



GEMS Wellington
Primary School

Curriculum: UK

Overall Rating:

Very good



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

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



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School information



| General information | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Location | Al Satwa |
| Type of school | Private |
| Opening year of school | 2008 |
| Website | www.gemswps.com |
| Telephone | 00971-4-3433266 |
| Address | PO Box 114652 Satwa Behind the Shangri La Hotel Dubai, UAE |
| Principal | Stephen Chynoweth |
| Language of instruction | English |
| Inspection dates | 14 to 17 November 2016 |

| Teachers / Support staff | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Number of teachers | 90 |
| Largest nationality group of teachers | British |
| Number of teaching assistants | 57 |
| Teacher-student ratio | 1:20 |
| Number of guidance counsellors | 0 |
| Teacher turnover | 17% |

| Students | |
|--|----------------|
| Gender of students | Boys and girls |
| Age range | 3-11 |
| Grades or year groups | FS1-Year 6 |
| Number of students on roll | 1171 |
| Number of children in pre-kindergarten | 0 |
| Number of Emirati students | 49 |
| Number of students with SEND | 276 |

Largest nationality group of students Indian

| Curriculum | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Educational permit / Licence | UK |
| Main curriculum | UK |
| External tests and examinations | CAT4 and GL |
| Accreditation | BSO |
| National Agenda benchmark tests | CAT4 and GL |



The DSIB inspection process



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

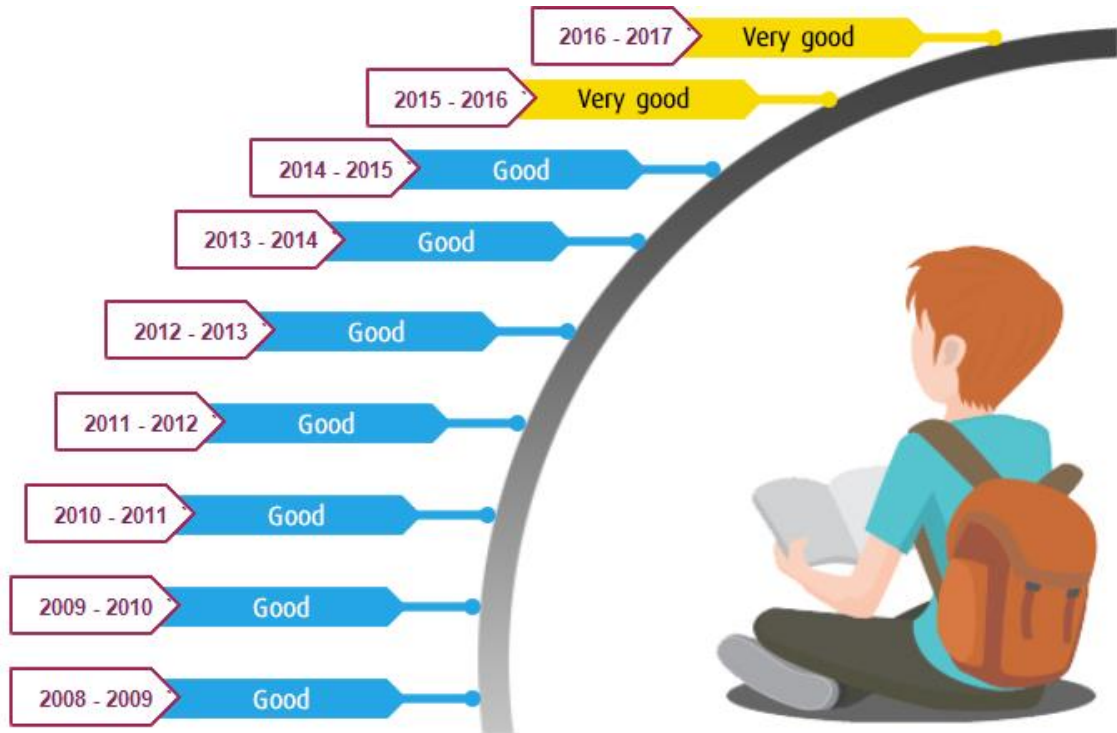
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

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

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

Inspection journey for GEMS Wellington Primary School



- The school opened in 2008. There are 1171 students on roll. Students, aged three to 11 years old are taught in mixed gender classes from Foundation Stage (FS) to Year 6. The principal has been in post for two years. Teacher turnover is 17 percent, compared to 31 percent the previous year.
- Previous inspections have acknowledged strengths in terms of students' personal development, health and safety, partnerships with parents and the school's management, staffing, facilities and resources.
- Recommendations over time have focused on the need to increase the accuracy and use of assessment, and the attainment of students in Islamic education and Arabic.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



GEMS Wellington Primary School was inspected by DSIB from 14 to 17 November 2016 . The overall quality of education provided by the school is **very good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Students' attainment is acceptable in Islamic education and Arabic. It is good in English, mathematics and science. Students' progress is good in Islamic education and Arabic. It is very good In English, mathematics and science. Student's enquiry, research, problem solving and critical thinking skills are developed effectively so that learning is very good.
- Students' personal and social development are outstanding. Students demonstrate a very good understanding of Islamic values and cultures in the FS. In the primary phase, their work in social studies ensures that their knowledge of the history and culture of the UAE is well developed. Students' environmental awareness is very good and their attendance is outstanding.
- The quality of teaching is very good because lessons are well planned and teachers' strong subject knowledge encourage students to develop intellectually, academically, socially, emotionally and physically. The quality of teaching and learning is less strong in Islamic education and Arabic. Assessment procedures are well developed and the school makes good use of a range of internal and external data to support teaching and guide the curriculum.
- The school follows the English National Curriculum. The curriculum is enhanced through a range of extra-curricular activities and enrichment to develop students' enterprise, innovation, creativity and social skills. Modifications to the curriculum for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those who are gifted and talented, are very good.
- The protection, care, guidance and support of students are outstanding. The school provides a safe, secure and supportive environment for students. The school takes its responsibilities for health and safety very seriously and procedures and practices are outstanding. Mutual respect, trust and confidence characterise interactions between staff and students.
- The inspirational and innovative leadership of the principal, capably supported by senior leaders, middle leaders and governors, is appreciated by students, staff and parents. The strengths and areas for development in the school are well known. Relationships with parents are integral to the strong partnership which exist between home and school. Facilities provide a vibrant, supportive and creative learning environment. Management, staffing and resources are excellent.

What the school does best

- The very good progress students make throughout the school, in English, mathematics and science.
- The very good quality of teaching, learning and assessment throughout the school.
- Students' outstanding understanding of Islamic values and their awareness of Emirati and world cultures in the primary phase.
- Students' outstanding personal development, the excellent curriculum design and care and support across the school.
- The school's outstanding arrangements for promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring students are kept safe.
- The outstanding partnerships with parents and the school's management, staffing, facilities and resources across the school.
- The inspirational and innovative leadership of the principal whose commitment, determination and integrity is valued by students, staff and parents.

Recommendations

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to raise attainment and progress in Islamic education and Arabic by ensuring:
 - there is greater consistency in the quality of teaching
 - work is more closely matched to students' individual needs
 - students of all ability levels are appropriately challenged
 - the needs of students with SEND are consistently and effectively addressed
- Raise students' attainment further by forensically analysing data to identify areas for further improvement and ensure that teaching fully meets the needs of all groups of students.

National Agenda Parameter



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

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

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

- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- Attainment based on the National Agenda Parameter is above expectations in English, mathematics and science.
- School leaders ensure the data provided by external benchmark tests is analysed in a systematic and detailed way. Strengths and weaknesses in students' learning are identified and teachers' plan lessons using this information.
- The curriculum has been adapted in English, mathematics and science. It now includes additional content relevant to the National Agenda Parameter. Lesson plans detail problem solving and critical thinking adjusted to the school's developmental approach using 'learning gears'.
- Most teachers are successful in promoting students' critical thinking and enquiry skills. In lessons, students actively learn and take greater responsibility for their own learning. They are beginning to evaluate their work and often try to improve it. In reading group sessions, for example, teachers focus on students' consolidation of direct retrieval, complex inference and authorial techniques. Consequently, students' progress is very good.
- The majority of students understand their results from the National Agenda Parameter tests. Students have access to a wide variety of resources which include online resources, to develop their research skills.

Overall the school's progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets exceeds expectations.

Innovation in Education

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









Promoting a culture of innovation:

- Students are proficient in seeking out information and make use of enquiry, research and critical thinking skills across a range of subjects especially mathematics and social studies. Teachers successfully create a learning atmosphere which promotes students' critical thinking and problem solving skills. The outstanding curriculum allows individual students to learn in their own way and at their own pace. Students are increasingly encouraged to engage in activities which support enterprise and creativity. Leaders demonstrate a clear and accurate understanding of how to innovate and improve their school. They actively promote innovation and encourage the use of social media and cutting edge technology such as clickers and quick response codes.

Overall school performance

Very good

1 Students' achievement

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

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

| | Foundation Stage | Primary |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------|
| Teaching for effective learning | Very good | Very good |
| Assessment | Very good | Very good |

4. Curriculum

| | Foundation Stage | Primary |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Curriculum design and implementation | Outstanding ↑ | Outstanding ↑ |
| Curriculum adaptation | Very good | Very good |

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

| | Foundation Stage | Primary |
|---|------------------|---------------|
| Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Care and support | Outstanding ↑ | Outstanding ↑ |


6. Leadership and management

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


Main inspection report



1. Students' achievement

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

- In English, the majority of children attain levels above those expected. Across the FS, children listen carefully to their teacher and speak confidently. They initiate conversations, and use a range of appropriate vocabulary. In FS1, children are learning to match letters in their play and recognise initial sounds. By FS2, most children can write words and short sentences. In lessons and play activities, children are successful in completing their tasks and make very good progress.
- In mathematics, the majority of children exceed expected levels against the Foundation Stage curriculum standards. By FS2, they are confident in manipulating numbers to add and subtract, and they have a good understanding of the symbols to use. The majority are skilled in measuring and using the vocabulary of taller than and shorter than. They also recognise 2D shapes and 3D objects in their play. Most children are progressing very well against curriculum expectations. In lessons, almost all achieve success against their learning goals. Children with SEND make good progress in achieving their specific learning goals in mathematics.
- Children attain well in science against the Foundation Stage curriculum. The majority exceed the expected learning goals. Children progress very well and succeed in developing skills of investigation and inquiry. They observe and make predictions of what will happen, for example if plants are not cared for and watered. They make very good progress in their class activities and build on their prior learning and from their start in KG.

|  Primary | | |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Subjects | Attainment | Progress |
| Islamic education | Acceptable | Good |
| Arabic as a first language | Acceptable | Good |
| Arabic as an additional language | Acceptable | Good |
| English | Good | Very good |
| Mathematics | Good | Very good |
| Science | Good | Very good |

- In Islamic education, internal school assessment indicate the majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards. However, in lessons and work samples, most students' attainment is acceptable. They demonstrate acceptable levels of understanding of Islamic values and principles of worship. They understand Hadeeths (the prophet's sayings) and the meaning of prescribed short Surahs from the Holy Quran. Their recitation skills are secure.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attain levels that are in line with the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum standards. Attainment has been acceptable for the last three years. Most students are developing good listening, speaking and reading skills. However, they are not confident and fluent speakers or writers. Students' good progress is demonstrated in lessons and in their workbooks. Girls show better language proficiency levels than boys.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the high results of internal exams are not reflected in the standards demonstrated in students' work over time. Class observations and work samples suggest that the attainment of most students is in line with curriculum standards. Students' speaking skills remain acceptable, as they are mostly limited to responding to questions with short answers. The majority of students can read a range of sentences and match sounds to letters. They make good progress developing their listening and reading skills but progress in writing skills is less evident.
- In English, students' attainment is good. The majority of students make better than expected progress in reading and writing. Speaking and listening skills are developed through active discussion and encouragement to acquire and use sophisticated vocabulary. Collaborative planning and feedback from very good quality marking ensures almost all students write well. A focus on reading skills, especially understanding inference, helps many students to understand the author's purpose. Students with SEND make very good progress from their starting points.
- In mathematics, student's attainment compared to curriculum and external benchmarks, is good and improving. Students' knowledge and understanding of number, measurement and shape is well developed. Links to other subjects are improving and practical applications are evident in many lessons. As a result they make very good progress. For example, older students use their knowledge to research population growth in Dubai because of EXPO 2020 and predict the likely impact on infrastructure.
- In science, attainment, as measured against the school's curriculum, national and international standards, indicates that the majority of students are above age related expectations. Students' attainment has improved in the last three years because leaders have ensured that scientific enquiry is at the core of students' work in science. Throughout the school, students are given regular opportunities to ask questions, design and carry out investigations for themselves. Students show curiosity to experiment, test and take risks to deepen their understanding. In lessons, most

students enjoy working together to plan, conduct and record their investigations resulting in very good progress.

| | Foundation Stage | Primary |
|---|------------------|-----------|
| Learning skills | Very good | Very good |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students show very positive attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic and persevere with work that challenges them. From the FS onwards, children are encouraged to make choices and gradually begin to evaluate their own work. Students value critical feedback from their teachers and other students because they want to improve their progress. In group activities, students communicate their ideas very well, co-operate and share resources very sensibly. They enjoy discussions and exploring what they are learning through well-reasoned debate, especially in the upper primary year groups. There is a shared culture of exploring learning by exchanging different viewpoints which is greatly valued by students. Connections between curriculum areas such as Islamic education, English, mathematics and social studies are well-developed, adding richness and depth to lessons. Students also enjoy linking knowledge to real-life situations, such as their research about the new canal system in Dubai. Such links bring learning alive and stimulate students' critical thinking skills. Students are encouraged to think deeply around subjects and carry out research into class topics and projects. Investigations in science foster mature scientific skills with hypotheses developed into experiments that are in turn recorded and the results analysed. In mathematics and in English there are problem solving exercises often involving sophisticated use of learning technology. Such skills of enquiry and research are less well developed in Islamic education and Arabic. | | |

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

| | Foundation Stage | Primary |
|--|------------------|-------------|
| Personal development | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's work to promote students' personal and social development is outstanding. Students' positive attitudes are a strength that make a significant contribution to their achievement. Students accept and respond to their teachers' advice in all aspects of their daily lives. They have an excellent understanding of the characteristics of a successful learner. Students conduct themselves in an exemplary manner both inside and outside their classrooms. Staff set very high expectations and have a consistent and common approach in relation to behaviour management. Very few students need reminders because they know how to conduct themselves sensibly. Student leaders of all ages, adopt responsibility for developing behaviour throughout the school. In football, decisions made by student referees are accepted without challenge. | | |

- Relationships between students and staff are very considerate. The level of respect students and staff have for each other is exemplary and as a consequence, relationships throughout the school are very strong. Students and staff provide sensitive and thoughtful support for each other.
- Students' healthy lifestyles are achieved through regular exercise, active participation in sport and eating sensibly. They are taught to value their long-term health in a range of opportunities across the curriculum. Playtime pals teach younger children playground games. Leaders provide a positive focus by asking parents to pack nutritious lunch boxes. The school ensures that students of all ages know how to protect themselves and keep safe from danger, especially when using the internet.
- Regular attendance is given a high priority from children's early days in the FS, to the time when they move to their next phase in education. Attendance is celebrated throughout the school in displays, newsletters and assemblies. Outstanding attendance is a clear demonstration that all children enjoy their experiences at school. There is no loss of learning between lessons because students arrive punctually when they move rooms.

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

- Across the school, students demonstrate a clear understanding of Islamic values and their relevance in UAE life. Students throughout the school discuss how all people should be treated respectfully and equally. They also explain how people should be dressed modestly in public places. Children in FS are still developing their understanding of the UAE culture.
- Most of the students in the school show excellent understanding of the Emirati heritage and culture. Children in FS, can explain how Dubai changed rapidly from a 'small city in the desert' to become a modern state with 'lots of skyscrapers' such as Burj Khalifah. All students are very aware of the cultural activities and celebrations such as the National Day and the Flag Day.
- Students in the primary phase are very aware of the cultural diversity in Dubai. They are proud of their own culture and are very conscious of cultural differences. Most demonstrate very strong knowledge of international cultures. Younger students can talk in detail about 'Big Ben' and the 'Great Wall of China'. Children in the FS are less aware of international cultures.

| | Foundation Stage | Primary |
|---|------------------|-----------|
| Social responsibility and innovation skills | Very good | Very good |

- Students are proud to be part of the school community. They have a clear understanding of their responsibilities as members of the school. School prefects are proactive in organising events and keeping the school orderly. Students, in all year groups, participate in fund-raising activities for local charities. Older students assist in cleaning local parks and beaches on a voluntary basis.
- Students have a very positive work ethic. The school continues to provide excellent and wide-ranging opportunities for students to contribute to the life of the school and wider community. Students willingly take on leadership roles and they are proud of their work. They happily participate in activities and help the school community as well as the larger community of Dubai.

- All students care for the school environment. They participate in cleaning projects throughout the school community. The plant project, where students create and maintain plants on the school grounds, supports their environmental awareness. Students are involved in recycling projects, including can, plastic, and paper recycling. Students are knowledgeable and can speak about environmental issues, including sustainability. They know a lot about global warming and its possible impact.

3. Teaching and assessment

| | Foundation Stage | Primary |
|---|------------------|-----------|
| Teaching for effective learning | Very good | Very good |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding of how their students learn best. They engage students of all abilities in rich discussions. As a result, students are confident and articulate learners. Teachers create interesting scenarios to suit their students' abilities and interests especially when explaining more difficult concepts. • Collaborative lesson planning is a strength that ensures new teachers become quickly involved and share a common approach. Learning sequences are planned using the core curriculum documents to personalise curriculum targets so students of all abilities are challenged. Resources support and scaffold students' independent and collaborative work. The school provides students with a rich and stimulating learning environment. • Almost all teachers employ highly effective questioning techniques. Interactions between students and teachers promote thinking and a pride in providing a knowledgeable response. Teachers ask open-ended questions to promote discussion and assess learning. Other adults provide support to enable all students to find answers and become more independent learners. Teachers often begin their lessons by challenging students to raise questions and direct their learning focus. In most lessons, there are regular opportunities for students to share their views and deepen their learning. There are a few lessons where questioning limits the depth of student response and learning is less active. • Almost all teachers have high expectations and this motivates students who enjoy planning and collaborating with their peers. Purposeful dialogue creates a constructive and stimulating environment where ideas are shared. Independent work to craft those ideas into finished pieces are varied and reflect students' different learning abilities and styles. Additional support ensures almost all students make very good progress. Teaching strategies are not always as effective in Islamic education and Arabic lessons. • Students perceive themselves as learners and are encouraged to select and use their most appropriate skills to complete each task in a purposeful way. Opportunities for independent learning arise when students use hand held technology to assess their work. Students learn to take responsibility for their own learning and are prepared to have a go and work things out. Students are presented in lessons with real-life situations that include problem solving. For example, how to attract sponsorship for projects or the impact of tourism on housing and transport. | | |

| | Foundation Stage | Primary |
|--|------------------|-----------|
| Assessment | Very good | Very good |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior leaders are ensuring a highly detailed approach to assessment. Internal assessment processes increasingly provide valid and reliable information that is used to measure students' attainment and progress. The 'Class Monitor' system enables teachers to maintain an accurate and detailed profile of students' progress, attainment and personal development daily. School leaders have also ensured assessment practices are updated in response to the changes in the English National Curriculum. Students' performance in English, mathematics and science is rigorously compared against the English National Curriculum expectations. It is also benchmarked with that of students internationally, and comparative schools in Dubai and the UAE. Students sat for international standardised tests in the primary phase. Assessment information is analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in students' attainment and to identify trends. For example, the school has identified and is starting to address the gender gap in the primary phase but acknowledges that further work is needed to check attainment against ethnicity. The school tracks the progress of students with SEND very carefully. In the FS, teachers use assessment programmes to record formative assessments and build a profile of achievement for each child which is shared with parents. They use the collated information very effectively to identify strengths and gaps in children's knowledge and skills. Throughout the school, teachers use assessment information to meet the needs of most students. Teachers have very good knowledge of individual students' strengths and weaknesses, including those with SEND. Feedback and written comments to students are helpful and constructive. Most teachers rigorously check how well students respond to the next steps in their learning. | | |

4. Curriculum

| | Foundation Stage | Primary |
|--|------------------|---------------|
| Curriculum design and implementation | Outstanding ↑ | Outstanding ↑ |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school curriculum in the FS and primary phase offers breadth, balance and very effective progression across the school. The curriculum is soundly based upon shared values of the school and is effective in developing a balance of knowledge. Time allocations allow depth of learning to challenge students' thinking and understanding. The FS curriculum provides exciting and stimulating experiences. Statutory requirements are fully met for both Islamic education and Arabic. The curriculum provides carefully planned continuity across the school by building on and developing students' prior learning very well. Transitions into the FS provide children with positive opportunities to visit, and become familiar with teachers and their surroundings, well before they start school. Teachers adapt approaches in Year 1 to blend practices from FS and ensure a smooth transfer. At the end of Year 6, students are very well prepared for the next stage in their education. | | |

- Children in the FS have very many opportunities to make choices in their play activities and they respond positively, developing independence and confidence. Students in the primary phase experience a very wide range of subjects, including French, art and music. The daily programme of clubs and sporting activities held after school, enhances their opportunities and choice very well with a high percentage of Grades or Year Groups attending.
- The very well-structured and planned schemes of work embed links across subjects, and within real-life contexts. Curriculum planning for every year group is integrated skilfully and includes thematic topics linked to history, geography and science. The numerous links between subject areas ensure students can apply their skills across their subject learning. This integrated learning very effectively encompasses both the British and UAE contexts.
- Leaders and teachers review the curriculum regularly and effectively to update and align it with UK national standards. It also meets specific expectations within the UAE, for example the very well-planned integration of social studies. A particular focus this year is the embedding of depth and challenge through 'learning gears' which develop critical thinking skills and application in real-life contexts and the wider world. Appropriate curriculum documentation ensures the development needs of all students are supported.
- The UAE social studies curriculum is carefully planned to enhance students' understanding, skills and knowledge of the subject. It is delivered as both integrated and separate lessons for Year 2 to Year 6 students. Social studies curriculum leaders ensure appropriate progression across the school with a wide range of rich activities within the school and wider community. Teachers share clear intentions and high expectations of what students are expected to contribute to lessons through depth of thinking about issues discussed. Students respond to the expectations very well and are engaged enthusiastically, building on their prior knowledge of Dubai and the UAE in their discussions. Teachers plan against the ministry guidelines using these effectively as benchmarks to assess progress.

| | Foundation Stage | Primary |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------|
| Curriculum adaptation | Very good | Very good |

- Teachers use a wide range of internal assessment and examination data with great care to identify where amendments to year group and classroom lesson plans are needed to improve students' progress and attainment. A very close focus on academic performance and learning styles of different groups, including fragile learners, ensures the curriculum remains vibrant and well matched to students' needs.
- There is a well-established culture of innovation and enterprise that values and uses students own interests and ideas very effectively. As a result, the curriculum is imaginative and is further enhanced by an exciting range of extra-curricular activities that are creative and support social development as well as providing extensions to academic work. Opportunities to show innovative thinking, creativity and enterprise permeate the school.
- In almost all aspects of the curriculum there is an appreciation of the richness and diversity of the UAE culture and society. Rich opportunities are planned and woven carefully through the curriculum from children in FS learning about life in a desert climate and the animals, to a very academic appraisal of the impact of significant changes in the UAE in the past decade.
- Children in the FS make a good start on learning to appreciate and speak Arabic. They delight in exploring the sounds of Arabic and linking these to the alphabet letters. Fun activities and songs add to the enjoyment of learning a new language. Resources, especially in a range of attractive story books, are available to add a further dimension to this new area of learning.

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

| | Foundation Stage | Primary |
|---|------------------|-------------|
| Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a very high level of care for students in all aspects of safety and welfare. Policies for child protection and risks associated with bullying, including abuse on internet and social media, are clear, well-known and consistently applied. This ensures that the school is a safe place for all. Staff are aware of procedures for child protection. Training is provided so that staff can identify signs and symptoms of students at risk. The school is very well supervised on a daily basis from arrival to departure. Buses operate very well. There are excellent procedures for passengers including children in the FS. Security arrangements are rigorous and the school site is very well managed. The school is very responsive to identified risks. There is a very high level of supervision throughout the school day with the support of school prefects. The school ensures that it links well with all regulatory agencies. Record keeping is meticulous and up-to-date in all areas, including the health clinic. Fire equipment is well placed around the building and regularly serviced. The evacuation plan is clearly visible to all and fire drills are held at least three times each year. These ensure that everyone knows how to evacuate quickly and safely. The health clinic is excellent. Apart from routine activities, there is a special focus on health checks. The clinic provides excellent guidance and advice for healthy living by creating awareness of a healthy diet and arranging routine checks on lunch boxes. Through weight and BMI monitoring they identify students at risk and provide additional advice and support. The school buildings and grounds are laid out very creatively and innovatively. This ensures a very positive learning environment where excellent use is made of facilities without compromising safety. Buildings are accessible for staff and students with physical disabilities. While there is no elevator, ramp access is available to the first floor and additional support from supervisory staff ensures relatively easy access to the second floor. This ensures that all students have access to the full range of educational experiences on offer. Apart from excellent health monitoring, there is a very wide range of physical education opportunities, including swimming. Outdoor facilities are wide and varied including the roof play area. Participation levels are high. Shading is very effective in providing protection from the sun and fresh water points are located throughout the school. | | |

| | Foundation Stage | Primary |
|------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Care and support | Outstanding ↑ | Outstanding ↑ |

- Relationships across the school community are exemplary and there is a very high level of self and mutual respect. The behaviour policy is rewards based and this acts as a very effective way of encouraging good behaviour. As a result, there is very low incidence of misbehaviour among students. When such rare incidents occur, these are managed very well in conjunction with parents.
- Attendance and punctuality are managed using well-defined procedures and expectations. Planned absences are cleared in advance by senior management. Unexplained absences are effectively followed up by the school. Excellent attendance is celebrated in assemblies, school newsletters and in reports to parents. Consequently, attendance is very high overall.
- There is a very well established identification programme led by the SEND co-ordinator, who responds to teachers concerns or liaises with parents of students admitted to the school with already identified needs. Careful observations are carried out during the assessment process with external support also being recommended if required. A programme of progressively more structured interventions, in and out of the classroom, support identified students very effectively.
- The school provides very effective support for students with SEND. It is rapidly expanding the challenge provided for gifted and talented students in accelerated learning classes for English and mathematics. An efficiently co-ordinated specialist team offer well planned interventions. A recent initiative which is showing early signs of success is the identification and special support for students with SEND with low self-esteem or stress related symptoms.
- The level of care and support for all students is excellent. A significant feature is the PASS (Pupils Attitudes to Self & School) system that has been developed to support students personally and academically. In-school counselling and support is available to students, who suffer from emotional events such as bereavement. Advice and support is given to upper primary students and their parents as they consider next steps after primary school. This includes opportunities for secondary schools to exhibit in the school. This information is supplemented by opportunities to visit secondary schools on a taster basis.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Very good

- The outstanding leadership and management of the SEND co-ordinator ensures there is a clear direction for improvements, based on accurate self-evaluation. There are outstanding resources and additional qualified staff to provide a broad range of carefully targeted support for students both in class and in small intervention groups.
- Students with SEND are identified quickly and very accurately by the SEND co-ordinator. Other qualified staff are not yet fully involved in this process. An extremely carefully structured pathway is followed for continually assessing students' needs to ensure that the support they receive is effective and is regularly reviewed so they continue to make very good progress.

- The partnership with parents is excellent. It is greatly valued by them as it provides regular and very detailed information about the development of their children. The recent links with home, between the specialist teachers, support staff and the informative and personalised transfer information booklet are valuable additions for parents.
- Modification to the curriculum is very good in intervention classes and for those students who are gifted and talented. It is variable in classes through the school. The care of students is a high priority and a recent initiative to identify those students who may be suffering from low esteem and require additional care is proving a helpful new dimension to the excellent care provided for students.
- Monitoring and assessment of the academic achievements of students with SEND are tracked very closely through the school's own assessment processes. In addition, monitoring identifies where further steps are needed to give a higher level of support, or where the level of support can be reduced. Currently, the department's monitoring indicates that students make very good progress against curriculum expectations because of the high-quality support they receive.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Very good

- Senior leaders, and in particular the principal, are highly effective and motivating practitioners whose passion and vision for the school is shared by all members of the school community. Senior leaders inspire and ensure an exclusive school. They are committed to the UAE vision, which is clearly communicated through the school's website and documentation.
- All leaders, demonstrate a secure and thorough knowledge of the English National Curriculum and the requirements for Islamic education and Arabic. They are resolutely committed to providing an inclusive and enabling environment which empowers all students to achieve their potential. Priorities for improvement are known and rigorously pursued.
- Relationships and communications between the school and its stakeholders are professional, harmonious and effective. Leadership is equally focused on the academic, pastoral and creative needs of students as well as developing their problem solving and critical thinking skills. Staff morale is high and teachers say they are proud to be a part of the school.
- Senior and middle leaders demonstrate a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Strengths and areas for development are well known and all staff are clear about how their involvement contributes to the wider success of the school. The school has continued to improve under the present leadership and capacity for further improvement is clearly evident. Students, parents, teachers and governors confirm their confidence in the leadership of the school.
- Leaders have been successful in improving the school from good to very good and consolidating the many strengths identified during the inspection. Leaders have been innovative and inventive in developing the school with evident improvements in the quality of teaching and learning as well as attainment and progress. The school meets all statutory and regulatory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very good

- Self-evaluation is systematic, thorough and embedded. The school makes very good use of internal and external data as well as lesson observations and stakeholder surveys to evaluate what it does well and what it needs to do to improve. The evaluation of key priorities is made by leaders, governors, teachers, parents and students. The school community is clear about the school's strengths and areas in need of improvements.
- Lesson observations are undertaken regularly and frequently using a detailed proforma focusing on students' attainment, progress, engagement, interactions and innovation. Lesson observations are used well to identify strengths and offer areas for improvement. They are evaluated on a range of aspects which are subsequently used to plan professional development opportunities including the National Agenda.
- A detailed and extensive school development plan is in place. It is underpinned by plans which are carefully prioritised with success indicators, time scales and detailed comments on the criteria against which the target is deemed to have been met. Individual plans for English, mathematics and science as well as a range of other subjects are similarly detailed but do not include timescales or any sense of prioritising.
- The school has made progress in addressing the majority of the recommendations from the previous inspection report. The school has improved the quality and quantity of students' writing in English, science and social studies as well as assessing how well they are learning.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Outstanding

- Feedback from parents confirm that they are highly supportive of the school and its leaders. Parent views are regularly sought and acted upon in a timely manner. The partnership between home and school is seen as integral to students' success. Parents say that any concerns raised are quickly dealt with. They feel that they can speak with teachers and leaders whenever they have a concern. Parental involvement makes a positive contribution to rising standards and the success of the school.
- The school has very effective procedures for communicating with parents including a parent representative for each class who keep regular contact with other parents. Parents say that they are well informed and kept up to date through social media where they can track what their children have been doing during the day and be informed about various successes. The regular newsletter provides a flavour of the varied and exciting activities which students enjoy. Parents of children with SEND feel extremely well informed and supported by the school.
- Parents are kept well informed about the progress their children make. Progress reports are comprehensive and sent home at regular intervals. Formal parent-teacher consultations are valued along with more informal gatherings such as coffee mornings and fathers' breakfasts.
- The school enjoys strong partnerships with the local community, such as entrepreneurial work raising money for charity including bake sales and cinema evenings. Links with other GEMS schools are productive in offering school reviews and support for the development of Arabic. Links with schools in the UK offer an international perspective and ensures that the school is up-to-date with changes in the National Curriculum.

Governance

Very good

- The newly constituted governing board includes representation by parents, teachers and local businesses. The school also has a representative from a UK based school to be a governor. The board is timetabled to meet regularly and, like the predecessor governing board, intends to uphold the school's vision and values as well as hold the school accountable for standards and performance.
- The governing body regularly monitors the school and holds leaders of the school accountable for the quality of the school's performance. The strengths and the weaknesses of the school are well known especially with respect to Islamic education and Arabic. Governors confirm their confidence in the leadership of the school as well as the achievement and personal development of students.
- The governing body provide proportionate and purposeful support for the school including offering additional support for the Islamic education and Arabic departments. However, further work is required on improving the teaching and learning in these subjects to raise attainment and progress.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Outstanding

- The school operates very smoothly on a daily basis. All staff know and understand their respective duties and carry these out consistently and efficiently. This ensures that there is little or no disruption to planned lessons, activities and routines. This leads to a very rich and broad educational experience for all students.
- The school is very well staffed and managed. All staff are suitably qualified and trained for their role in the context of a very caring school community. The number of teachers is sufficient to ensure that class sizes remain appropriate. The breadth of experience among teachers is excellent and ensures that the school is able to offer a rich and varied curriculum. Learning and other support staff are very well deployed to support the smooth operation of the school and the needs of students. Ongoing professional development is a significant feature of the school.
- School facilities are excellent and innovatively developed so that students have the best possible educational experience. Space is very well used without compromising safety. This leads to sufficient space for group and individual learning. The richness of the campus is that it is an extremely attractive learning environment where excellence is central to provision.
- In all areas of the school there is a very high level of resourcing. Alongside general resources, of which there are many, specialist resources are used very effectively to promote the ongoing development of skills in research and enquiry. The use of information technology is a significant feature of the school. Quick response codes throughout the school are a wonderful aid to the encouragement of self-directed learning. The use of social media has opened very effective links to home and extends learning into the home environment.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

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

| Responses to the surveys | | |
|---|-----------|-----|
| Responses received | Number | |
|  Parents* | 2016-2017 | 517 |
| | 2015-2016 | 467 |
|  Teachers | 54 | |
|  Students | 0 | |

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

- Almost all parents that responded to the survey, are satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school. Additional written comments confirm parents are happy with the quality of teaching and learning, and the leadership and management of the school.
- Parents are less happy about Islamic education and Arabic teaching and express concerns on the progress their children are making in these subjects. One in five parents that responded did not feel that the school promotes the love of reading in Arabic. Almost all parents agree that their children are developing a good awareness of the UAE and other cultures.
- Almost all parents feel their children enjoy school and 99 percent of those responding feel that their children are safe in the school and on school buses. A minority of parents raised concerns about bullying. Inspection evidence does not support these views.
- Almost all parents feel that the school is well led and that leaders and staff listen and act on concerns parents raise.
- All parents agree that the school offers good academic guidance.
- Comments from teachers that responded to the survey are universally positive and all of them comment favourably on the quality of education and the support for students' safety and well-being.
- Staff that responded to the survey agreed that the school is well led and that this is a good school to work for. Almost all comment positively on the collegiality and trust among staff as well as the professional development opportunities which are helping them to become better teachers.

What happens next?

The school has been asked to prepare and submit an action plan to DSIB within two months of receiving the inspection report. This should address:

- recommendations from DSIB
- areas identified by the school as requiring improvement
- other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school
- priorities arising from the school's unique characteristics.

The next school inspection will report on changes made by the school.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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