



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

The International School of Choueifat -
Branch

Curriculum: SABIS (UK/US)

Overall rating: Acceptable

Read more about the school



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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	Dubai Investment Park
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2012
Website	www.iscdip-sabis.net
Telephone	04-884-7884
Address	PO Box 643581 Dubai Investment Park 1
Principal	Jamal Hazbun
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	8 to 11 February 2016

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-16
Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Grade 11
Number of students on roll	2,719
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	32
Number of students with SEND	0
Largest nationality group of students	Arab

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	119
Largest nationality group of teachers	Irish
Number of teaching assistants	28
Teacher-student ratio	1: 23
Number of guidance counsellors	5
Teacher turnover	39%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	SABIS
Main curriculum	SABIS
External tests and examinations	iGCSE, AS and A levels, AP, SAT, TOEFL
Accreditation	AI and NCPSA
National Agenda benchmark tests	None

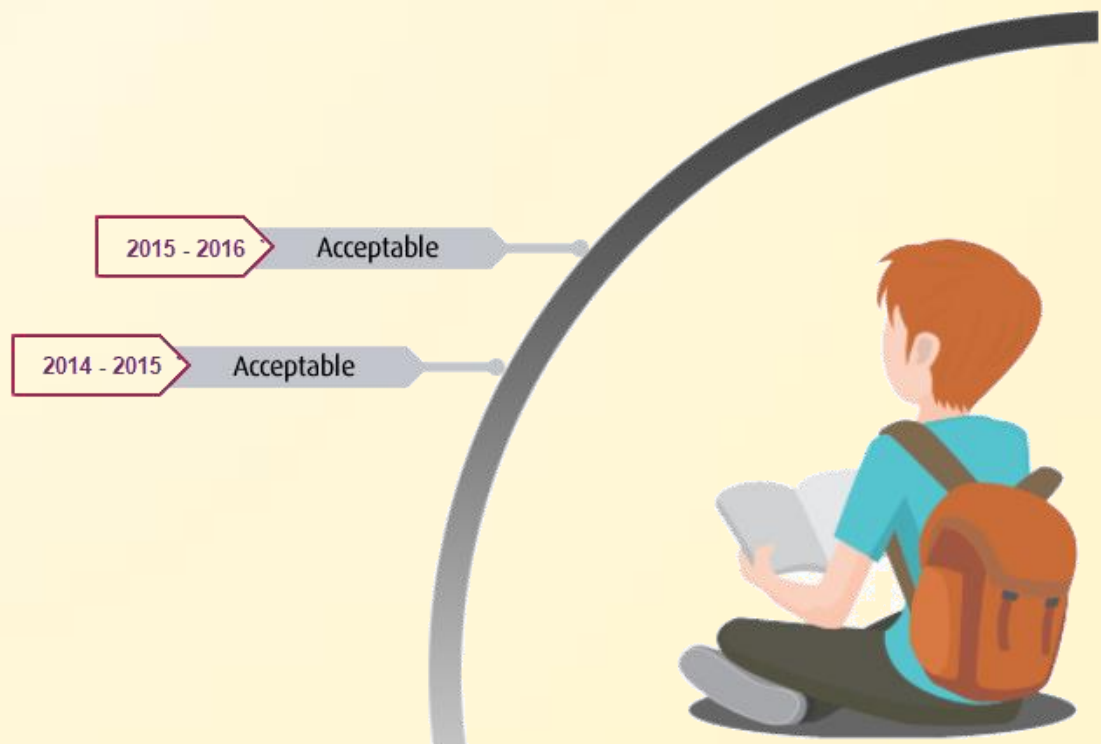


Summary for parents and the community

The International School of Choueifat - Branch 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- Branch** provided an **acceptable** quality of education for its students.

- Students' attainment and progress were mostly acceptable across all phases. It was better in English and mathematics, but weak in Arabic as a first and second language. Students' learning skills were acceptable but there were too few opportunities to develop their critical thinking, problem solving and practical skills.
- Students' personal and social development were good. Relationships were respectful and supportive. Attendance and punctuality were good. Students demonstrated secure understanding of Islamic values. Their environmental and global awareness were acceptable.
- The quality of teaching was acceptable but better when teachers used the textbook as one of many teaching resources, rather than following its contents exclusively and focusing only on examinations. Assessment procedures were regular and detailed, but the resulting information was not used sufficiently to inform teaching and the curriculum.
- The school followed the SABIS curriculum model without due regard for the Ministry of Education (MoE) regulations about Arabic and Islamic education. Modifications of the curriculum for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) were not evident.
- The school provided a secure and safe environment for its students. The school took its responsibilities for ensuring the health and safety of its students, seriously. Policies and procedures were rigorously followed, including those for fire evacuation. A child protection policy had been introduced and was followed by all staff members.
- The director of learning demonstrated a strong capacity for further improvement and development. He was supported by a competent group of senior leaders as well as middle managers who were taking increasing responsibility for their areas. The school's self-evaluation work was unfit for purpose and governors had failed to address the recommendations of the previous report. Parental partnerships were weak. Overall, the management, staffing, facilities and resources were of an acceptable quality.



What did the school do well?

- The good attainment and progress made by students in English in the elementary, middle and high phases, and mathematics in the middle and high phases.
- The students' personal and social development, including their attendance, behaviour, relationships and understanding of healthy living.
- The provision for students' health, safety and welfare as well as the supportive procedures for child protection and safeguarding.



What does the school need to do next?

- Address the recommendations from the previous inspection report, which remain as areas for improvement:
 - Governors must ensure that the school is compliant with the MoE's requirements for teaching Islamic education and Arabic as an additional language.
 - Review the school's admission procedures for students with SEND and align it with the expectations of the *UAE School Inspection Framework* and best international practice
 - Ensure that the systems for identifying and supporting students with SEND and those that are gifted and talented, are rigorous and effective in supporting them to make good progress
 - Use the *UAE School Inspection Framework* criteria for conducting the school's self-evaluation and use the resulting information as a basis for making improvements.
- Raise students' attainment in Arabic and Islamic education by improving teaching, learning, assessment and the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and the curriculum across all phases by:
 - ensuring that work is challenging and well matched to students' individual needs
 - developing students' critical thinking, problem solving and independent learning skills
 - using assessment information to identify and address student needs during lessons
 - ensuring that the curriculum meets the needs of all groups of students
 - identifying and sharing the very best practices seen across the school.
- Strengthen partnerships with parents by involving them more in their children's learning and the life of the school, improving the term reports and increasing the opportunities to meet teachers.



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

- The school's leaders were adamant that there were no students with SEND, so did not collect data on the progress and outcomes of these students.
- The school stated that it did not admit any students who were either 'physically or mentally compromised,' in line with its policy. Reporting to parents was in accordance with the school's reporting procedures.
- The school communicated with parents through the normal reporting procedures. Parental approval was sought if the school considered that a student might benefit from attendance to an additional special class after school.
- Apart from the usual parental involvement, there were no additional opportunities to support their child's education.
- No additional support or guidance was provided to parents of children with SEND as no children were identified. Apart from this, parents were asked for their approval when children were being considered as needing to attend special classes.

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 fully meet the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. No attainment data from the National Agenda Parameter was available to make a judgement on the progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets.
- The school had not promoted awareness of the National Agenda to the school and its stakeholders. Students were able to speak about the use of TIMSS and PISA and, indeed, a number of the students had taken the tests. Whilst the governing body and the senior team were aware of the National Agenda, an understanding of it had not been transmitted to parents and students.
- There had been minimal adjustments to the curriculum in key subjects. Teachers were aware of the link between the TIMSS and PISA tests and the aspirations of the UAE. Students involved in taking the tests had been well prepared. There was little further development of the relevant skills within the National Agenda parameter.
- The manner in which the curriculum was delivered did not help teachers to develop students' critical thinking skills, but there were examples in English and in high school mathematics when questioning techniques were effective. In English, opportunities arose when, for example, students considered the feelings of soldiers in the First World War. In the other key subjects, activities were more rigidly linked to set texts.
- The development of students' research skills was not evident in lessons. Students had opportunities to work on projects of their own choosing, enabling them to carry out investigations and research. The set curriculum provided little opportunity for independent work or to seek and evaluate information from a variety of sources. Students had access to tablet computers, although they were not widely used for research.

Innovation in education

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

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



Promoting a culture of innovation:

- The director of learning understood the importance of innovation and was committed to the school's mission and philosophy of innovative ideas be integrated throughout the programme. The school had not developed a strategic response to promote the UAE's vision of innovation as a national priority. The infrastructure supported student-initiated activities and school leaders had identified some physical spaces to promote students' engagement. The design of the curriculum did not consider innovation and as a result teachers did not encourage students to take risks or attempt innovative ways of learning.

Overall school performance					
Acceptable					

1. Students' achievement					
		KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
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	Weak
	Progress	Not applicable	Weak	Weak	Weak
English 	Attainment	Acceptable	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good
	Progress	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics 	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good ↑
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good ↑
Science 	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good	Good	Good	Good
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	Acceptable
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The children came into school with a range of skills in communicating and many spoke English as an additional language. Their confidence and self-esteem had beneficial effects upon their spoken English. When they were interested they paid attention, listened to what was being said and could follow simple instructions. Their skills in writing were developing appropriately. By Kindergarten (KG) 2, they could write their own names, but there were some inconsistencies in letter formation and a mix of capital and small letters. Children were able to apply their increasing phonetic knowledge to decipher words, but this was not used well enough for them to spell and write words independently. In reading, phonetic knowledge and familiar words were used to help them read simple sentences.
- In mathematics, children were able to count reliably to ten and by KG 2 could go beyond 20 and work out simple problems. They managed the latter with ease, but did not extend the depth and breadth of their skills and understanding. The children appreciated a range of two and three-dimensional shapes, but these were not explored in detail. Practical activities did not feature regularly in the children's mathematical experiences. This meant that their progress was not as rapid as it might have been in discovering how mathematics related to their environment.
- Attainment in science was acceptable overall but, as scientific enquiry was not a feature of the children's work, experiences to explore materials and media were sometimes missed to the detriment of their progress. When this was successfully provided, for example to observe the features of sunflowers as they grow, children's progress was good. However, this type of activity was not frequent enough for children to embed their skills and consolidate their understanding. The outdoor areas were not used enough to enable children to become 'scientists' and explore the environment, manage simple tools and make discoveries. Practical work or explorations were rarely offered. This lack of investigation meant that children who were naturally curious learners did not find out things for themselves.

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

- Students' attainment in the elementary phase, as measured against the expectations of the MoE curriculum, showed that most had achieved an acceptable level of understanding of Islamic values in the verses of the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeths. They had developed skills and understanding about faith and their responsibility for Islamic duties. Students continued to display appropriate levels of understanding and appreciation of Islamic principles. Most students were making acceptable progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding as measured against the learning objectives. Their progress in acquiring knowledge of facts was adequate, but their application of concepts was limited due to excessive teachers' talk and ineffective teaching methods.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attained levels that were in line with the curriculum standards, and this was demonstrated by internal tests. Students made the expected progress against the curriculum standards, although there were some unequal levels between them. Most students had appropriate listening and basic reading skills. Students' abilities to write coherent paragraphs were developing, however their creative writing lacked originality. Students' speaking skills were only acceptable, due to excessive use of colloquial language and due to their limited vocabularies. Comprehension of literature was very limited; only a majority of students were able to respond to poetry during their lessons. Most students made acceptable progress in understanding the texts being studied and in writing simple sentences using new words.
- The majority students learning Arabic as an additional language attained below the curriculum standards. There were significant gaps in students' knowledge and weaknesses in their skills and understanding. The majority of students were able to listen and respond to familiar greetings. Engaging in simple conversations about family and daily life, or reading familiar sentences were too difficult for the majority of students. As a result, their independent writing skills were weak. Language was not used confidently to communicate during lessons.
- A majority of the students' skills in speaking, reading and writing English were above the curriculum expectations. They made good progress in reading in the early grades and this provided a secure base for their writing, which was above expectations by the end of the elementary phase. During lessons, students made good headway, particularly in reading comprehension and drawing inferences from texts. They had begun to use literary devices such as similes and metaphors in their writing. The more able students typically made rapid progress. Their attainment was good, although some had the potential to achieve more. Overall levels of attainment had improved on the previous year. The school had not measured students' attainment against international standards.

- In mathematics, elementary students attained levels in line with the expectations for their ages. A few students were able to achieve at better than the expected levels. As the school did not use any international benchmarking tests, comparison was not possible. Students showed sound knowledge of mathematical concepts, for example Grade 5 students were able to work with accuracy on ratios. The levels of attainment were consistent over the last three years, as shown in the school's attainment data. Most students made the expected progress against their lesson objectives. There was variation in the amount of progress made by different groups of students. Those who grasped concepts most quickly were not able to progress at a faster rate, whilst lower attainers struggled to keep pace with the work.
- In science, most students attained in line with the curriculum standards. Opportunities for students to apply their knowledge, test their predictions, or practice the steps of the scientific method were limited. There was an over dependence on textbooks and a constant need to complete the prescribed weekly work. There were insufficient laboratories available for the consistent development of investigative skills and the curriculum did not support research activities. In Grade 2, most students could provide examples of how different objects move. Older students could use and describe the terms potential and kinetic energy. Most students made the expected progress in science. However, students' progress was restricted. There were too few opportunities to develop their skills of investigation, critical thinking and problem solving.

Middle

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

- Students' attainment in Islamic education in the middle phase, as measured against the MoE curriculum expectations, showed that most had achieved an acceptable level of understanding about Islamic rules in the chapters of the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeths. They had developed skills and understanding about the events from the Prophet's (PBUH) biography, along with a secure understanding and appreciation of Islamic principles. Most students were making acceptable progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding as measured against the learning objectives. Teachers talking most of the time was a major reason for the slowing of students' progress.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attained levels that were in line with curriculum standards although this was not the case in internal school tests. Students made the expected progress against the curriculum but progress was variable. Most students had appropriate listening and reading skills. Students' ability to write coherent paragraphs were developing however creative writing was under-developed in most classes. Students speaking skills were acceptable due to teaching strategies which gave more focus to this. A majority of students were able to respond to poetry during their lessons with support from their teacher. Most students made acceptable progress in understanding the texts being studied and in writing simple paragraphs using new words.

- Standards reached by the majority students learning Arabic as an additional language were below the curriculum expectations. There were significant gaps in students' knowledge and weaknesses in their skills and understanding. Students' listening and reading skills were not secure. Their writing was even less developed. In speaking, most students lacked confidence when expressing their ideas and opinions. Work in lessons was not differentiated to support students at differing levels. This limited progress in developing speaking and writing skills for most students. A significant minority were unable to demonstrate basic competency in the language. The lack of modelling of how the language should be used prevented their progress from being better.
- Students acquired fluent speaking skills in English, expressing themselves confidently in well-structured sentences. They were attentive when listening and collaborating with their peers. Almost all were fluent readers. They had very secure comprehension skills. Students analysed texts well, drawing inferences as well as literal meanings. Their writing skills were generally good with the correct syntax, spelling, punctuation and grammar. Some students wrote with considerable flair in a range of genres. Progress during lessons was typically good as effective teachers generated enthusiasm and a sense of purpose. During lessons, boys and girls made similar progress. Although the more able students were generally challenged through open-ended tasks, once they had achieved the expected grade levels, their learning tended to plateau. Students' progress was not measured against international standards.
- The majority of students' attainment in mathematics exceeded expectations of the curriculum. Students had a secure grasp of the key concepts related to the mathematics being taught. They demonstrated good mathematical principles and were able to apply their knowledge to the processes mastered. There was no available measure of attainment against international standards. Students had yet to develop a questioning and critical approach when seeking possible solutions to problems. Similar levels of performance had been maintained over the last few years. Most students made better than expected progress. However, their progress in lessons was varied, as the level of challenge and pace of work was not meeting the needs of all.
- Students achieved at acceptable levels in science. They increased their scientific vocabulary, as well as their scientific knowledge and by the end of the phase, a majority were able to respond to increasingly complex ideas and concepts. Grade 7 students could confidently describe the formation of ions when atoms gained or lost electrons. In Grade 8, students studied scientific inquiry theoretically. However, there was no opportunity for building their understanding by engaging in practical activities. The development of students' critical thinking and problem solving skills through research and investigations was similarly inhibited. Students had not been exposed to international benchmark testing to support the UAE National Agenda.

High

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

- Students' attainment in the high school, as measured against the MoE curriculum expectations, demonstrated that most had achieved acceptable levels of understanding about Islamic laws related to permitted food and dress. Students had also developed skills and understanding about fasting in Ramadan. Most students were making acceptable progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding as measured against the learning objectives in the units of study. Their progress was limited by poor quality teaching which failed to engage students.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attained levels that were in line with the curriculum standards as demonstrated by internal school tests. Students made the expected progress against the curriculum, although there was variance between them. Most students had appropriate listening and acceptable reading skills. Students' abilities to write coherent texts were under-developed. Students' speaking skills were acceptable, due to excessive use of colloquial language and limited vocabularies. Only a few students demonstrated skills above curriculum standards. Their comprehension of literature was very limited. Most students made acceptable progress in understanding texts, but there was little evidence of extended writing.
- Standards reached by the majority of students learning Arabic as an additional language were below curriculum expectations. There were significant gaps in students' knowledge and weaknesses in their skills and understanding. Students' listening and reading skills were not secure. Their writing was under-developed. In speaking, most students lacked confidence when expressing their ideas and opinions. Inappropriate tasks limited their progress in speaking and writing. A significant minority were unable to demonstrate a basic competency in the language. As in the younger grades, a lack of modeling of how the language should be used limited students' progress.
- Students studying English were making good progress and generally attained well in speaking, reading and writing. During lessons, students showed considerable understanding and increasing insights when analysing texts. For example, Grade 10 students recognised the powerful impact of a poem by Wilfred Owen. Students expressed their views eloquently. Boys and girls were making similar progress and the most able students were building well on their very secure starting points, including in their writing.
- Attainment by the majority of students in mathematics was above the curriculum standards. Most students showed good knowledge of the subject, were aware of the processes and how to apply formulae. Their knowledge of why processes worked and how they related to the real world was less secure. Students' attainment had remained consistent over the last two years. The progress by the majority of students was better than expected, although in lessons it was variable. The few higher attaining students and those who had difficulty with aspects of the subject tended not to make good progress.

- The students' attainment and progress in biology, chemistry and physics was acceptable. Grade 9 students continued to build on their strong knowledge base when they studied musculoskeletal systems. For example, all students could describe which muscles were used to straighten a leg during flexing. Students in Grade 11 chemistry lessons developed secure knowledge of ionic and covalent bonding. However, their development of critical thinking and problem solving skills was often overlooked in the quest for factual knowledge. This restricted students' overall progress in science. Investigative science and research were not strong features of the senior science lessons. Students in this phase had not completed any external examinations.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Students had positive attitudes towards their learning and were happy working individually and in groups. Opportunities for students to take personal responsibility for their learning were limited. In KG, children had growing levels of independence. The older, more able students were not sufficiently challenged in lessons, while others did not receive the required support. Across the school, students had limited insights about their progress as learners.
- Students worked cooperatively and collegially. They occasionally worked with their peers to complete tasks when answering extended questions. Across the senior phase there were too few opportunities for class dialogue. Students were generally not encouraged to present their own ideas or to hear and reflect upon the ideas of others. However in KG, for their age children presented their views confidently.
- Only a few lessons allowed students to link ideas to other subjects or to real world contexts. Connections were seldom used as the basis for students' learning. As a result, more than a few students struggled to fully understand the relevance of some lesson content to their lives. In the KG, there were too few meaningful links to everyday situations in Dubai.
- Students had limited experience of research or investigation in lessons. The few examples of independent research demonstrated untapped potential. In classes, students were able to use technology, but this was generally a substitute for textbooks. Older students engaged in a minimal number of practical science investigations. Their skills of critical thinking and problem solving were generally under-developed. Students had little opportunity to demonstrate enterprise, creativity or their innovative abilities. Creative work using a range of media was happening in the better lessons in the KG.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Across all phases, students demonstrated positive and responsible attitudes. These were evident, for example, in their mature responses to feedback from their peers and teachers. Students in the high school phase displayed high levels of self-reliance.
- Students across all phases were well behaved. They worked co-operatively in groups when given the opportunity. They followed the school's rules and most exercised self-control. However, in the middle phase there were some instances of bullying, which were quickly followed up by the school.
- Relationships between students reflected high levels of care and support. Students did not hesitate to give support to others when required. This was a particular strength in the high school. Relationships with teachers and with visiting adults were highly respectful.
- Students had good understanding of the benefits of a healthy life style. Many took part in sporting activities. They were aware of the importance of a healthy diet. In the KG, children developed their understanding of healthy bed time practices such as brushing their teeth. In the other phases, students regularly recorded the contents of their lunch boxes on a chart.
- The students' attendance over the last full term and during the time of the inspection was good. Most students arrived at school in a timely manner and there were good systems in place to ensure that they were punctual to every class.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Most students were able to discuss Islamic values at a very basic level. They were aware of important Islamic celebrations such as Eid Al-Adha and Eid Al-Fitr celebrations. They were also aware of the importance of treating everyone with respect. However, most were not secure in their knowledge about the significance of such things. They were aware of the differences between cultures and nations regarding dress codes, but their knowledge lacked depth.
- Students across all phases demonstrated an appropriate level of knowledge of the UAE, and its founding principles. They were less aware about the period before the union or the roles of the current leaders of the UAE. Most could describe a few differences between the daily lives within the UAE's emirates. Most had a limited understanding of why Dubai was different than the other Emirates. They discussed the concept of an 'open' society, but most were unable to describe how this feature affected their daily lives.
- Most students reflected on the importance and differences of dealing with other cultures and nations during their discussions and a minority were able to examine that experience and how it affected them personally. They were aware of the changes happening to their culture, but were not able to further explain how to deal with these changes. A leadership conference provided a few students with leadership experiences that supported their overall development.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Students were well aware of their responsibilities in the school community. In most classrooms, students had assigned tasks which they undertook responsibly and with enthusiasm. Some senior students were involved in activities in the wider community, however these opportunities were under-developed.
- Most students across all phases had a positive work ethic and participated responsibly during assemblies, lessons and break times. While students were willing participants in activities they were often too dependent on their teachers' directions.
- Across all phases, the environmental actions initiated by students was limited. Plants had been supplied by students to improve the school's surroundings and students showed care towards these and the general school environment. There was scope to improve the recycling initiative across all phases. Global and environmental awareness was a developing feature across all phases.

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Most teachers had acceptable knowledge of their subjects. However, a majority of teachers, particularly those in the lower phases, lacked sufficient understanding of the best teaching practices that would engage and fully challenge all groups of students. Teachers' awareness of how students learn their subjects was strongest in the high school. Some teaching, particularly in the KG and primary phase, lacked interesting topics and practical applications to engage students actively in their learning. Often there was insufficient depth, breadth or challenge in the tasks that teachers set for their students.
- Most lesson plans adopted by teachers were provided from the SABIS corporate office. Plans were effective in identifying key elements knowledge that had to be learned. However, a large minority of teachers were didactic in their approaches, teaching classes as a whole. Too often they did not determine students' understanding at the beginning of lessons to take account of their current knowledge or interests. Students mostly received knowledge passively and did not link concepts to real life situations, events and objects. Few teachers used technology or interactive and physical materials to engage students.
- In most lessons, teachers asked questions to check students' understanding or to recall facts. However, in the best lessons these questions were broad in focus. They were challenging enough to promote deep thought and to stimulate meaningful dialogue. Occasionally, students were encouraged to present their ideas to their classmates and were given sufficient opportunities to hear and reflect on the ideas of others. In too many lessons teachers dominated the proceedings, with only a minority of lessons featuring some group activities.
- The matching of teaching activities to the needs of different groups of students was a weakness across all phases of the school. In the better lessons, teachers offered a range of challenges, but frequently these did not stretch the most able students. In the lower phases, teachers' expectations were often too low, which restricted students' progress. In the KG there was too much direction by adults. Children had too few opportunities to choose for themselves, to explore, to investigate or to develop their critical thinking skills. Some KG teachers worked very hard to provide practical activities and had prepared their own resources. These worked well when the resources had been chosen to add structure to the tasks and therefore supported the children's learning.

- Teachers occasionally asked open questions of their students, but they seldom asked them to justify conclusions or expand their ideas beyond straight forward responses. Some enquiry, project or research activities, particularly for older students, heightened students' curiosity. In a few lessons, students were encouraged to interact with selected materials and generate questions and hypotheses. However, in most lessons across all phases, there were too few opportunities to develop critical thinking skills. Older students were able to work independently, but only within prescribed tasks, and with little opportunity to be innovative or creative.
- Most teachers of Arabic as a first language planned for and used a narrow range of teaching strategies. Most were didactic in their approach. They seldom used a range of questioning strategies to ensure maximum student involvement, thinking and articulation. This resulted in passive, inactive and disengaged students whose individual learning needs were not being met.
- The teaching of Arabic as an additional language was weak overall. Not all teachers had secure subject knowledge. Within lessons, learning objectives were not clear and there was a lack of differentiation of content. This resulted in a lack of challenge and disengagement for some students. Teachers' talking dominated the lessons, restricting opportunities for students to be fully involved.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Internal assessment systems were consistent. The assessments were linked closely to the curriculum. In the KG, procedures were comprehensive and generally very detailed. Individual subject leaders were not responsible for the design of the assessments, but were provided with the results regularly. The processes provided detailed attainment data but were less useful for measuring the progress that students made.
- At the time of the inspection the school had not made use of any system of international benchmarking. However, during the previous academic year a few older students had successfully taken the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (iGCSE) examinations in a number of subjects.
- The extensive data that the school generated was used to track the attainment of students. The frequency of the tests and the analysis that had been carried out were indicators of progress, but this were not sufficiently robust to ensure the effective monitoring of individual students' progress.
- Assessment data was not sufficiently well used to inform the planning of lessons to meet the needs of all groups of students. The analysed data had little effect upon curriculum planning, although there had been some adjustments to the pacing of the elementary school English curriculum. The analysis of assessment information was not used to identify starting points in teaching and learning.
- Most teachers had reasonable knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses. Students frequently marked their own work, for example in mathematics, and peer evaluation was used in the key subjects. However, detailed written feedback from teachers in students' notebooks was absent in most subjects.

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The curriculum provided by the SABIS group was reasonably broad and balanced, with a focus on developing students' knowledge. Whilst the content met the requirements of the school's authorised curriculum, it did not meet statutory requirements for teaching Arabic as an additional language and Islamic education, because there was not enough teaching time given to these two subjects.
- In the KG, children's learning was promoted through purposeful play, although opportunities to explore ideas independently were limited. The curriculum provided increasing challenge as students moved through the school, although there were missed opportunities for the most able students to extend and deepen their understanding. The curricula for Arabic and Islamic education missed some key aspects which meant that students were not well prepared for subsequent grades.
- The range of subjects available ensured that all students had an opportunity to realise their academic potential and develop their academic interests and talents. Older students had a good range of options from which to choose as they started Grade 10, including biology for the arts stream and other subjects for the science stream.
- Curriculum guidelines did not include specific ways by which links might be made between subjects. Some teachers used their initiative to prompt connections across the curriculum. For example, during a lesson on *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, the teacher linked the size of porridge bowls to recent work in mathematics. Some relevant links were made between literature and social studies in the higher grades, but they were incidental rather than planned.
- Phase and subject leaders met regularly to review the effects of the curriculum upon students' learning and progress. This resulted in some small adjustments to how the highly structured curriculum was implemented; for example by giving more time to a particular concept. Changes were generally slow to be implemented.
- Students followed two social studies programmes taught in Arabic and English. The programme taught in Arabic followed the MoE guidelines and included aspects of UAE culture and Islamic values. The programme taught in English included mainly aspects of history and geography.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak

- The school diligently followed the SABIS curriculum. Modifications to meet the needs of particular groups of students were difficult within the constraints of the curriculum. The school had not modified the curriculum to facilitate these students' learning, nor made changes to augment the curriculum for those who were gifted and talented.
- Opportunities for the enhancement of the core curriculum were limited due to time constraints and the prescriptive nature of the curriculum. The curriculum's support for enterprise and innovation was implicit and activities to promote links within the community were developing.

- Links to Emirati culture and UAE society were appropriately developed in some social studies classes which were given in Arabic. In addition the curriculum for Arabic was suitably modified to make direct references to Emirati culture. Throughout the rest of the school these links were tenuous except for the writing competition based on the heritage and culture of the UAE.
- One period of Arabic lessons were provided each day in the lower and upper KG classes for Arabic speaking children. Non-Arabic speaking children were simultaneously learning French. On the basis of the Arabic lessons observed, Arabic lessons in the KG were well presented and the children were interested and participated actively.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The school had a clear and comprehensive child protection policy that offered detailed procedures, roles and responsibilities. The policy was well known to the staff and the school had acted upon any concerns in proactive and sensitive ways. Staff members were able to articulate clearly the actions they should take if they had a concern. Parents confirmed that their children felt safe at school.
- Risk assessments were duly considered and pre-visit risk assessments were made prior to any trips or excursions. Transport arrangements were secure, with supervision on the buses, fire extinguishers in place, first aid kits provided, seat belts available and registers taken. Access to the school was well controlled and all gates were secured.
- Record keeping was comprehensive. Checks and regular maintenance arrangements were logged systematically to ensure that the premises were safe and well-maintained, with suitable actions taken to quickly remedy any shortcomings.
- The premises were well maintained, with designated facilities for science and physical education. There were shaded outdoor areas for students and children in the KG. The buildings provided suitable access for those with disabilities. Cameras were installed across the school to ensure the safety of students and the staff.
- The school had well maintained two clinics served by three nurses and a doctor. Medications were stored appropriately and records for individual students kept securely. The school actively promoted healthy life styles, hygiene and good food choices for all students. Students, especially the younger ones, were actively supported in their choice of healthy foods.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Relationships between the staff and students were good and actively promoted by the Student Life Organisation's theme of 'Building Good Relationships.' There were very effective procedures in place to monitor behaviour and to ensure that students adhered to the school's code of conduct. Members of the school's Student Life Organisation were used successfully to promote good behaviour and discipline.
- Robust procedures surrounded students' attendance and punctuality. Attendance was recorded at the start of the school day and at appropriate periods throughout. The reasons for absences were ascertained at an early stage and follow up with parents was carried out when necessary. A tracking system for late comers was in place and statistics on attendance and punctuality were recorded for reporting to parents.
- The school's admissions policy and other documents suggested that the school did not have any students with SEND. During class visits, the inspection team noted that almost all teachers had identified students who required further assistance to complete their tasks. The reasons for these interventions were not fully explained. The school had started the process of identifying students who were gifted and talented.
- The school had established a number of additional classes for students who were under-achieving in the rigorous tests. In addition, peer tutoring was provided for these students to help them to catch up. Support for gifted and talented students was mostly provided through the large range of sport and art clubs, as well as debating societies.
- The school had established good systems to guide and support students, particularly through the offices of the Student Life Organisation coordinator and designated faculty members assigned for each grade. Subject and career guidance and information was supplied from Grade 7 onwards and, on a weekly basis from Grade 9. A careers manual was also widely used by students.

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

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

Weak

- The governors of the school had formulated an admission policy which stated that the school did not admit 'any student who was either physically or mentally compromised.' As a consequence, the inspection team was not provided with policies, plans for inclusion or test results for students with SEND in the school.
- Almost all teachers had identified students who required further assistance to complete their tasks and had noted this on their class lists or lesson plans. These identifications were based upon internal test results, which occurred on a very regular basis, and upon teachers' observations.
- All parents received regular information about the attainment of their children across all subjects, but there was no specific mention of the attainment or progress of students who had specific challenges or reference to those students' who may have SEND. There was no specific person allocated to support students with SEND, as the school did not recognise that any student might fall within such a category.
- The school had not modified any aspect of the curriculum for any student and the core curriculum was delivered as set out by the SABIS group. All students were expected to reach an acceptable standard within each class level. Class teachers supported their under-achieving students through additional in-class support and peer tutoring. These students also attended extra classes.

- No adaptation was made during testing to accommodate any students with likely specific learning difficulties. Since the school did not recognise that there were such students attending, it was not possible to identify their progress.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- Senior leaders, and in particular the director of learning, were competent and effective. Leaders, including middle leaders, undertook their duties with appropriate levels of efficiency and competency. They demonstrated awareness and appreciation of how students learn with a variety of different needs.
- Most leaders demonstrated a secure knowledge of the curriculum and good teaching practice. Priorities for development were known but not recorded. Middle leaders offered support with increasing levels of confidence especially in English, science and in the KG.
- Relationships and communications between staff members across the school were courteous and professional. Staff members were encouraged to work co-operatively with a focus on greater involvement. Morale throughout the school was positive.
- Senior staff members demonstrated secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the SABIS management structure. They had good understanding of what needed to be done to raise the quality of teaching and improve outcomes for students.
- Overall, the leaders of the school had too little success in improving the aspects of the school that were raised in the previous inspection report.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very weak ↓

- School self-evaluation was limited and narrowly focused. The grades offered were unrealistically inflated in comparison with the *UAE School Inspection Framework*. Comments to support the judgements offered by the school's leaders were often misplaced and made little reference to the framework.
- Lesson observations were undertaken regularly and used well to offer support to teachers on how to improve. Lesson observations were evaluated on aspects such as planning, teaching, management and communication. Evaluations were used to support individual professional development but did not contribute to whole school action planning.
- A school improvement plan was not available. As such, it was impossible to identify the school's strategic and operational goals, monitor stakeholder involvement or assess incremental improvements in student outcomes.
- There had been little progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection report. In particular, the school had not addressed the non-compliance with the MoE's requirements for providing Arabic and Islamic education lessons, neither had they improved the systems for identifying and supporting students with SEND.




Partnerships with parents and the community	Weak
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school did not sufficiently involve or encourage parents in their children's learning or school life in general. The opinions of parents were known through informal contacts, but parents did not all feel that the school welcomed or encouraged their views or involvement. Communication with parents was carried out on a regular basis. For example, parents were contacted in the event of unexpected absences or inappropriate behaviour. All parents had access to the school's website, which offered them regular updates on the academic and pastoral progress of their children. Reporting was regular and offered parents frequent updates about academic attainment and personal development, but with little indication about how to improve further. Some parents complained about the lack of opportunities for meeting teachers. The school offered limited links with the local community through tree planting activities, attendance at training camps and links with other SABIS schools for a variety of sports events. Links with other schools and the local community were generally under-developed. 	

Governance	Very weak ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The governing board included representation of the school's owners but not from parents and other stakeholders, whose views were rarely encouraged or sought. The governing body was responsible for 'all final decisions in relation to the operational choices of the schools,' whereas the director was entrusted with 'the responsibility to implement SABIS policies and the day-to-day running of their school. The governing body played a pivotal role in holding the school accountable for its performance. Representatives of the board, such as the regional director, visited the school regularly. Parent surveys were not undertaken; concerns raised by parents were not always responded to in an appropriate or supportive manner. The governing body actively encouraged senior leaders in their pursuit of improvement, but made no attempt to address the statutory requirements for teaching Arabic as an additional language and Islamic education for non-Arab Muslims. Other recommendations highlighted in the previous inspection report were not acted upon. 	

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organisation and daily management of the school was seamless and effectively delegated. Policies were clearly stated and flexible processes and systems for the daily planning, communication and decision making were embedded. Timetables were effectively designed to ensure that facilities were well utilised. Students and the staff exhibited confidence in the high level of consistency of these operations. The school was adequately staffed. Almost all teachers had degree-level academic qualifications, but only a small percentage held any teaching qualifications. Consequently, many teachers lacked an understanding of best teaching practices. Professional training was available through various routes. However those staff members identified as requiring training through the appraisal process seldom had this need met. Furnishings throughout the school were suitable and allowed for a range of different activities. Specialist rooms included computer laboratories, language rooms, and a well-resourced library. There were insufficient science laboratory resources to ensure that all middle and high school students could carry out practical, investigative and research. Lifts provided anyone with physical mobility issues access to the higher floors. The school had an adequate range of learning resources. The collection was growing in KG. Most classrooms had visual technology to support teaching and most students had computers for in-class use. However, these computers were seldom used to support independent research or project work. In the KG, there were too few opportunities for children to develop their skills using technology. 	

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	257
	2014-2015	458
Teachers 	8	
Students 	53	

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

- Most parents and students were satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school.
- Parents felt that their children were making good progress in English and mathematics.
- A large minority of parents expressed concerns about progress in Arabic and a minority expressed concerns about Islamic education. Students expressed similar concerns.
- Almost all parents said that their children felt safe in the school. A minority of students did not feel safe.
- Most parents felt that the school was well led and a few added positive comments about supportive teachers across the school.
- Parents agreed that more might be done to raise students' awareness of the environment, the community and different cultures.
- A quarter of the parents and nearly half of the students did not feel that the school's leaders listened or acted upon their views.
- A significant number of parents expressed concerns that there were no scheduled parent meetings.
- The number of responses received from teachers was too small to carry out any meaningful analysis.

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