

دبي

Knowledge المعرفة

The International School ...



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

The International School of Choueifat

Curriculum: SABIS(UK/US)

Overall rating: Acceptable

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‘Without
challenges,
we won’t feel
the taste of
success and
happiness’



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School information

General information



Location	Al Sufouh
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1993
Website	www.iscdubai.sabis.net
Telephone	04-3999444
Address	PO Box 21935-Dubai Road 331 , AlSufouh2
Principal	Mr Hisham Hassan
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	8 to 11 February 2016

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-19
Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Grade 13
Number of students on roll	3965
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	322
Number of students with SEND	0
Largest nationality group of students	Arab

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	158
Largest nationality group of teachers	Irish
Number of teaching assistants	32
Teacher-student ratio	1:27
Number of guidance counsellors	26
Teacher turnover	42%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	SABIS
Main curriculum	SABIS
External tests and examinations	IGCSE, GCSE, AP
Accreditation	Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSACS)
National Agenda benchmark tests	none

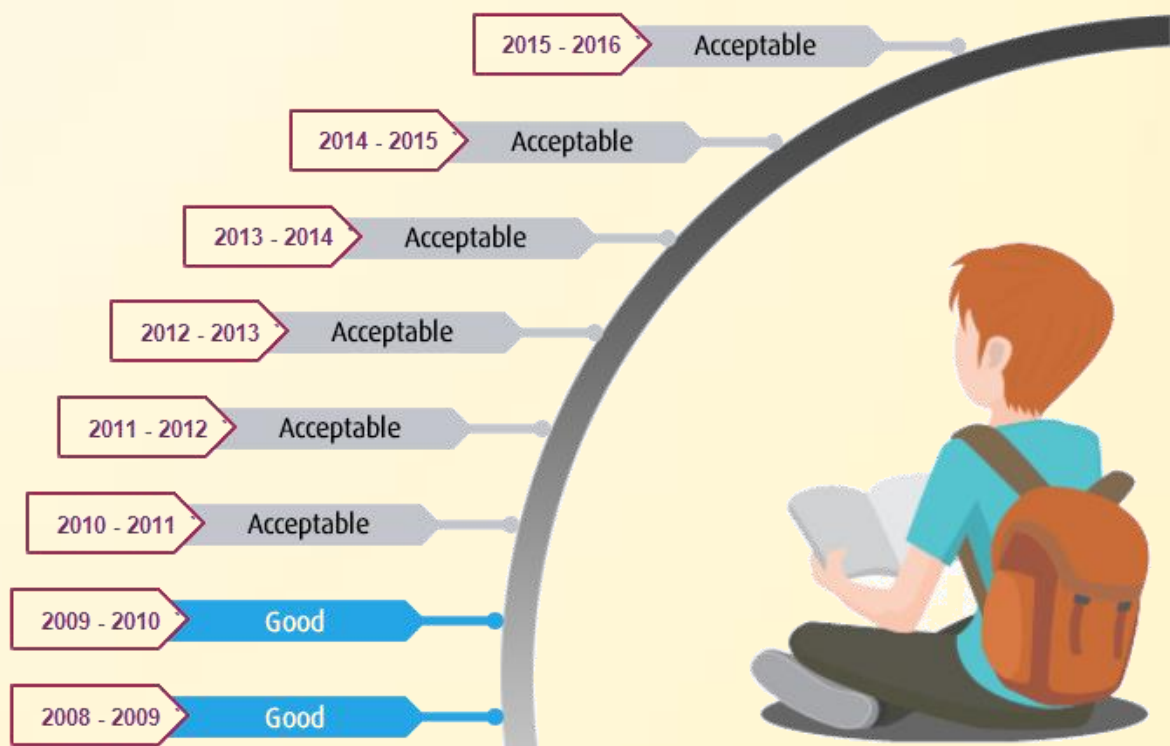


Summary for parents and the community

The International School of Choueifat was inspected by DSIB from 8 to 11 February, 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **acceptable**.

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

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





How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, **The International School of Choueifat** provided an **acceptable** quality of education for its students.

- Attainment and progress were acceptable in almost all key subjects in the Kindergarten and primary phases. Attainment in the high school was higher in English, mathematics and science. In all phases, attainment and progress were weak in Islamic education and Arabic as an additional language.
- The personal development of students in the high school was very good. Almost all students throughout the school were well behaved in lessons. When unsupervised, the behaviour of a minority of students was weaker. Students understood how to live healthy lifestyles, but this was not always reflected in their choice of food. Although students displayed a positive work ethic they rarely took the initiative in lessons.
- Teaching was acceptable overall. It did not meet the needs of all groups of students. Activities lacked creativity and did not always motivate students to make good progress. Teachers did not use assessment information effectively to plan lessons that built on students' knowledge, understanding and skills.
- The curriculum was not adapted to meet the needs of all students in all phases. In Kindergarten, opportunities for children to learn about science were limited. The curriculum was enriched through opportunities to be involved in 'Student Life' activities and sport. In lessons, particularly in the Kindergarten and primary phases, few meaningful links existed between subjects or UAE culture and society.
- The school conducted regular checks of teachers and staff to ensure the protection of students. Buildings were well maintained. All procedures to ensure safety in laboratories and the secure storage of medicines were in place. Supervision of students on buses, and during break and lunchtime, was not always effective.
- Leaders at all levels shared the SABIS vision of education. They were committed to contributing to the UAE priorities. Self-evaluation processes, however, continued to be limited. The Governing Board had not ensured that the school had taken action to improve the weaknesses identified in previous inspections, for example, the need to meet statutory requirements regarding the teaching of Islamic education and Arabic.



What did the school do well?

- Students' attainment and progress in mathematics and science in high school was very good.
- The very good personal and social development of students in the high school, particularly through their involvement in the 'Student Life' organisation and in high-quality sporting events.



What does the school need to do next?

- Governors should take action to:
 - ensure that the school is fully inclusive and accurately identifies and meets the needs of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
 - introduce systems to take into account the views of parents and provide them with opportunities to be fully included in the education of their children

- ensure that the school is fully compliant with all of the Ministry of Education (MoE) regulations for teaching Islamic education to non-Arab Muslim students and for Arabic as an additional language.
- Urgently improve systems of self-evaluation to provide a realistic view of school performance in relation to the UAE framework requirements, and use this information to create a clear, detailed and measurable plan for improving the quality of education provided by the school.
- Improve the curriculum to meet the needs of all students by:
 - providing planned opportunities for children in Kindergarten to learn about science
 - enriching what is provided in lessons with effective and meaningful links between subjects, UAE culture and society
 - engaging students in opportunities for enterprise, innovation and creativity.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better across all phases of the school and so enable all groups of students to make at least good progress by:
 - using assessment information to adjust teaching strategies in lessons to take fully into account students' prior knowledge, skills and understanding
 - routinely providing activities that engage and motivate students to think critically
 - providing enough time and opportunity for students to work independently and collaboratively on a range of challenging tasks.
- Improve students' personal development, especially in the Kindergarten, primary and middle phases, by:
 - improving levels of supervision during breaks to reduce the incidents of poor behaviour
 - improving punctuality to lessons to ensure that all learning time is used to the maximum
 - implementing a system that promotes and monitors healthy eating habits.



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

- Students who underachieved in school tests were required to attend special and remedial classes. In these lessons, they made acceptable progress and were reintegrated into their classes quickly. In other lessons, students with SEND were not supported and made weak progress.
- Parents were kept informed about whether their children required the special and remedial class provision as a result of any underachievement that was highlighted in tests.
- Communications between the school and parents were formal. They were restricted in scope and frequency to the normal cycle of school reporting and provision of information.
- Parents were not actively involved with the school on a regular basis to ensure they were kept fully aware of their children's learning, development needs and progress.
- Support and guidance for students with SEND was not made available, because such students were not identified or recognised by the school. The support which was provided to students who attended special classes because of their underachievement in school tests was acceptable.

National Agenda Parameter



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

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

Main points:

- The school did not meet the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter.
- No attainment data from the National Agenda Parameter was available at this stage to make a judgement on progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets.
- The school had not actively promoted the importance of the National Agenda. Leaders had not communicated the National Agenda targets to many of the school's stakeholders. Only those students who had previously participated in PISA and TIMSS tests could articulate their knowledge about the requirements of international tests.
- The curriculum was not fully aligned to the TIMSS and PISA test requirements. However, the outcomes from international assessments in the high school demonstrated students' ability over time. The school expressed a commitment to register in the future for National Agenda parameter testing in order to track students' progress over time towards TIMSS and PISA.
- In most lessons in the primary and middle phases teaching did not promote the development of students' critical thinking, as outlined in the National Agenda. Older students in the high school were better prepared. Teachers rarely used open questions. Learning activities did not require students to access a wide range of information in different ways in order to form their own lines of inquiry.
- Students had only rare opportunities to research using learning technologies. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) was mainly restricted to computer-generated testing to measure levels of attainment.

Innovation in education

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

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



Promoting a culture of innovation:

- The school director and senior leaders believed that the school used innovative ideas in its approach to education. Leaders had not developed an innovation policy or procedures to promote the UAE's vision. Research into strategies to enhance students' innovation skills had not yet been undertaken by the school's leadership team or SABIS regional leaders. Leaders were aware of the need to develop teachers' understanding of how to facilitate the development of the skills of innovation. The school's infrastructure had the potential to support the implementation of activities that might promote a culture of innovation.

Overall school performance

Acceptable

1. Students' achievement

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

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

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Weak	Weak ↓	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak ↓

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
Care and support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

6. Leadership and management

	All phases
The effectiveness of leadership	Acceptable
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Very weak ↓
Parents and the community	Weak ↓
Governance	Very weak ↓
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable



Main inspection report

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

Judgements are made on a six-point scale



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

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

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

1. Students' achievement

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	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable	Good ↑
Science	Weak	Weak

- In English, most children achieved age-related expectations against the SABIS curriculum for listening, speaking and reading. They were able to follow instructions and answer simple questions using key vocabulary and subject-specific terminology. Children were able to recognise and read simple contextualised words. Their abilities to form letters correctly and to copy words were increasing although their ability to write independently was not yet developed. Most children made expected progress against curriculum outcomes. There was no discernible difference in the progress made by different groups of children.
- In mathematics, most children had a secure grasp of the SABIS curriculum expectations, with the majority making above age-related progress against international standards in number. Children used well-formed written numerals to represent quantities of up to ten, and accurately counted objects. They were able to perform simple calculations confidently, using a range of strategies. Children were able to combine and separate groups of objects accurately, recognising and using the appropriate symbols for addition and subtraction. They were able to name simple two-dimensional shapes and recognise basic colours. Both boys and girls made similar progress against individual starting points and during lessons.
- In the absence of a kindergarten science curriculum, there was no formal instruction in scientific enquiry and no internal data to reflect children's levels of achievement. Children were exposed to general concepts related to their natural world, and the majority gained some knowledge through planned contextualised learning activities in other subjects. They made limited progress in the development of their investigation and exploration skills and in the development of scientific vocabulary.

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

- In Islamic education, attainment levels were below curriculum expectations. Assessment information indicated that less than three quarters of the students made the expected progress in relation to their starting points measured against MoE curriculum standards. Most students could recite some short Surahs such as (Surat Al Layl). They knew and understood the meaning of its vocabulary. The majority of students made limited progress in reciting the prescribed Surahs of the Holy Qur'an. There was no difference between the progress made by boys and girls.
- Assessments in Arabic as a first language, together with observations in lessons, indicated that most students made expected progress in relation to the expected curriculum standards. A few students made good progress. Over the past three years, the attainment of most students had been in line with national standards. Most demonstrated appropriate levels of speaking and reading skills. However, too many continued to use colloquial language. Most students' writing contained grammatical inaccuracies. Few opportunities were provided for extended writing. Overall, students made acceptable progress.
- In Arabic as an additional language, less than three quarters of the students attained in line with curriculum standards. The school's internal assessment reflected a low level of challenge. As a result, internal school data indicated that students' attainment was higher than it actually was. Listening for understanding was weak for most students. Speaking skills were limited to one single familiar word. Writing skills were mainly copying from the board and included many errors. There had been no change in trends of students' attainment over time. There was no difference between the progress of boys and girls.
- In English, the attainment of most students was in line with curriculum, national and international standards. They had very well-developed listening and reading skills as a result of the amount of time given to their development. They could understand what they read on a daily basis in order to pass weekly tests. When spoken to, students were articulate, but they had limited opportunities to speak in the majority of lessons. Writing skills remained underdeveloped. Students made accelerated progress in listening and reading, but weak progress in writing because of the restricted time given to the development of this important life skill.
- Students' attainment in mathematics was in line with the school's curriculum standard. No international test data was available. Evidence in lessons indicated that attainment was in line with international standards, although this was variable across the phase. Most students usually made acceptable progress in the knowledge gained. They had an acceptable knowledge of number and geometry. They could find and compare angles in similar shapes. Progress in understanding and in the development of skills was inconsistent. Most students made acceptable progress over time. The progress of boys was at times restricted, as they did not always present their work accurately enough.
- In science, most students had a sound grasp of the concepts covered, such as static electricity and life processes, although a minority displayed some misconceptions. Students' level of knowledge and understanding was in line with the school's curriculum standard and had been maintained over the last three years. Students were able to make predictions and hypothesis appropriately. A paucity of practical work, together with very limited critical thinking opportunities, hindered progress, which was generally acceptable for most groups of students in lessons and over time.

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

- In Islamic education, the attainment of more than a quarter of the students was below curriculum standards. School data indicated a more positive picture. However, the internal assessments lacked challenge and were below the MoE curriculum expectations. Most students knew and understood the characteristics of the Prophet (PBUH) and his relationship with his sons and daughter. Trends in attainment over time were similar to the attainment seen during the inspection. Progress was weak. There were no differences in the progress of groups of students, especially between boys and girls.
- Most students attained levels that were in line with curriculum expectations in Arabic as a first language. In external examinations in Grades 7 and 9, most students attained levels that were in line with national and international standards in reading and writing. In lessons, most students' speaking and reading skills were developing appropriately. Too many, however, were using colloquial Arabic or were lacking in confidence in their speech. Most students' writing lacked accurate grammar and structure. Students were developing their skills of comprehension, but only a few were involved in a challenging reading programme. Over the past three years, most students had attained in line with national standards and had made expected progress.
- In Arabic as an additional language, less than three quarters of students attained in line with the MoE curriculum standards. Internal assessments did not reflect the correct level of challenge and resulted in an inflated analysis. Most students had weak listening skills. Their speaking and reading were confined to short sentences with familiar words, and contained errors. Writing mainly consisted of copying from the board. Trends in attainment over time for most were weak. Progress was weak, with most students only expected to complete activity sheets in lessons. There were no differences between the progress made by different groups of students.
- Students in English had well-developed reading skills, based on a restricted number and range of set texts. Their comprehension skills were well enough advanced to enable them to pass the weekly tests. As a result, school data showed good levels of attainment against this narrow element of the subject. Listening skills were adequately advanced. Speaking was restricted in lessons to providing short responses to questions set by teachers, which slowed progress. When spoken to, students were articulate and confident speakers. Writing skills continued to be below expected levels for their age and ability range. Attainment and progress over time were acceptable.
- Internal test scores indicated that the attainment of the majority of students in mathematics was above curriculum standards. Students' work reflected their knowledge in a range of challenging mathematical concepts in all grades at this phase. They could simplify and solve algebraic equations and could perform calculations involving fractions. They routinely made good progress in well-structured mathematics lessons in each grade and over time. School data indicated that all groups of students made similar progress.

- In science, a majority of students had mastery of many of the essential concepts covered, such as energy types and their conversion and motion. Internal school data indicated that attainment of the majority was above curriculum standards. Skills of practical and investigative work were developing well and were sustained over time. The majority of students made better than expected progress against starting points in both tests and in lessons. Progress was hindered by a lack of challenge for the more able.

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

- In Islamic education, less than three quarters of students were attaining the MoE curriculum standards. Most students could recite a few verses of Surat Al Kahf. They knew and understood how the Holy Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). There had been no change in students' attainment over time. They had made some progress in knowing the names of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH), but over time progress against their starting points was weak. There were no differences between the progress of boys and girls.
- Most students made expected progress in relation to appropriate learning objectives for Arabic as a first language. In lessons and over the past three years, the attainment of most students was in line with national standards in speaking and reading. Most students' writing skills were less well developed. In external examinations for Grade 11, most students attained levels that were in line with national and international standards in reading and writing.
- In English, the attainment of the majority of students, particularly in reading, had been above curriculum, national and international standards over the last three years. Students attained levels in listening, speaking, reading and writing which were above curriculum standards because of their accelerated progress due to a better standard of teaching in this phase. They were provided with opportunities for extended reading and writing which was supporting students' engagement with the subject. All groups of students made equally good progress in lessons and over time.
- The large majority of students attained above international standards in IGCSE mathematics at Grade 10. Internal test results were well above the expected curriculum standard for most students. In a range of US and English external examinations in Grade 11 and Grade 12, the large majority of students achieved outcomes above expected levels. There were consistent high challenge and high expectations in mathematics lessons. The result was that a large majority of students made accelerated progress and had secure knowledge in a range of mathematical concepts beyond expectations for their grade.
- In science, the attainment of a large majority of students was above curriculum standards both in school and in national and international examinations. There had been a gradual improvement over the last three years. Skill-based attainment improved as students moved towards the end of the phase, with an increase in evaluative skills, critical thinking and analysis. These skills were extended by practical investigations which supported their ability to hypothesise and predict. The large majority of students made very good progress in lessons and over time.

	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

- In the majority of lessons, particularly in the high school, most students displayed positive attitudes to learning. In the weaker lessons, students listened and followed directions, but did not initiate their own learning. Girls were generally more engaged in their learning than boys. From test results, students knew their weaknesses and took responsibility for bringing about improvement.
- Students could express their thoughts, opinions and ideas well. When engaged in 'Student Life' activities, they collaborated very well and used their initiative to develop a range of projects. This level of collaboration was much less evident in the classroom.
- In the best lessons in the high school, students effectively applied their skills to solving problems which reflected real-life situations. In other phases, students did not routinely make connections between different areas of their learning.
- In the majority of lessons, students had few opportunities to research and engage in critical thinking. In all phases, the use of technology as a tool for learning was limited.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Personal development	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Very good ↓

- In lessons, students were generally positive and polite. They accepted criticism well. They showed self-reliance in their response to weekly test results. High school students who participated in the 'Student Life' programme took important leadership roles.
- Students behaved well in lessons, listening carefully to their teachers and following instructions. A minority of students, generally in middle grades, at times behaved poorly during breaks.
- For the most part, students respected adults and this respect was reciprocated. They were tolerant of one another and respected the contributions of others. For example, students in Grade 8 expressed positive views on the quality of projects undertaken by other classes in their grade. Relationships were generally strong.
- Students had a clear understanding about healthy lifestyles. Many participated in extra-curricular sporting activities. There were no systems in place to discourage students from bringing their own unhealthy food to school. As a result, the diet of a large minority was less than healthy.
- Punctuality was an issue at times. Both students and teachers were occasionally late for the start of lessons, resulting in lost learning time. Attendance was very good.

	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑

- Students generally demonstrated a basic level of understanding of Islamic values. Particularly in Kindergarten, they had a limited understanding of the relevance and impact of these values on everyday life in the UAE.
- Most students in the primary, middle and high school phases could express several reasons why they enjoyed living in the UEA. Few of these reasons were linked to their understanding of cultural heritage. They enthusiastically joined in celebrations such as National Day, Flag Day and Martyr Day. They showed good respect during the daily playing of the national anthem.
- The large number of nationalities in the school led to an appreciation of multicultural diversity, demonstrated through projects such as international culture day. Students were proud of their own heritage and traditions.

	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

- Students, particularly those in the high school, took responsibility for themselves and others. Older students undertook additional activities to benefit the school and their fellow students, such as acting as shadow teachers and prefects.
- Students generally displayed a positive work ethic. They rarely took the initiative in lessons. During 'Student Life' activities, however, they demonstrated creativity, innovation and resilience in completing tasks.
- Especially in lower grades, students had a limited understanding of environmental issues. Recycling projects were still at the planning stage. In Kindergarten, children had a weak understanding of social responsibility. Many students dropped food and wrappings at break time, and even inside their classrooms.

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Most teachers demonstrated acceptable subject knowledge and understood how to teach according to the methodologies prescribed by the organisation. They were not fully knowledgeable, however, about how students learn best. As a result, not all students benefited from appropriate levels or methods of instruction and differentiation.

- Planning was linked clearly to set textbooks and materials, which reflected the curriculum standards and requirements. It had not been adapted to meet the needs of different groups of students.
- Some teachers, but not all, skilfully used questioning to engage students in order to stimulate their interest and accelerate their thinking, particularly in the high school. Questioning was not a consistent feature of teaching elsewhere across the school because of the limitations of the instructional methodology prescribed by the school. As a result, students, showed limited ability to think for themselves and engage in challenging discussions.
- Instructional teaching was required by the school and expected of teachers. As a result, teachers could not routinely provide appropriate levels of challenge or support to meet the needs of different groups of students. Those who were underachieving or who were gifted and talented did not have their needs met. Only the strongest teachers in the school were able to deviate from the set methods.
- In the best lessons, in the middle and high school phases, particularly in mathematics and science, teachers skilfully linked learning to real-life situations and challenged students to find solutions. However, in most lessons, opportunities for students to think critically, to solve problems, and to develop their innovation and independent learning skills, were limited.
- In Arabic as a first language, most teachers demonstrated secure knowledge of their subjects. Their planning, time management and use of resources were variable. Questioning was not sufficiently challenging and dialogue did not engage students effectively. Teachers did not use strategies that meet the needs of the different groups of students. The development of critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation and independent learning skills was weak.
- In Arabic as an additional language, teaching was weak. Most teachers did not have secure subject knowledge. Teaching did not address the different needs of students. The level of expectation was low. Planning of lessons lacked challenge. Teachers did not effectively support students in their learning. Most questioning was closed and direct. Teachers mainly used textbooks and did not develop students' critical thinking.

	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- Internal assessment procedures through weekly, termly and annual tests were consistent and rigorously applied. They provided a great deal of data about students' performance, knowledge acquisition and progress over time.
- The school benchmarked academic outcomes against international standards, such as PISA and TIMSS, but did not have a system of regular international benchmark tests in Grades 1-9. In the high school information from AP, A level and IGCSE tests was used to compare the attainment of older students with those across the world.
- Assessment information was analysed thoroughly. It was accurate against the school's curriculum expectations, and enabled the tracking of progress in relation to SABIS criteria. It allowed comparisons to be made against performance in other SABIS schools.
- Assessment results were not used to adjust curriculum planning. Data provided feedback to students regarding test questions, and teachers were held to account. In some subjects and phases, assessment information gained from test results was used to place students into ability groups where they could offer support to one another.
- Teachers did not know students' strengths and weaknesses as well as they might in some subjects, such as Arabic and Islamic education. In other subjects their knowledge was stronger, but did not lead to systematic personalised support or challenge. There was little peer or self-assessment, and no feedback in student workbooks.

4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Weak	Weak ↓	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The SABIS curriculum expectations in some subjects were challenging and led to secure outcomes, particularly in the middle and high school phases. The school did not fulfil the requirements of the MoE curriculum for Islamic education and Arabic. The amount of time allocated to the teaching of Arabic to non-native Arabic speakers, and to Islamic education to non-Muslims, was not compliant with UAE expectations.
- The SABIS curriculum was planned to ensure progression and continuity across most key subjects in most phases. In English, mathematics and science, high school students were prepared for the next phase in their education. For example, there was an accelerated programme in mathematics to enable students to reach high levels of attainment. Students were able to access a number of internationally recognised further education institutions.
- Overall, curriculum choice was limited. In Kindergarten, it did not focus on the promotion of independence nor provide opportunities for children to explore and develop scientific enquiry. In the high school, older students had the opportunity to choose curriculum streams to meet their career aspirations.
- The transference of knowledge between some subjects enhanced outcomes. The mathematics curriculum contributed to older students' high attainment in science, but this level of cross-curricular working was not a regular feature of most lessons.
- Reviews were carried out centrally to ensure that the SABIS curriculum met the academic outcomes required of students to be competitive on the world stage and to be successful in their applications for entry to international universities and colleges. School information was not used to carry out reviews or develop the curriculum to meet the specific needs of students.
- The UAE social studies learning outcomes were not integrated into the SABIS curriculum, and were taught alongside the school's curriculum. Students from Grade 1 to Grade 9 had one 35 or 45 minute period per week.

	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak ↓

- The academic curriculum was not adapted to meet the needs of groups of students or individuals. The Kindergarten curriculum did not take into account the way young children learn. In Islamic education, there were missed opportunities for students in the upper year groups to link learning with their daily lives.
- The curriculum provided in lessons was focused on students' ability to pass tests rather than sparking their interest and enjoyment. Some extra curricula activities and events were delivered in partnership with outside organisations, for example, the Dubai police. Weekly clubs enriched students' academic strengths as well as their personal interests.
- The SABIS curriculum provided a limited number of opportunities for students to develop their understanding of the UAE's culture and society. However, the 'Student Life' activities and special events provided a range of culturally relevant experiences. These additional activities and events were not sufficient to develop in students an in-depth understanding of the local context or respect for the UAE and global cultures.

- Kindergarten children had the option to choose to study either Arabic or French. They had Arabic lessons each week. This included time for Arabic speaking Muslim children to access Islamic education.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- The school had policies to ensure students' cyber safety and to protect them from the dangers associated with social media. Child protection training was given to all new teachers. Most staff and students were aware of the school procedures. A minority of parents and students expressed concern over how well the school tackled issues of bullying.
- The school provided a hygienic environment. Fire drills were carried out periodically. Senior members of the administration managed health and safety procedures, but they did not always systematically identify where the schools policies were not fully operational. Supervision for students during break and lunchtime was not always effective. The school had ensured that buses were fully fitted with seat belts.
- Buildings and equipment were overall well maintained, although some checks were not always up to date. Two doctors with nurses supervised students' health. The clinic had up-to-date records for each student, with a central log of medical needs. Medication, chemicals and all other substances and equipment likely to cause danger were kept in locked cupboards.
- The school premises and facilities provided students with a safe physical environment. Fencing had been updated and sports facilities were extensive. The school had no ramps or lifts to enable full access by students with physical disabilities.
- Most of the meals and snacks provided by the school were healthy. The school did not have a policy to restrict unhealthy food being brought from home. A good range of sports and activities was provided for students in all of the different grades.

	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Care and support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Relationships between staff and students were generally positive and cordial. Systems and procedures for managing students' behaviour were inconsistent across the phases of the school. Although there were prefects who assisted the supervisors in their duties, they were not all skilled or confident in managing and promoting good behaviour.
- The school promoted very good attendance. Systems to promote punctuality to lessons were not as well developed. A few students arrived late for lessons and were not challenged by teachers.
- The school did not admit or formally recognise students with SEND. It did not have a system in place for specifically identifying or screening students with gifts, talents or those who were higher achieving. Students who were identified as underachieving were given opportunities to attend special or remedial classes in order to improve their performance in tests.

- Support was not available for students who struggled in lessons, or who needed to be accelerated in their day-to-day learning. This had a negative impact on the progress made by those groups of students.
- The well-being and personal development of students was monitored throughout the school, and appropriate personal guidance and support provided. Adequate careers guidance allowed students to make their transition successfully to university. Staff and student volunteers in 'Student Life' were highly effective in providing additional guidance and support to students who experienced difficulties personally or academically.

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

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

Weak

- School leaders did not officially recognise students with SEND in line with the KHDA categories. However, there were systems in place, through 'Student Life', to support students who experienced difficulties to achieve better and improved outcomes in their regular tests.
- The school had no system for identifying students with SEND. Very limited screening of children in Kindergarten, and on entry to the school, meant that individual students' learning needs were not identified.
- The curriculum was not modified or adapted to meet the needs of any groups of students with SEND.
- Parents were kept informed if their children underachieved or did not score highly enough in assessments, and were offered special classes for their children to attend.
- The progress made by students who attended special and remedial classes was acceptable overall, but limited in scope. The learning was focused on correcting students' misunderstandings, and on correcting their errors in grammar or in technical aspects of their work which would impact negatively on their performance in tests.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- Leaders at all levels shared the SABIS vision of education and articulated a commitment to contributing to the UAE priorities through maintaining the good and better levels of achievement in the high school. The school was not fully inclusive and did not admit students with physical or mental disabilities.
- Most leaders had a secure knowledge of the SABIS curriculum. They were successful in creating a culture in which students took responsibility for improving their academic performance, and in which students could engage in activities that built self-confidence and resilience. Best practices in teaching, learning and assessment were not effectively developed or shared across the school.
- The effective communication skills of the senior management team helped to build professional dialogue between all levels of staff. Leaders at all levels had clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Most staff expressed positive views of the school.

- Whilst leaders acknowledged that further improvements could be made, this was mainly in response to external demands. Efforts to bring about improvement were focused on test results and did not extend to meeting UAE framework requirements fully.
- Actions taken by the school had led to some improvement in attainment, particularly in the high school. Leaders did not ensure that the school was fully compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very weak ↓

- Self-evaluation processes were very limited and paid insufficient attention to UAE framework requirements. In Grades 1-9 the school did not use regular external benchmark tests against which to moderate internal data. This resulted in an inflated view of the school's performance.
- Senior and middle leaders had monitored the quality of teaching through lesson observations. These did not effectively measure the impact of teaching on student learning and consequently did not provide an accurate evaluation of the success of school provision.
- Development plans were focused on improvements to the school premises. They did not include the need to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They did not secure compliance with statutory requirements regarding curriculum provision.
- The school had made minimal progress in implementing the recommendations of the last inspection report or in improving the school over time.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Weak ↓

- The school took limited action to involve parents in their children's learning or in school life. There were no systems in place for seeking the views of parents with regard to school improvement.
- Communication with parents was limited to information regarding day-to-day school routines and discussion with academic leaders. School systems did not allow parents to have a meaningful dialogue with those teaching their children.
- Reports for children in Kindergarten contained mainly subjective evaluations, and did not provide detail of children's areas of strength or what they needed to do to improve. School reports for Years 1-13 contained marks and grades, but did not say what the next learning steps should be. They did not provide detailed comment on progress or on students' personal development.
- Links with other schools within the SABIS group and the wider school community in Dubai were well established through sporting competitions. The school made few social contributions to local, national or international communities.

Governance

Very weak ↓

- The governing board did not represent all stakeholders and did not have any systems in place to seek or act on their views.
- Although the Board of Governors was informed of the school's performance through regular gathering of data, they had not supported the school sufficiently to bring about improvements.
- The Board of Governors had not ensured that the school complied with the MoE regulation regarding the amount of time for teaching Arabic as an additional language, or Islamic education.




Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Acceptable

- Most aspects of the school were routinely well managed and the school ran efficiently. The school was well organised, had clear structures and well established procedures.
- Teachers had relevant qualifications in the subjects taught, especially in the middle and high school phases. All teachers had been trained to deliver the SABIS curriculum to the required standard. Not all teachers in the Arabic and Islamic education departments had been approved by KHDA. Very few teachers in Kindergarten had relevant early childhood qualifications.
- The premises were adequate overall. Technology facilities were mainly used for curriculum tests. The extensive sports facilities contributed to the school's success in a range of competitive sports. The facilities dedicated to 'Student Life' enriched curriculum provision.
- Classroom environments were not routinely equipped with a wide range of resources to support learning. Technology resources, including recently introduced tablets, were not used well to extend opportunities for students to carry out independent research. Students in the high school had access to specialist rooms such as laboratories, Students in other phases had only limited use. Library resources were restricted to supporting students' learning in the SABIS curriculum.

The views of the parents, teachers and students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
Parents* 	2015-2016	760
	2014-2015	249
Teachers 	29	
Students 	49	

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

- Almost all parents, teachers and students responding to the inspection survey agreed that students were safe in school.
- Almost a third of parents who responded to the survey did not think that the school listened to their views. Most of those who attended the parents' meeting also had concerns.
- Most parents and students were happy with the quality of education provided by the school.
- More than a third of students and parents raised concerns regarding the progress made in Islamic education and Arabic.
- Parents and students were much more positive about progress in English, mathematics and science.

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