

INSPECTION REPORT

2022-2023



GEMS ROYAL DUBAI SCHOOL - DUBAI BRANCH

UK CURRICULUM

VERY GOOD

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SCHOOL INFORMATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

	Location	Al Mizhar
	Opening year of School	2005
	Website	www.royaldubaischool.com
	Telephone	97142886499
	Principal	Jan Steel
	Principal - Date appointed	1st August 2022
	Language of Instruction	English
	Inspection Dates	16 to 20 January 2023

STUDENTS

	Gender of students	Boys and girls
	Age range	3 to 11
	Grades or year groups	FS1 to Year 6
	Number of students on roll	917
	Number of Emirati students	239
	Number of students of determination	80
	Largest nationality group of students	Emirati

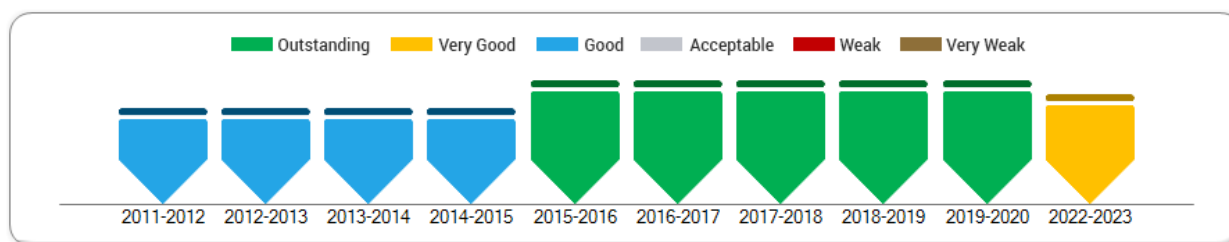
TEACHERS

	Number of teachers	62
	Largest nationality group of teachers	British
	Number of teaching assistants	36
	Teacher-student ratio	1:15
	Number of guidance counsellors	1
	Teacher turnover	27%

CURRICULUM

	Educational Permit/ License	UK
	Main Curriculum	UK
	External Tests and Examinations	NA
	Accreditation	COBIS

School Journey for GEMS ROYAL DUBAI SCHOOL - DUBAI BRANCH



Summary of Inspection Findings 2022-2023

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **very good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for students' outcomes, provision, and leadership.

STUDENTS OUTCOMES

- Children in the Foundation Stage (FS) make consistently outstanding progress. In the primary phase, the achievement of students is variable. Progress in English, mathematics, and science is not as rapid as that observed during the previous inspection. Students' attainment in Arabic as a first language has improved and is now good. Attainment in mathematics has declined. Throughout the school, students have outstanding learning skills.
- Students' ability to manage their own behaviour, to take responsibility for themselves and to support others, is outstanding. They have an excellent understanding of Islamic values and of Emirati and world cultures. They can compare different traditions and beliefs from around the world. They have a very good understanding of sustainability issues and make very sensible suggestions to protect the environment.

PROVISION FOR LEARNERS

- In FS, teaching has an outstanding impact on children's learning. In Primary, teaching is not as consistent. Teachers have excellent relationships with students and offer them many opportunities to become independent learners. However, their assessment of how well students are learning are not always accurate. This adversely affects the planning and delivery of lessons, progress slows, and students do not always reach their full potential.
- The curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that it continues to provide students with an outstanding range of interesting activities. Subjects are successfully linked and are often well related to life outside the classroom. After-school activities are extensive. They enable students to follow their interests and add to their enjoyment of learning.
- Arrangements for health and safety, including practices for child protection, are outstanding. Students' wellbeing is central to the highly-effective systems of care and support which permeate all areas of the schools' work. The inclusion of all students is a strong feature of the school. Students of determination are effectively supported to make rapid progress against their personal targets.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- Leaders have very successfully implemented a range of programmes to support the development of learning skills and personal qualities. However, overall educational direction is not consistently understood by all leaders. Leaders know the strengths of the school. Systems to check the effectiveness of teaching, and of how successfully students learn, are not sufficiently refined. The partnerships with parents are outstanding. The school's facilities and resources are conducive to positive learning..

The best features of the school:

- Children's excellent experience in FS
- Students' outstanding personal development and learning skills
- The learning environment, and the excellent systems for care, support, wellbeing and safety
- The breadth of the curriculum and the outstanding specialist facilities
- Partnerships with parents

Key recommendations:

- Review the school's assessment processes, especially in Primary to ensure that the data gathered on achievement is accurate, understood and used skilfully by all teachers and fully supports self-evaluation process.
- Ensure that all leaders have a secure understanding of the best practices in teaching, curriculum, and assessment to provide effective educational direction.
- Improve the systems for monitoring the quality of teaching.

Overall School Performance

Very good ↓

1. Students' Achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary
<p>Islamic Education</p>	Attainment	Not applicable	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good
<p>Arabic as a First Language</p>	Attainment	Not applicable	Good ↑
	Progress	Not applicable	Good
<p>Arabic as an Additional Language</p>	Attainment	Not applicable	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good
<p>English</p>	Attainment	Very good	Very good
	Progress	Outstanding	Very good ↓
<p>Mathematics</p>	Attainment	Outstanding	Good ↓
	Progress	Outstanding	Very good ↓
<p>Science</p>	Attainment	Outstanding	Very good
	Progress	Outstanding	Very good ↓
		Foundation Stage	Primary
Learning skills		Outstanding	Outstanding

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	Outstanding	Outstanding
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Very good
Assessment	Outstanding	Very good ↓

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding

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

For further information regarding the inspection process, please look at [UAE School Inspection Framework](#).

Focus Areas

National Agenda Parameter



In 2014, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, launched the UAE National Agenda 2021. In 2015, KHDA launched the National Agenda Parameter, which is a method for measuring and monitoring schools' progress towards achieving the UAE National Agenda targets. [The following section focuses on the success of the school in meeting the National Agenda Parameter targets.](#)

The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.

	Whole school	Emirati cohort
Progress in international assessments	meets expectations.	meets expectations.

- In TIMSS, the school is performing at a high level in mathematics and science. In NAP assessments, students' outcomes in English and in science are stronger than they are in mathematics. Leaders are aware of weaknesses and are taking action to bring about improvement.

	Whole school
Leadership: data analysis and curricular adaptation	is above expectations.

- Leaders analyse data and use the reports from external assessments to identify gaps in learning. They implement adaptations to the curriculum to support stronger outcomes for students. Leaders provide teachers with an analysis of assessment data, but are not sufficiently rigorous in ensuring that teachers use this information when planning lessons.

	Whole school	Emirati cohort
Improving reading literacy and wider learning skills	is above expectations.	is above expectations.

- New assessment arrangements effectively monitor students' progress in reading. The Higher Performance Learning (HPL) programme is a positive influence on students' learning skills in all subjects.

Overall, the school's progression to achieve the UAE National Agenda targets is above expectations.

For Development:

- Ensure that problem-solving activities are a consistent feature of lessons, particularly in mathematics.
- Ensure that any gaps in attainment and progress are closed, particularly in mathematics.

Wellbeing

The quality of wellbeing provision and of outcomes is at a **very high level**.

- Governors and senior leaders have set a clear vision. They see wellbeing as a fundamental part of the school's life and ethos. There are high levels of care and support throughout the school. Students' development is closely monitored with regular discussions of wellbeing and inclusion. The school conducts appropriate surveys of wellbeing and utilises a range of data to monitor and improve provision.
- Students' behaviour and their relationships with teachers are exemplary, and significantly support wellbeing development which is monitored closely. Focused support is given when needed. Members of staff have regular opportunities for professional training. Having studied surveys, leaders are aware of the need to provide more pastoral and academic support for members of staff. Parents are closely involved in the life of the school. Their concerns and suggestions for improvement are acted upon where appropriate. Students have many opportunities to contribute to the life of the school, including class and whole-school leadership roles.
- The broad curriculum provides activities to support students' welfare. A wide range of extra-curricular activities enhances the extensive sporting and cultural experiences. Clinic staff effectively promote and monitor healthy lifestyles. Students say that they feel valued and safe and are fully engaged in their learning and the life of the school. Transition arrangements for older students to the secondary stage are well planned and supportive.

UAE social studies and Moral Education

- The school teaches UAE social studies and moral education using the Moral, Social and Cultural Framework. There are two weekly lessons of 40 minutes each, taught from Year 1 to Year 6, in English.
- During social studies lessons, teachers make appropriate links with other curriculum subjects and extra-curricular activities. They develop students' understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Teachers consistently encourage students to analyse and explain what they are doing during lessons. They cater very well for individual differences in all year groups. Teachers use a good range of assessment tools to measure and track students' progress.
- Moral education is planned as a separate subject, though concepts are embedded into the wider curriculum. Students are encouraged to think critically and to collaborate purposefully. They can make connections between the outside world, their own lives and what they are learning, especially in upper primary classes. Teachers use a range of assessments to measure and track students' progress.

Main Inspection Report

1. Students' Achievement

Islamic Education

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Attainment	Not applicable	Good
Progress	Not applicable	Good

- Students work efficiently and effectively . They gain appropriate skills and knowledge related to Islamic Education. The majority exceeds curriculum expectations in many aspects of the subject. However, gaps remain between the attainment of different groups of students.
- Students' skills of memorising and reciting The Holy Qur'an exceed expectations. Their knowledge of Islamic history and civilisation is well developed. Most students can apply their knowledge of Islamic concepts by linking them to life beyond the school.
- Raised expectations have resulted in the effective development of students' learning skills, especially their analytical skills.

For Development:

- Close the gaps between the attainment of different groups of students.

Arabic as a First Language

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Attainment	Not applicable	Good ↑
Progress	Not applicable	Good

- Students' ability to express their ideas and to write creatively improves as they move through the school. Almost all find the subject interesting, which accelerates their learning.
- The reading comprehension skills of the majority of students exceed expectations. They show high levels of confidence in speaking and writing. Their creative writing shows clarity, coherence and a wide range of vocabulary.
- As a result of the school's "Talk for Writing" strategy, students have generally improved their language proficiency.

For Development:

- Continue to develop students' communication skills in speaking and writing.

Arabic as an Additional Language

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Attainment	Not applicable	Good
Progress	Not applicable	Good

- Based on the number of years of study, a majority of students exceeds curriculum expectations. Students develop communication skills appropriate for their age in Lower Primary and show a maturity in linguistic skills by Years 5 and 6.
- Students express themselves in a variety of contexts, using a wide range of vocabulary. They understand what they hear, but their responses vary in level and quality. Writing skills have improved. Students are able to express their thoughts and articulate these appropriately.
- The increasing use of standard Arabic in class contributes to improved proficiency in the language. However, when there is an absence of effective differentiation of tasks, progress slows.

For Development:

- Ensure that all groups of students make the progress of which they are capable.

English

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Attainment	Very good	Very good
Progress	Outstanding	Very good ↓

- Children in FS make an excellent start to reading. Most speak confidently, using an increasingly wide, and appropriate, range of vocabulary. In Primary, students build on this good start. In the lower primary classes, they can write simple sentences with correct punctuation and grammar.
- By Year 6, most students have strong comprehension skills. They can discuss the main characters in the book which they are studying and can infer meaning through their understanding of a wide range of vocabulary.
- Primary students, particularly new learners, receive additional phonics support. Teachers successfully use active discussion as preparation for extended writing, thereby improving creative and descriptive work. They concentrate well on the development of skills, though sometimes at the expense of developing knowledge and understanding.

For Development:

- Ensure that students in Primary progress as well in knowledge and understanding as they do in the development of their language skills.

Mathematics

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Attainment	Outstanding	Good ↓
Progress	Outstanding	Very good ↓

- Children in FS demonstrate a deep knowledge and understanding of number, shape, and space. Internal assessments indicate that most students in Primary attain above expectations. This is not confirmed by information from external assessments or from work in students' books.
- Knowledge and understanding of number are strengths. In FS, children can effectively select a resource to support their calculations. By Year 6, most students successfully use their knowledge of number operations to help them to produce scaled drawings and to calculate proportions.
- The recently introduced personalised learning plans have improved the progress of Emirati students. In Primary, the emphasis on teaching number limits opportunities for students to apply their skills to other strands of the subject, such as shape and measure.

For Development:

- Improve students' understanding of how to apply their knowledge of number independently, in new strands of learning.

Science

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Attainment	Outstanding	Very good
Progress	Outstanding	Very good ↓

- In FS, children's skills of observation, classification, and investigation develop rapidly. Most can describe what a plant needs to grow. In Primary, students understand scientific methodology and vocabulary. However, their ability to conduct independent investigations based on their own hypotheses is not sufficiently developed.
- In Year 1, students know the meaning of subject terminology such as transparent and opaque. By Year 5, they describe friction and give examples, demonstrating a secure understanding. By Upper Primary, they can explain the control of variables when carrying out a fair test.
- The availability of the specialist science laboratory provides good opportunities for students to deepen their scientific knowledge and understanding. However, teachers do not always provide sufficient challenge, nor do they have high enough expectations of what students can achieve.

For Development:

- Improve students' ability to create a hypothesis, to plan and execute their own investigation to test the hypothesis, and to arrive at a conclusion independently.

Learning Skills

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Learning skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Children in FS are independent learners who find things out for themselves. Primary students have highly positive attitudes to learning. They work collaboratively and discuss their learning maturely. Almost all can work without direct supervision.
- All students make meaningful connections in their learning. They use and apply their skills and knowledge across a range of subjects, especially those that reflect the world beyond school. In Primary, students use digital technology for age-appropriate research more frequently than children in FS.
- Teachers encourage students to be reflective, innovative, and to take responsibility for their own learning. While students understand how to apply these skills when organising tasks, they focus less in some subjects on higher achievement and expectations.

For Development:

- Improve students' understanding of how their learning skills can be used to increase their attainment in English, mathematics, and science.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students in both phases have extremely positive attitudes to school. They are self-reliant, resilient, respectful and polite. They work very effectively and collaboratively together, showing exemplary empathy and support for the needs of their classmates.
- Behaviour is outstanding during lessons and around the school. Students are self-disciplined and courteous. They and their teachers share a very strong relationship based on mutual respect. Students take the lead in developing their school. Student leadership continues to be a strength.
- Across both phases, there is an excellent awareness and commitment to following healthy lifestyles. Children and students make sensible decisions about what they eat and about regular exercise. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

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

- Students demonstrate a deep understanding of Islamic values. They can talk in detail about how they practise these values in school life. They show consideration to fasting students and engage in celebrations including the birthday of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH).
- In both phases, students have a strong understanding of Emirati culture and history. They are aware of key features of everyday life in the Emirates. They are knowledgeable about Emirati symbols and features of the landscape. They are well engaged in national activities.
- Students demonstrate a very good appreciation of other world cultures. They participate in multi-national activities, including study and charity trips and cross-curricular projects. They recognise links between their history, geography, social studies and moral education lessons.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Almost all primary students have a leadership or voluntary role. Together, they make a highly-positive contribution to the school. Students regularly offer ideas for improving the school. Younger members of the school community help to take care of their immediate surroundings.
- Students from Years 3 onwards participate in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. They manage their own projects, collaborate, carry out extensive research and make reasoned decisions. They achieve impressive outcomes.
- Students of all ages take a keen interest in environmental issues. They have a deep understanding of the challenges facing the UAE and of global problems. Even the youngest children are advocates for protecting increasingly fragile, and threatened environments and species.

For Development:

- Through continued emphasis on all aspects, strengthen students' cultural and environmental awareness.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Very good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers in FS plan purposeful lessons that reflect their accurate knowledge of children's different abilities, thus accelerating progress. In Primary, teachers ensure that students have clear learning objectives. Their planning does not always show an adequate understanding of students' potential to ensure maximum progress. Teachers make best use of students' strengths in speaking by designing an increasing number of collaborative or practical tasks. Students use learning technologies well to develop independent learning. Teachers' questioning is not always used effectively to adjust the pace of learning. In Islamic Education and Arabic, teachers have strengthened students' performance because their higher expectations provide greater challenge. Strategies to personalise learning experiences are successful in engaging students' interest but make less impact on their academic progress. 		

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Assessment	Outstanding	Very good ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment systems used in FS to measure children's attainment are coherent. They provide valid data which allow leaders to track children's progress accurately. This is not always the case in Primary. Leaders benchmark outcomes against national and international standards. They make successful adaptations to the curriculum where necessary. However, teachers in Primary do not consistently use assessment information to plan lessons which maximise the progress that students are capable of making. The recently introduced marking policy is inconsistently applied in Primary. Comments often lack specific advice on the next steps that students need to take. There are inconsistent examples of self-assessment. There is little evidence of peer assessment. 		

For Development:

- Introduce a consistent and coherent internal assessment system in Primary.
- Ensure that all teachers use information from assessment to inform their planning and to improve all students' progress.

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The school curriculum has a very clear rationale. It is effectively aligned to the National Curriculum for England (NCfE) and to the Emirati vision, successfully meeting all national requirements. The broad and balanced curriculum engages and motivates students.
- The text-based nature of the curriculum helps to strengthen cross-curricular links. Comprehensive half-termly reviews ensure that continuity and progression are maintained across a dynamic curriculum that expertly accommodates students' preferences.
- The student-centred curriculum has a significantly positive impact on students' enjoyment of school and on their motivation to learn. Individual learning plans for Emirati students in mathematics have resulted in improved progress for this group of students.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Teachers effectively incorporate modifications into the curriculum. For example, they have increased the emphasis on vocabulary acquisition to support those for whom English is not their first language. They provide additional mathematics lessons to narrow attainment gaps.
- Students choose from a variety of daily extra-curricular activities. The curriculum is student-centred. Students have ample opportunities to engage in activities to develop their personal skills.
- Links with Emirati culture are very well established and have a positive impact on students. A member of the Emirati basketball team visited the school to share her success, thereby engaging and inspiring students.
- Arabic is taught for one lesson in FS1 and for two lessons in FS2. Children primarily sing songs and practise new vocabulary.

For Development:

- Keep the curriculum under constant review.

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

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

- The school has rigorous procedures for the safeguarding of students and for child protection. Training for members of staff is thorough and provided regularly. Since the previous inspection, security has been tightened by requiring parents to have identification cards to access the school premises.
- Buildings and equipment are maintained in an excellent condition. The school consistently provides a safe, hygienic, and secure environment. Safety checks are frequent and rigorous. The supervision of students is highly effective at all times.
- The school's premises and facilities provide an excellent physical environment which meets the learning needs of all, including students of determination. Teachers strongly promote safe and healthy lifestyles.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Members of staff know the students extremely well. Excellent relationships between students and staff result in a positive climate of mutual respect. High expectations of behaviour are very successfully met. Procedures for monitoring attendance and for promoting punctuality are rigorous and effective.
- The identification of students of determination and those with differing needs is accurate. In the main, they receive very good and often outstanding levels of support.
- Personal care and wellbeing are very high priorities for the school. Students receive strong support from the school counsellor, the inclusion team and their teachers. Personal development is carefully monitored. Advice and support are effectively provided for students moving to the secondary stage.

For Development:

- Ensure that all lessons consistently provide support which is well matched to individual needs.

Inclusion of students of determination

Provision and outcomes for students of determination

Outstanding

- Governors and school leaders are committed to offering high-quality provision and resources to meet the needs of the growing number of students of determination. This is a caring and highly-inclusive school. The inclusion team is strongly led, very experienced and well qualified.
- The school accurately identifies students' individual learning needs. A wide range of assessments, often involving outside agencies, enables class teachers and the inclusion team to plan well-focused interventions. As a result, barriers to learning are significantly reduced.
- Partnerships with parents are extremely positive. Parents are very pleased with the quality of support which their children receive both in class and in individual sessions. They appreciate the school's open-door approach and the regular meetings to set and review students' goals.
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are very well focused on students' prime needs. They are detailed and include clear measurable targets with regular updates on progress. In a few classes, planning takes insufficient account of students' individual starting points.
- Overall, students make outstanding progress. Almost all consistently meet and often exceed their individual goals. When students receive support from members of the inclusion team, progress is particularly rapid.

For Development:

- Ensure that all class planning consistently and clearly identifies specific challenging tasks.

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

- The principal has set a clear vision for the future development of the school, based firmly on support for students' wellbeing. Senior leaders have a good understanding of the learning process. They have begun to identify barriers to sustained improvement. Middle leaders do not consistently have the same depth of understanding of the best practices in teaching, curriculum, and assessment, and do not always provide clear educational direction. The actions taken by the new leadership team demonstrate a capacity for improvement.

The school uses internal and external data to support its self-evaluation process. Lack of accuracy in internal data results in an over-positive view of the school's effectiveness. There is regular monitoring of the quality of teaching. However, this evaluation does not focus rigorously enough on the impact of teaching on students' progress. School improvement planning, in the main, includes clear targets. Since the previous inspection, the school has successfully brought about improvement in attainment in Arabic as a first language.

- The school is highly successful in engaging parents as partners in their children's learning. Workshops, progress meetings and an open-door policy all contribute to this success. Systems of communication are regular and very effective. However, formal reports to parents lack consistency in format and terminology. All parents highly appreciate the procedures to keep them informed about their children's development and learning. Partnerships, including those with other schools, contribute strongly to extending curricular opportunities.
- All stakeholders are well represented on the governing board. Members gain knowledge of the school through regular monitoring visits and through reports from leaders. They exert a positive influence on the school through the sharing of their own expertise. They are aware of potential barriers to school effectiveness. They have not always used this information to challenge leaders or to ensure the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation process.
- The school operates very smoothly on a daily basis. Changes in staff have contributed to difficulties in ensuring an effective response to the school's altering student population. Training for members of staff is regular and linked to the school's identified priorities. Resources are of high quality and plentiful. Specialist facilities provide students with excellent learning opportunities.

For Development:

- Strengthen the ability of all leaders to provide clear educational direction and to drive improvement in their areas of responsibility.
 - Ensure the effective use of accurate data to support self-evaluation.
 - Rigorously check the impact of the quality of teaching on students' progress.
 - Make more effective use of governors' knowledge of the school to challenge leaders.
-

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 QA.Schools@khda.gov.ae