good. Through regular problem-solving and critical thinking tasks, a majority of students are attaining above curriculum standards. Progress is good throughout secondary, particularly in the first two years of this phase. Students make good progress across all mathematical strands with the best progress in application of number, and space and shape. Girls have slightly higher attainment levels than boys with both groups progressing equally well in all grades.
- Attainment measured against the school's curriculum standards shows that a majority of students are above age-related expectations. International benchmark and CBSE Grade 12 examinations have lower levels of attainment. The students are developing effective inquiry and investigative skills. Most are competent users of technology to support their research and learning. They are able to hypothesise and then develop investigations based on their knowledge and understanding to test hypotheses. Attainment over the past three years is showing improvement over time.

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

- Across all phases students are enthusiastic, interested learners and have very positive attitudes to their work. Students know their strengths and weaknesses and how they can improve. They willingly take responsibility for their own learning by carrying out research, using tablet computers and other resources. In the Kindergarten and secondary phase, students sustain their interest and enjoy developing their skills through active learning, both independently and in groups.
- Students interact and collaborate purposefully and productively in a range of situations. Collaborative work is a strength across all phases with students regularly working together on projects and presentations. For instance, in a KG1 science activity, children were observed testing absorbent materials in groups, deciding which material Cinderella should use to clean the kitchen. Across the school, students communicate their learning clearly. In the secondary phase, they are proficient in a variety of communication styles. However, their skills are weaker in lower primary, where they sometimes lack the vocabulary to describe ideas and thoughts coherently.
- In lessons, students make meaningful connections between different areas of learning and relate these connections to their understanding of the world. For example, in Grade 2, students write acrostic poems about the planets and Dubai. In the secondary phase they apply skills in English with confidence to leadership roles, developing entrepreneurship using research, innovation and critical thinking. In Arabic, students apply what they learn to their own culture and the UAE.
- Critical thinking skills, and the use of technology to support learning, are developing effectively in the best lessons. Most students across the phases demonstrate effective enquiry and research skills. Creativity, collaboration and problem solving are key features of learning in the KG and secondary but require further development in the other sections of the school.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal development	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good ↑

- The overall school ethos encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning and there is much evidence that almost all students enjoy the challenges it brings. The school's extra-curricular programme contributes towards the positive and responsible attitudes of students, empowering and supporting them to follow their own creativity and innovations.

- Almost all students are very well behaved: in classes, during school events, and when moving around the school. Very good systems are in place to prevent bullying, such as the 'Sunshine Club', whereby members of the student council address any concerns of potential bullying. Almost all students work cooperatively, respecting each other in and outside the classroom. The development of students' high self-esteem supports positive behaviour and the ethos of happiness and well-being in the school.
- Student-staff relationships are friendly and respectful across all phases and, in the upper school especially, students enjoy excellent relationships with staff. It is evident that students feel valued and supported and this, in turn, leads to effective relationships among all students. They show genuine concern for others and are always ready to extend help to those in need.
- A range of positive healthy lifestyle programmes are in place, some of which have been initiated by students such as the JSS Premier League. Students have a secure understanding of how to make healthy choices and they apply this knowledge to their lifestyle.
- Overall attendance is high. Students are punctual when arriving at school and for lessons throughout the day.

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

- Muslim and non-Muslim students demonstrate a genuine appreciation of Islamic values and the influence those values have on society. They contribute to the harmonious ethos of the school. Senior students in particular are excellent role models for the younger students. They lead by example, as seen in their involvement in projects, charities and activities.
- Students respect and appreciate the culture of United Arab Emirates. They discuss in some depth the developments that have occurred in Dubai. Students in the secondary phase have an excellent understanding of the need to preserve heritage and traditions, whilst welcoming the modern styles and architecture. In all phases, students have a very good knowledge of, and demonstrate pride in, their own cultures.
- Students are mindful that they must live in a harmonious environment to be more productive, with senior students setting the tone for the rest of the school through various activities such as, school sponsored Culture Days.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- Students show a high level of commitment to their school and contribute actively in many ways initiating projects such as, the 'Sunshine Squads' and 'Clean up the World'. In the wider communities they share activities with schools such as the nearby Japanese school and Dubai Special Needs Centre. Consideration of others is a prime focus and students seek to support those less fortunate than themselves. They collect stationary for the poor in India. They raise funds and provide useful gifts and food for the workforce in the labour camps and by visiting and supporting the Dubai Special Needs Centre.
- Students have a very good work ethic. They are creative and initiate many projects, such as the Commerce Café, Tuck Shop and the STEAM project, where all funds raised go to charities. Significant social impact has been made through the design of an application called 'Trolley' created by students and contributing to Expo 2020.
- Students are involved in a variety of environmental awareness projects. The KG children are responsible for watering the plants. Students have a vertical garden, organic vegetable garden and bird feeders. They are keen to look to ways to improve their school environment through projects like waste management.

### 3. Teaching and assessment

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

- Teachers have a good understanding of how students learn; clear lesson objectives and success criteria are always shared with students at the start of lessons. Most teachers have good subject knowledge, which they convey clearly to students in lessons. However, this is not as well-developed in lower primary where teachers sometimes use vocabulary that is unclear to students.
- Teaching is creative and well-organised. Almost all teachers plan purposeful and engaging lessons and most planning takes account of previous learning. In science lessons, planning is thorough but sometimes over-planned, not allowing for the spontaneity needed in practical classes. Class learning environments are motivating and resources are used very effectively to support the needs of most learners.
- Good teacher-student interactions contribute to the positive learning environment in classrooms. Teachers use open-ended questions to encourage students to think for themselves and explore ideas. When group sizes are too large there are occasions when some students are not engaged in active learning, but this is rare. Teachers usually allow students sufficient time to reflect and to consolidate their learning.

- Across the school, teachers use effective strategies to develop students' enquiry and analytical skills. Teachers set a good pace to lessons and give students time to work independently and in groups. In KG, children have good support from teachers and teaching assistants. They make regular checks to see that groups are on task and encourage collaboration through techniques such as, 'think-pair-share'.
- There are early signs of good innovation and independent learning. Teachers use technology productively throughout the school. Students use tablets frequently to research and plan their work. English teachers link topics to real world experiences, such as blogs, advertisements and films, and students make meaningful connections to their own lives. Senior students draw intelligent conclusions from their independent research activities.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Assessment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

- The school aligns its summative assessments for students to the CBSE curriculum and with those from the external benchmark tests in English, mathematics and science. There are no external benchmarks for Islamic education and Arabic. Internal assessment processes are developing with the construction of rubrics and students' self-assessments. The school recognises that it needs to develop and strengthen the application and processes of work scrutiny in all subjects to support its knowledge and understanding of students' progress.
- The school undertakes external, national and international benchmark tests to ascertain students' academic outcomes. This year the school has also included the Cognitive Ability Test 4 (CAT4) assessment to provide an indication of students' potential achievements.
- Assessment data are analysed thoroughly by leaders in primary, middle and secondary phases to identify strengths and areas for improvement for individual students and for groups of students. However, this information is not used consistently well in all classes to identify students' next steps in learning or to track their progress effectively.
- Primary and middle school teachers make good use of assessment data to inform curriculum planning and teaching. For example, opportunities for the students to show their problem solving skills and to test their higher order thinking are included regularly in lessons. In the KG, the use of additional staffing in each class not only supports assessment of the children but helps to modify and reinforce successful learning in this phase
- In most curriculum areas, teachers know their students well and involve them in assessment using tools such as, 'Smiley Faces', 'I can' statements and rubrics. Students with special needs and disabilities are often assessed with an appropriate diagnostic test. However, lack of rigour with tracking against these standardised tools means that in some instances the school does not have a clear overview of the progress its students are making.

## 4. Curriculum

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

- Overall, the curriculum is planned effectively for students to become independent and responsible global citizens. It enhances the application of skills and 'out-of-the-box' thinking through a rich programme incorporating academic and non-academic activities. The inclusion of the best practices of learning in the early years has strengthened the KG curriculum.
- The careful mapping of the curriculum ensures continuity in learning in each subject and across all grades. Gaps identified on the basis of International Benchmark Tests (IBT) and CAT4 results are starting to be integrated into the curriculum plans. However, at the time of the inspection, there had been little effect on lesson planning.
- The school provides students with a range of opportunities through the clubs, activities, competitions and excursions to identify and pursue their respective interests. The JSS Extension Programme, conducted after school, nurtures special talent and interests.
- Meaningful cross-curricular links, such as the STEAM projects, add richness and balance to the curriculum. However, other cross-curricular links are less effectively integrated in the lessons.
- School and subject leaders regularly review the curriculum and make changes to meet the needs of learners. Scrutiny of students' performance to identify gaps in their learning has led to some modification and enhancement in the curriculum. For example, 'probability' has been incorporated in Grade 4 after the analysis of IBT examination results.
- The school meets the statutory requirement for teaching UAE Social Studies from Grades 1-9. It is taught in English and interwoven across the school in a variety of ways. While Grades 1- 2 base their learning on UAE text-books, in other classes it is integrated into Indian Social Science themes. The majority of students make meaningful inferences and connections based on their experience and research. Opportunities for students to evaluate UAE situations and present their solutions through discussions and projects are numerous. Students are aware of the assessment criteria and take responsibility for their learning in many ways. These enable them to further their appreciation of the UAE's rich history, economic advantages, geographical resources and environmental challenges.



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

- The curriculum is adapted effectively by teachers to meet the personal and academic needs of almost all groups of students across the school. Students with special educational needs and disabilities have education learning plans which usually provide the necessary curriculum challenge suited to their needs. For children in the KG, the early year's curriculum is enhanced by a very good variety of carefully planned themed activities.
- Programmes planned within the curriculum interest and stimulate students. The curriculum is increasingly creative and promotes enterprise and innovation. Students across the school engage in projects to develop their thinking and investigative skills. A wide variety of extra-curricular activities provide opportunities for personal, social and physical development. All students support a number of environmental and charitable events.
- The curriculum includes opportunities which promote and develop students' knowledge and understanding of UAE history, culture and heritage. Students are proud to live in Dubai and have a good awareness of Emirati traditions and values.
- Arabic is taught from KG2 for forty minutes per week. It is based on an appropriate set of standards with emphasis on listening and speaking linked with high frequency words for emergent learners. All Arabic teachers are qualified to teach the subject.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- The school has developed a wide range of policies to protect and safeguard children and students. These policies are communicated clearly to parents and staff electronically and through meetings, and to students through assemblies. The school effectively uses a variety of means, including student initiatives, to protect children and students from all forms of abuse, including bullying and Internet exploitation.
- The school has successful ongoing procedures in place to ensure the environment is safe, secure and hygienic for all. Regular checks, including monthly staff, parent and student audits, are conducted on safety equipment and school systems. Supervision of children and students before, during and after school, is effective.
- Equipment and buildings are very well maintained by outside contractors with records of all servicing. Medical and personnel records are sufficiently detailed and are safely kept. Individuals entering or leaving the school during the day are monitored and recorded. All incidents, and their subsequent follow-up, are logged.

- The facilities, equipment and resources provide a safe physical environment for all students. Play areas, classrooms, the auditorium, the swimming pool and other specialised areas are efficiently and effectively used, safe and suitable for purpose.
- Through the assembly programme, and other means of communication, the school educates the students to avoid dangers and promotes healthy living. High profile initiatives, some student-initiated and student-led, encourage good lifestyle choices.

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

- An atmosphere of mutual respect permeates the school. Staff know their students well and are aware of individual needs. There are effective and whole school systems and clear policies for managing and monitoring behaviour. Students are well aware of these and this is reflected in the calm and purposeful life of the school.
- Systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality are rigorous. Accurate records are kept. Parents are quickly notified of any concerns about individual students. As a result, levels of attendance have improved.
- The school admission policy is inclusive. Thorough assessment systems identify students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Most individual learning plans identify clearly the necessary support students require to make progress. Relatively few students have been identified as being gifted. The school is aware of the need to provide these students with greater support and challenge.
- The school plans effectively for the support for students with SEND. Specialist well-qualified staff and teachers are now in place. Modifications to meet individual needs are good overall but not consistent in some lessons.
- The school has strong systems for monitoring students' well-being and personal development. Students receive good advice and support from teachers, school counsellors, school leaders and the clinic staff. The very good relationships within the school give students the confidence to ask for support when necessary. Student leaders also provide a first reference point for individual concerns regarding welfare. Older students greatly appreciate the excellent advice and guidance regarding career choices provided by the school and outside agencies.

## Inclusion

### Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good

- The relatively new special needs coordinator and team provide good and improving leadership. They are very well-qualified and experienced. Together with school counsellors and support staff in the Learning Centre, they ensure the effective management of and provision for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- The identification of students with SEND is thorough. Identification involves class, subject teachers and outside specialists. A variety of assessments is used which ensures accurate identification of need and appropriate support strategies.
- Parents are closely involved in the process of support for students. Regular meetings are held to review educational support and learning plans. Parents appreciate the help they receive but some would like more advanced information on future class projects and subject areas.
- Most lesson plans identify modifications for students with SEND but, in some classes, these are not used sufficiently to enable individual needs to be fully met. In the better lessons, teachers use a range of assessments well, including marking of work, to ensure activities are focused at the appropriate level for students. A good range of resources is provided to support students' understanding.
- Most students make good progress in relation to their personal targets and starting points. Progress is consistently high when students work with the specialist staff in the Learning Centre. The regular monitoring and assessments by the SEND team inform the appropriate revision of individual learning plans.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Very good ↑

- Leaders at all levels are highly effective in setting clear, strategic direction for the school. The re-shaping of the school's vision, mission and core values, incorporates a well-developed understanding of the National Agenda and the school's wish to develop its students as global citizens. Sharing of the vision by all leaders has led to several improvements including the quality of provision in the Kindergarten and student progress in Islamic education, Arabic and English.
- Leaders have a thorough understanding of the curriculum and a developing understanding of its alignment to international benchmark tests. They understand best practice in teaching and learning but are developing their full understanding of the effective use of assessment information and its impact on raising student achievement and student progress.

- Relationships amongst staff members are very good. Systems of communication ensure that all colleagues have a voice in deciding actions for improvement. The principal delegates roles and responsibilities strategically. Senior and middle leaders are highly committed and all have capacity to improve in their areas. The high level of leadership displayed by all students, particularly those in the senior phase, is a significant strength of the school.
- Leaders at all levels have a clear understanding of their roles in school improvement. They are reflective and focus on identifying solutions to overcome barriers to learning. Actions such as peer mentoring for new staff members and coaching are supporting the challenges created by changes in staffing. The high quality management of the early year's section of the school ensures that children in this phase are given a very good start to their education.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use this information to plan for improvement. Since the last inspection they have successfully introduced systems to address the areas for further development, such as assessment processes and tracking, although this is not having consistently positive effects upon students' learning in all classes across the school.

#### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- The school makes good use overall of the internal and external assessments of students' attainment and progress to identify areas that need to improve. These form the basis of the school's improvement planning. Leaders know most of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are taking effective measures to prioritise, plan and take action.
- Monitoring of teaching by leaders at all levels is accurate and consistent and is resulting in well-focused areas for school and individual professional development. Actions taken on the basis of analysis are having a positive impact on student achievement; improvements in progress in the Kindergarten, Islamic education, Arabic and English in various phases of the school.
- The detailed school improvement plan includes clear actions that reflect the findings of the school's self-evaluation. Success criteria link well to targets for improvement with student achievement. School leaders recognise that improvement planning must continue to provide sufficient capacity to support its move towards outstanding teaching, learning and assessment.
- The school has made good progress in addressing the recommendations from the last inspection report.

## Partnerships with parents and the community

Very good

- Parents are involved in, and supportive of the school, its leaders and their own children's education. Many parents are actively involved in the, '25 Million Minutes of Reading Project'. Their views are sought by the school, valued and taken into account.
- The school uses a wide range of communication methods, including the use of the parent app, to keep them informed about the school, its activities and their children's progress. The parents are welcomed to the school and they feel that any concerns they have, of which there are few, are dealt with in a very efficient and constructive manner.
- Reports to parents about their children's progress provide an appropriate indication of overall achievements in each subject compared to the curriculum and, where applicable, to international benchmarks. They include some targets for improvement.
- Through extensive contacts and parental links, the school has growing partnerships with the local and wider community, including businesses and other schools. These links provide opportunities for student initiatives and leadership as well as enhancing their learning experiences.

## Governance

Good

- The membership of the governing body is extensive and includes a wide representation from groups of stakeholders. Through staff and parent representatives, and access to the analysis of test results, the governing body has a strong understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- The governing body hold leaders accountable for the performance of the school. Strategies at all levels are reassessed and modified when required. Governors monitor the success of the school in bringing about further improvements through comparisons between the school, its parent school in Dubai, and international test results. Regular meetings of the governors sustain their roles in supporting school improvement as well as enabling them to act as a constructive, critical friend to all leaders in the school.
- The governing body is proactive in ensuring that all statutory requirements are met. The wealth of expertise on the board is used to very good effect, for example in helping the school to overcome barriers to improvement, such as staff turnover and recruitment challenges. Its impact on school performance is positive.

**Management, staffing, facilities and resources**

Good




- The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and is well-organised. The school timetable provides enough time for students' break so they can continue to learn effectively. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined; staff members know their responsibilities and carry them out efficiently.
- The school is well-staffed and the increase in staffing has contributed effectively to the running of the school. Almost all teaching staff have subject specialist degrees and qualified teacher status. They benefit from regular professional development which closely matches the school's priorities as well as their own personal development. The staff work well together supporting each other with lesson planning to maintain a good standard of teaching. The sharing of best practice in classes is a strong feature of the nurturing ethos of the school.
- The premises provide a safe, pleasant environment to meet the needs of students. Classrooms are orderly and tidy. The generally well-maintained environment, including the Kindergarten, supports the staff in promoting students' achievements and well-being.
- A good range of resources support teaching and learning. Staff members use these well in classrooms and laboratories to enhance the learning experiences of the students. The well-stocked library and various creative learning centres around the school are used to support teaching and learning.



## The views of parents, teachers and senior students

### The views of parents, teachers and senior students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
 <b>Parents*</b>	2016-2017	207
	2015-2016	358
 <b>Teachers</b>	121	
 <b>Students</b>	127	

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

- Almost all parents who responded to the survey are satisfied with the quality of education and school leadership. They believe that their children learn well, and almost all believe their children are safe at school.
- Overall, parents are satisfied with the progress their children are making in most key subjects. A few parents have concerns about the texts used in Islamic education and a few believe the subject needs to be taught in more depth.
- Although mostly positive about curriculum provision, a few parents comment that they would like more international links and more frequent reports on their children's progress.
- Parents are well aware that fee increases are regulated through the school fees framework but a significant minority are not satisfied with the annual fee increases. Comments about the high charges for extra-curricular activities and sports reveal concerns in this area.
- A large majority of parents think that KHDA's environmental, cultural, social and knowledge sharing initiatives contribute to building a socially responsible community, although a small percentage believe their children have not gained a good understanding of the importance of Islamic values in Dubai.

## 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](mailto:inspection@khda.gov.ae)