

Inspection Report



Horizon International School

2014-2015



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School information



General information

Location	Umm Al Sheif
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2008
Website	www.horizonintlschool.com
Telephone	04 348 3314
Address	Umm Sheif, PO Box 51008, Dubai
Principal	David Wilson
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	26 th - 28 th January 2015



Students

Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age range	3 - 15
Grades or year groups	FS1 - Year 10
Number of students on roll	880
Number of children in FS1	88
Number of Emirati students	7
Number of students with SEN	79
Largest nationality group of students	British



Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	67
Largest nationality group of teachers	British
Number of teacher assistants	22
Teacher-student ratio	1 to 24
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	12%



Curriculum

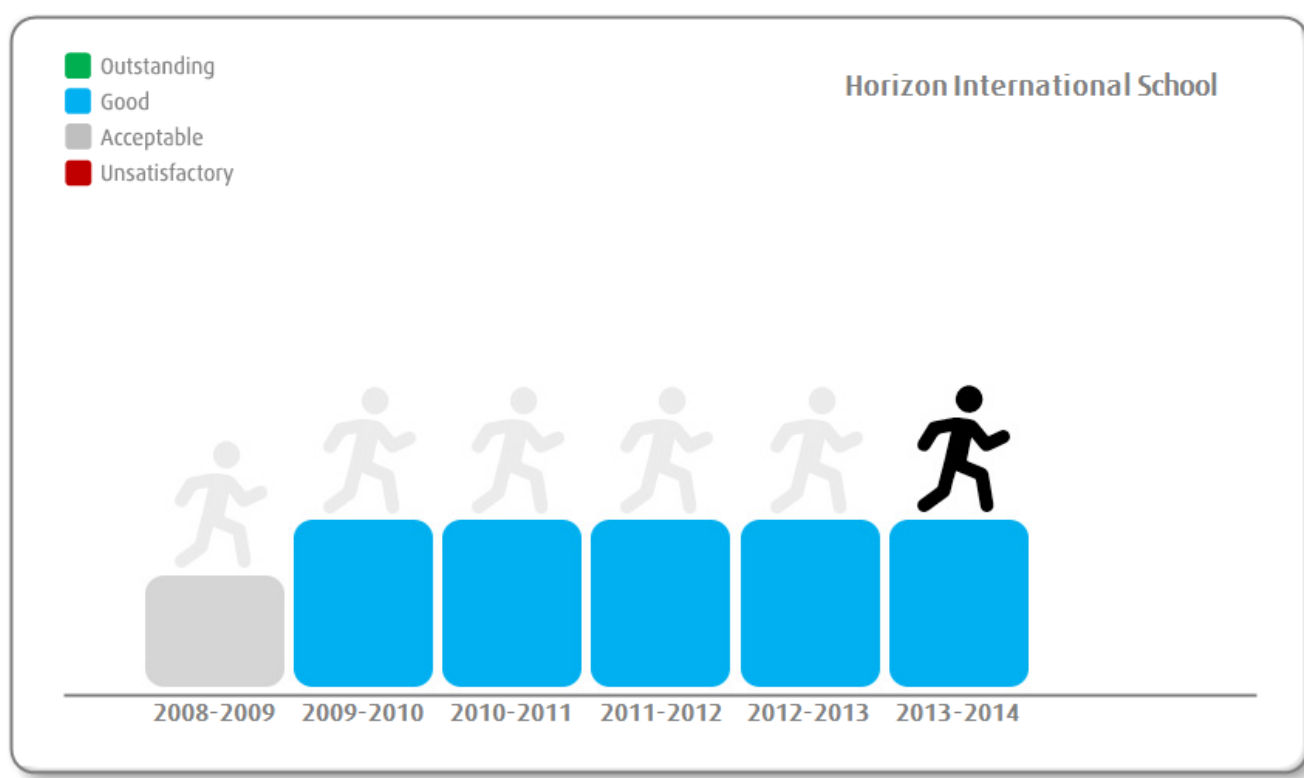
Educational Permit	UK
Main Curriculum / Other	UK
Standardised tests / board exams	ACER
Accreditation	None



Dear Parents,

Horizon International School was inspected by DSIB from 26th - 28th January 2015, and the overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **Good**

In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by the school, inspectors considered six key aspects of the school's performance and standards. Inspectors looked at children's attainment and progress in five key subjects, their learning skills as well as their personal and social development. They judged how effective teaching was across the school. Inspectors considered how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside the classroom, 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 a range of evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observing children learning in lessons, looking at their work, talking with children, meetings with staff, parents and governors, and reviewing the parents' and teachers' surveys.

The key strengths and areas for improvement to be made by the school leaders, governors and owners are:

Strengths

- Students demonstrated positive attitudes and behaviour, and their relationships with each other and staff were particularly positive.
- The good learning skills of students and the responsibility they took for their own work in most subjects.
- The wide range of sports, performing arts and creative activities which were available for all students during and after school.
- The outstanding arrangements made by the school to promote healthy life styles and keep students safe.
- The outstanding links with parents and the wider community.

Areas for improvement

- Raise progress and attainment in Islamic Education and Arabic, especially in the secondary phase.
- Raise standards of attainment in all core subjects.
- Ensure support for students with special educational needs impacts directly and positively on their day to day learning experiences, particularly in lessons, so they make at least good progress.
- Improve the systems of accountability so that leaders and managers are routinely held accountable for the decisions they take and the impact they have on improving students' outcomes.

We warmly encourage you to read the full school inspection report.

The school is required to submit to DSIB an action plan identifying the steps they will take to address the areas for improvement. We have advised your school leaders to share this with you.

We trust that the information provided will help you understand, and encourages you to support, your child's school.

Yours sincerely,

**Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau
Knowledge and Human Development Authority**

A closer look at Horizon International School



How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, the Horizon International School provided a **'Good'** quality of education for its students.

- In the Foundation Stage attainment was good. In the primary and secondary phases, attainment was acceptable in most subjects and students made good progress from their starting points. Students had positive attitudes and took increasing responsibility for their learning as they progressed through the school.
- Students were friendly, eager to learn and their behaviour was very good. They were self-disciplined and had positive relationships with teachers. Students were aware of the benefits of healthy active lifestyles. Students had a good understanding of Islamic values and could explain how it influenced the daily life in Dubai. They knew and appreciated Emirati traditions and heritage. Students were proud of their own culture and recognised the variety and range of cultures in Dubai. Most students were involved in a number of projects in science, history, design and technology and art. They had opportunities to develop their leadership skills. They learned about the conservation of the environment and took part in initiatives aimed at improving the school environment.
- Teachers knew their subjects well. They planned lessons effectively. In most subjects, teachers' questioning was skillful. Most teaching strategies served the needs of students but often failed to take sufficient account of those with specific learning needs. The school had clear assessment systems to measure students' attainment. School leaders were aware of the need for international benchmarks. Teachers had good information about the progress students were making. When planning their lessons, teachers used assessment information well. The quality of teachers' marking of written work and giving feedback to students was variable. Teachers had good knowledge of individual students' strengths and weaknesses.
- The school had an exciting and imaginative curriculum supplemented with an extensive range of enrichment activities which were designed to improve students' academic and personal development. Staff provided many opportunities for students to develop their sporting and artistic talents. The programmes of work in Islamic Education and Arabic as a first language did not fulfill the required curriculum standards. Teachers adjusted the curriculum to meet the different needs of students. The school was developing more subject choices for secondary students. An exceptionally wide range of extra-curricular activities were available.
- Arrangements for health and safety were outstanding in all phases of the school. Students were safe at school and on school transport. The school was clean and well-maintained and students were encouraged and supported to have a healthy lifestyle.
- The school had outstanding links with parents. Governance, leadership, management, accommodation and resources were good. Self-evaluation was acceptable. Lines of accountability across the school were not consistently strong and the steps taken by senior staff to improve the school were acceptable.

How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?



- Students with special educational needs made acceptable progress in their learning and good or better progress in developing self-confidence and positive attitudes.
- The curriculum was appropriately modified in almost all lessons. Innovative extra-curricular and enrichment activities helped to develop the self-confidence and life skills of students with special educational needs.
- Support for students was planned in partnership with parents and where student's needs were more complex, the school liaised with external professionals to determine the best strategies to support their on-going development.

1. How good are the students' attainment, progress and learning skills?

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
 Islamic Education	Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory ↓
	Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
 Arabic as a First Language	Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory ↓
	Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
 Arabic as an Additional Language	Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
 English	Attainment	Good ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
	Progress	Outstanding	Good	Good
 Mathematics	Attainment	Good	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
	Progress	Good	Good	Good
 Science	Attainment	Good	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
	Progress	Good	Good	Good
		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills		Outstanding	Good	Good

↑ Improved from last inspection

↓ Declined from last inspection

2. How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Outstanding

3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good	Good



4. How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Outstanding	Good	Good
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Good	Good	Good

5. How well does the school protect and support students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of support	Good	Good	Good

6. How good are the leadership and management of the school?

	All phases
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable 
Parents and the community	Outstanding 
Governance	Good
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good



School **Inspection** Report

Overall school judgement

Good

Key strengths

- Effective and positive relationships between staff and students impacting on particularly good attitude and behaviour across the school.
- Students demonstrated good learning skills and took responsibility for their own work in most subjects.
- There was a wide range of activities which enriched the curriculum across all phases.
- The arrangements made for health and safety were outstanding.
- The links with parents and the wider community were outstanding.


Changes since the last inspection

- The school had changed ownership and name since the previous inspection and the new owners had increased the investment in staffing, facilities and resources.
- A significant number of new students had joined the school at each phase, from another school in Dubai. These students were included in the inspection team's judgements on attainment and progress.
- Attainment declined in Islamic Education and Arabic as a first language in the secondary phase, from acceptable to unsatisfactory.
- In English, mathematics and science at primary and secondary phases, overall attainment had declined from good to acceptable. In the Foundation Stage attainment in English declined from outstanding to good.
- Self-evaluation had declined from good to acceptable.
- The links with parents and the community had improved from good to outstanding.

Recommendations


- Improve students' progress and attainment in Islamic Education and Arabic, especially in the secondary phase by increasing the level of challenge provided to students and aligning the standards to the curriculum expectations.
- Raise attainment in all core subjects by:
 - increasing expectations and providing more challenge for the higher attaining students
 - interpreting accurately and making better use of performance data
 - improving the standards of monitoring of students work
 - benchmarking standards of attainment with international standardised assessments.
- Improve the progress made by students with special educational needs by ensuring that teachers provide appropriate in-class support.
- Ensure all leaders are accountable for the achievement of high standards in their areas of responsibility.

 Improved from last inspection

 Declined from last inspection




1. How good are the students' attainment, progress and learning skills?

Foundation Stage

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as a First Language	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an Additional Language	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
English	Good 	Outstanding
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- Children made outstanding progress in developing their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. For most children English was not their first language, but they spoke confidently and clearly using a wide vocabulary. The majority recognised common words and a few were beginning to read age appropriate text. They had a secure knowledge of single letters and sounds and when prompted by adults, attempted to write words and simple sentences.
- In mathematics, the majority of children made good progress against the expected outcomes for shape, space and measure and number. They could confidently count to twenty and recognise numerals. Their ability to combine two groups of objects and take some away was developing. They were improving their problem solving skills. Children were able to describe differences in size, height and weight.
- The majority of children were knowledgeable about the Earth's environment and living things. They could describe animal behaviours and were aware of different habitats. Older children could identify different weather conditions and were able to recognise the seasons. Children had regular opportunities to explore and investigate, and could talk about their discoveries.

Primary

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a First Language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an Additional Language	Acceptable	Acceptable
English	Acceptable 	Good
Mathematics	Acceptable 	Good
Science	Acceptable 	Good

- In Islamic Education, most students demonstrated levels of understanding, knowledge and skills that were in line with expectations. For example, in lower primary, students had a clear understanding of the Pillars of Islam, daily prayers, and the Prophet's family and companions. In upper primary, students could explain and apply some aspects of Fiqh such as 'Traveller's Prayer'. Most students developed their understanding of Islamic concepts such as worship and Seerah. Students' recitation and memorisation skills were improving.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students understood their teachers' standard Arabic while providing explanations, asking questions, or giving instructions. They demonstrated acceptable communication

skills. For example, they could express their ideas using simple language, mixing standard Arabic with colloquialisms. Most students could read age related literature at an appropriate speed and could identify the main features of the text. Younger students could write a variety of short sentences. However, their writing was not always accurate. Students made better progress in listening and reading than in the other language skills.

- In Arabic as an additional language, most students could respond appropriately to the teachers' frequent instructions and simple questions. They used a limited range of Arabic phrases and sentences to ask and answer questions about simple learned topics. Their pronunciation of Arabic sounds was reasonably accurate. Most students showed developing oral reading skills, but their reading comprehension was less developed. Most students' writing was restricted to constructing short sentences which followed a certain pattern or copying from a given text. Students lacked the ability to write extensively and creatively. They made better progress in reading than in the other language skills. Progress was slow in writing.
- In English, most students achieved standards that were in-line with curriculum expectations. Nevertheless, there was some variation between year groups. Most students' ability to read and interpret information was better than their writing skills. At the end of the primary phase, students were able to analyse and identify characteristics of the reporting styles in different types of newspapers and use these features to create their own articles. Most students made good progress from their individual starting points as they moved through the primary phase.
- In mathematics, younger students could estimate accurately and measure using both standard and non-standard units of measure. Older students were proficient in collecting data from which they could construct graphs. A minority could accurately interpret line graphs. Attainment across year groups was in line with UK age-expectations and indicated a stable picture of attainment over a 3 year period. Progress was good in number skills, shape and data handling. There was little difference in the progress of boys and girls.
- In science, primary students made good progress, especially in the development of their investigative skills and scientific enquiry. For instance, in the lower primary they investigated which materials were best at keeping things warm and as they progressed through the primary phase they investigated the adaptation of animals to their habitats.

Secondary		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Unsatisfactory ↓	Acceptable
Arabic as a First Language	Unsatisfactory ↓	Acceptable
Arabic as an Additional Language	Acceptable	Acceptable
English	Acceptable ↓	Good
Mathematics	Acceptable ↓	Good
Science	Acceptable ↓	Good

- In Islamic Education, most students demonstrated a basic understanding of Islamic concepts such as worship, life of the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions and the Islamic battles. Students' ability to relate Islamic principles to real life situations was inconsistent in the secondary phase. Recitation and memorisation skills were underdeveloped for most students. However, most students made the expected progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of Islamic concepts. There was minimal improvement in recitation and memorisation skills of students.

- In Arabic as a first language, most students had difficulty understanding the level of language expected at this stage. When speaking, sentences were short and mostly included colloquial language. Students struggled to use appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures and this had an adverse effect on their fluency and confidence. Most students were slow readers and their skills in drawing conclusions and making inferences were underdeveloped. Most students' writing was characterised by poor content, inadequate organisation and weak application of language conventions. The inability of students to write extensively and creatively was a major weaknesses. Students made better progress in listening and reading than in the other language aspects.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students could understand familiar Arabic words and phrases. They could engage in short conversations about a topic being studied using learned terms and phrases. However, they were not able to sustain a simple conversation. Students lacked confidence when reading. They were unable to elaborate well on their understanding of the text. Students' written work was short and characterised by mistakes in spelling and structure. Better progress was made by students in listening and reading than in speaking and writing.
- In English, attainment for most students was in line with curriculum expectations. However, girls' attainment outperformed boys. The progress most students made was good. This was most evident in lessons where they deepened their knowledge and understanding of literature and developed their writing and analytical skills. For example, students were able to interpret different texts, such as a Shakespeare sonnet and features of detective novel writing. They were then able to express their ideas confidently to an audience. Their literacy skills developed well as they progressed through the phase.
- When faced with mathematical problems concerning proportion, students were able to identify appropriate units of measure and other mathematical aspects to obtain the necessary information. Students could identify different types of angles and measure them with a protractor to one degree of accuracy. They could solve simple problems of ratio. Attainment across year groups was in line with UK age expectations. Students' made good progress both within lessons and from Year 7 to Year 10, with no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls.
- In secondary science, most students were attaining at expected levels and were making good progress, especially in the development of their investigative skills and scientific enquiry. Lower secondary students could build and talk knowledgably about electrical circuits. Older students could investigate the relative densities and ideal soil conditions for the UAE.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills	Outstanding	Good	Good

- In the Foundation Stage, most children were fully engaged in learning and interacted well with their teachers. Students had positive attitudes and could work for extended periods without constant support from the teacher. Most students knew the curriculum level at which they were working. A few, found it difficult to explain how they could improve and move to the next level.
- Students worked well in cooperation with others. Older students communicated with confidence and collaborated successfully with their peers. They took advantage of the many opportunities to use technology.
- Students demonstrated success in applying their skills to real life contexts, for example in visiting the school juice bar to apply skills of calculating proportion. Many students were able to make connections between their learning in different parts of the curriculum.
- The majority of students demonstrated independent thinking skills, however a number relied too much on their teachers to direct their learning. In science, students were acquiring a range of investigative skills. Students in the classroom, did not often use their IT skills to retrieve and analyse information. However, this was improving in the secondary phase.

2. How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were friendly, had a positive outlook and were very helpful to each other, staff and visitors. They were eager to learn and keen participants in class discussions. They demonstrated strong self-reliance and were receptive to feedback from their teachers and other students. • Behaviour in and out of classrooms was consistently excellent. Students were self-disciplined and went out of their way to be pleasant to others. Most students had opportunities to develop their self confidence in a range of class-based and extracurricular activities. • Most students benefited from respectful and supportive relationships with their peers. Relationships with teachers were consistently positive and appropriate, and helped to ensure that students made progress in their learning. • Students showed very positive attitudes to healthy living. They were well aware of what they should eat more of, or avoid and were generally appreciative of the school's consistent approach towards the promotion of healthy eating. Furthermore, students had ample opportunities to participate in activities that helped them keep fit and active. • Attendance and punctuality in the morning and during lessons were very good. 			

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students had a good understanding of Islamic values and its impact on life in Dubai. They described features of Islamic society and the influence of Islamic values on daily life. • Students knew and appreciated Emirati traditions and heritage. Their cultural awareness was developed within social studies, Personal, Social, Health Education and humanities, and by cultural visits to the Heritage village and Sheikh Saeed house. The national events such as National Day were celebrated, and students recognised their importance and value to people in the UAE. • Students had a good appreciation of their own culture and the variety and range of cultures from around the world. They were aware of cultural diversity and the common elements between cultures. The displays around the school related to Emirati culture but other cultures were limited. 			

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most students demonstrated a responsible attitude to their schoolwork and the projects and activities they were involved in. They had opportunities to be active members of their community, for instance, by joining the students' council or the eco-monitoring group, by fundraising or by working to become sports leaders or class prefects. Student voice was stronger in the secondary phase. A very good example of this was the direct involvement of, and support from, Year 10 students in helping to develop the school's policy on cyber bullying. • Most students throughout the school displayed a very positive work ethic. They took pride in developing, and taking part in, a number of projects in different curriculum areas such as science, history, design and technology, enterprise and art. • The school's efforts to ensure student appreciation, and involvement in conservation of the environment were embedded in many areas of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Each class from Year 1 to 10 had two eco-monitors and most students were involved in whole school recycling opportunities. This aspect was particularly strong in the secondary school, where students were more likely to initiate, and take responsibility for, environmental initiatives. For instance, in a science project, Year 10 students explored and reported on conservation issues in the countries that they came from. 			

3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers knew their subjects well and understood how their students learn. Nearly all provided lessons in a meaningful context for their students. • Lessons were planned effectively with stated learning objectives, which were often shared and reviewed with students. Time and resources were well used. Teachers had created a positive climate for learning through giving praise and celebrating achievement. • Teachers ensured that students were sufficiently engaged in lessons and as a result, students made good progress. In most subjects, teachers' questioning was skillful and encouraged students to think and ask questions of each other and their teachers. • Teachers recognised that groups and individuals had different learning needs. Most teaching strategies served the needs of most students but did not always take sufficient account of those with specific learning needs. • Teachers expected students to take responsibility for their own learning but the promotion of independent learning was inconsistent. Teachers sometimes gave ample time for reflection and required students to reason and think deeply. • In Arabic as a first language, all teachers had a secure subject knowledge. They planned their lessons appropriately and used time and teaching resources adequately. However, the learning expectations were not often aligned with the students' language development needs. Teachers interacted well with their students. However, a minority of them often limited the opportunities for students' to take charge of their own learning. Most teachers implemented strategies that engaged students actively, particularly in the primary years, but the opportunities to promote students' critical and higher-order thinking skills were limited. 			

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Assessment	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment practices linked well to the school's curriculum standards to provide clear measures of students' academic attainment. Current UK National Curriculum levels were used appropriately. The school had started to use external assessments, such as ACER IBTs. The school stated that it planned to participate in TIMSS and PISA testing in 2015. Internally assessed UK National Curriculum tests had been used since 2012 to assess student attainment at the end of Year 6. The school recorded students' National Curriculum levels in termly summative assessments. The analysis of students' attainment data in English, mathematics and science at a whole school and year group level was not rigorous and the interpretation of this data was not in line with Dubai School Inspection Bureau's (DSIB) standards. Students' progress was accurately tracked and action plans were put in place for those students for whom progress was a concern. Teachers made good use of assessment information in their planning to meet the needs of most groups of students. Teachers had a good knowledge of individual students' strengths and weaknesses. The quality of teachers' marking of written work and providing feedback to students was variable. 			

4. How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Outstanding	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school had a very clear rationale for its curriculum. It was to prepare students for their next phase of education and develop life skills. The curriculum was planned to ensure progression in each subject and there was strong focus on the acquisition and development of investigation and critical thinking skills. The curriculum had been enriched significantly over the last year particularly in the secondary phase, to provide students with an extensive and diverse range of learning experiences which, not only provided opportunities for academic progress, but also helped to develop students' talents, for example, in the performing arts. Evidence of the high quality of students' art work was on display throughout the school. In Foundation, the outstanding curriculum had enabled children to make good gains in their academic and personal development. Over the last year, teachers had provided further enhancements to embed the new primary curriculum and to provide greater opportunities to improve students' skills through additional reading and writing sessions as well as the introduction of a specialist science coordinator. Cross curricular links were regularly made between subjects in meaningful ways and this was seen in the many quality displays of students' work such as, the project on the Egyptians, which brought together several subjects. The curriculum was reviewed frequently by leaders and adaptations made to meet students' future needs such as, the introduction of Mandarin and Spanish. The curriculum content for Islamic Education did not meet the needs of the students. In primary and secondary phases, the school delivered the Ministry of Education curriculum in Arabic as a first language. However, it was not well planned and reviewed to meet the learning needs of all students, particularly in the secondary phase. The design of the learning activities and choice of content were not well linked to the language development needs of students, hampering their progress. The curriculum lacked enrichment and extension to help students stretch their skills appropriately. 			

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The curriculum was well planned and adapted to meet the learning needs of almost all students and particularly those with special educational needs through personalised support. The school introduced additional reading and writing sessions in order to raise students' attainment. The many recent enhancements to the curriculum, such as, 'curriculum workshops' in the primary phase, provided students with greater opportunities to make decisions about their own learning. There was excellent provision for talented students, in sporting, academic and artistic activities. There were many opportunities for students across all phases to follow their interests and be involved in their own learning. In Foundation, the curriculum was designed in such a way that children were able to make their own choices and learn independently through exploration and investigation. The many excursions, visits, and residential stays, extended learning beyond the classroom and enhanced pupils' enjoyment of learning. Older students accessed a wide choice of GCSE courses to meet their interests and aspirations. The school operated an extensive, imaginative and well attended range of extra-curricular programmes that provided new experiences and challenges. Students took part in many school and community projects, such as the Jumeirah Mural and 'Dubai Cares' art initiative. The school's Foundation programme did not include structured Arabic learning opportunities for the 11 Arab children. 			

5. How well does the school protect and support students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school ensured that staff were made aware of arrangements for child protection. Procedures for protecting children from bullying were in place. The school developed a policy in collaboration with secondary students on cyber safety, including cyber bullying and the use of social media. The school had good systems to help ensure that the buildings were safe, hygienic and clean at all times. Staff kept good up-to-date records on health and safety procedures. Systems for ensuring health and safety were embedded in the school's everyday operations. Fire drills were regularly organised and arrangements were in place for good supervision at school and on school buses. The clinic provided an effective and child friendly service to help meet students' health related needs. Buildings were well maintained and provided students ample facilities to participate in a wide range of curricular options. Whilst the school was fully accessible to all current students, prospective students with restricted mobility would only have access to classes and facilities on the ground floor. The school had a clear policy that supported the promotion of healthy living in all aspects of school life. A healthy school lunch policy was in place and carefully monitored, and a range of healthy options were available from the school's juice bar. Furthermore, the school provided sufficient opportunities for students to participate in physical education and sport. 			

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Quality of support	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff had very good and respectful relationships with students. Staff knew students very well, were aware of their academic, personal and social needs, and provided them with support as needed. They managed behaviour effectively and this helped ensure that students made good progress in most lessons. • The school had excellent systems to ensure good levels of attendance and punctuality. Any absence was immediately followed up with parents. • Achievement Centre staff together with teachers, used a range of information to identify student's needs. The identification procedures were extensive and accurate. • Teachers and subject leaders aligned lesson plans to meet students' individual targets and planned support strategies to ensure continued progress. Additional enrichment opportunities such as social skills groups and personal development activities had a significant impact on the well-being of students with special educational needs. • All students had access to known and trusted members of staff who provided useful advice and guidance about their academic progress, health and future career. Information gathered by the school from student surveys was used to help improve the provision of their care. 			


How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?

	Overall
The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's leaders, including qualified professionals in the Achievement Centre, promoted an inclusive ethos across the school. The team was effective at developing and implementing innovative strategies to support students with special educational needs. Clear lines of accountability for the progress made by these students were not yet established. • Achievement Centre staff together with teachers, used a range of information to identify students' needs on entry to the school. The identification procedures included teacher assessments, screening and diagnostic tests, and where appropriate an in-depth analysis of need by external professionals. The school worked in partnership with a range of external specialist agencies to ensure that students with complex needs were supported effectively. • Lesson planning processes reflected curriculum modifications and helped to target support. Most teachers and subject leaders aligned lesson plans to students' individual targets and planned support linked to student progress. Strategies were appropriately matched to the personal, social and emotional needs of students. Teachers evaluated termly progress against the pre-determined success criteria detailed with Individual Educational Plans, in consultation with parents and students. • The Achievement Centre team kept parents well informed by engaging them in the identification of need, the setting of targets and the review of individual plans. Almost all parents, were highly appreciative of the quality of specialist advice offered to help them support their children's learning at home. Personalised feedback and where necessary daily updates from specialist support staff helped promote an excellent partnership with parents. 	


- The school's monitoring systems provided evidence of students' starting points and levels of academic progress. Students with special educational needs made acceptable progress in their academic learning and good or better progress in developing emotional well-being and self-confidence. The progress of students with special educational needs in many classes was not monitored consistently well.

6. How good are the leadership and management of the school?

	Overall
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Principal and other members of the senior leadership team had been successful in promoting the vision of the school to the school community, which was encapsulated in the motto 'Aspire to Achieve'. • The distribution of leadership across the school was growing in line with the development of the school. Year heads were in place for most years and subject coordinators had been appointed for core subjects. Processes to ensure that this team had an adequate and appropriate amount of time for their duties, and to be held accountable for the performance of their area of work, had yet to be fully established and operational. • The senior leaders were visible throughout the school and effective at communicating with staff, parents and students. Senior staff had good relationships with staff, parents and students. • The senior and middle leaders had demonstrated their capacity to bring about improvement through their recent focus on improving the quality the curriculum, teaching and learning. They encouraged teachers to be innovative and there were signs of innovation and inspiring teaching. • The quality of teaching and learning had improved since the last inspection. The progress students made in class was generally good, but these improvements had not yet had impact on improved student outcomes. 	

	Overall
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leaders had developed a range of appropriate processes to evaluate the effectiveness of the school and seek the views of stakeholders. The school did not have any historical data on international benchmarking assessments to help to validate the attainment levels of students. Under new ownership the school had entered students for these assessments but the results were not yet available. • The school had developed good systems to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning and provide feedback to teachers. This informed the review process and the professional development provided for teachers. Senior staff did not consistently apply the DSIB standards correctly to the attainment levels and progress of students. • Following self-evaluation the school developed detailed action plans and these helped the staff to bring about improvements to teaching and learning across the school. The installation of WiFi across the school enabled staff and students to make better use of ICT in lessons. This initiative helped to improve the learning skills of students. 	

- Although, the improvements in teaching and learning had not yet brought about significant improvements in attainment, the high quality teaching in most core subjects, enabled students to make good progress in most lessons. It was difficult to judge the improvement in performance of the school over time as a result of the recent changes in the school population and inconsistencies in performance data.




	Overall
Parents and the community	Outstanding 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents felt a strong sense of community and were fully engaged with the school and their children's learning. They helped the school by contributing their time and expertise. A very good example of this was their participation in a careers day. • The school communicated very well with parents through its website, the 'Communicator', weekly bulletins and through face to face meetings. Parents often attended school assemblies where they were able to see their children perform and celebrate their achievements. • The very high quality school reports and meetings with teachers were appreciated by parents. These reports had detailed statements on students' progress in each subject along with their next steps in learning. • The school had a growing range of links with local businesses and organisations which helped to put learning in a relevant and up to date context. 	

	Overall
Governance	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recently formed Board included parents and teachers as stakeholders of the school. The parental representatives felt that their views were considered seriously by the owning company's representatives. • The Principal attended the Board's monthly meetings and reported on the performance of the school. This report included measures such as teacher retention and the academic performance of the school. The current reports on performance were not validated against external international benchmarks. • The Board had approved considerable investment in the school to improve its facilities. 	

	Overall
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school operated efficiently on a day to day basis. There were very effective systems to manage the attendance of students and their use of buses. Maintenance was managed well. • The school was well staffed with suitably qualified teachers. Most of the subject coordinators did not have sufficient non-teaching time to carry out their quality assurance role. • There were sufficient specialist facilities including a library, science and computer laboratories within the very high quality school buildings. Due to the absence of a lift, there was limited access for students with restricted mobility. Foundation Stage facilities were outstanding and sports facilities were ample. There were excellent displays throughout the school which created a very positive and stimulating learning environment. • The school had very good facilities for learning technology. Each classroom had an interactive whiteboard and WiFi was available across the campus. This had enabled the school to pilot a 'Bring your own device' policy with the older students. Classroom resources were plentiful. 	

What are the views of the Principal, parents, teachers and students?

Before the inspection, the views of the Principal, 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		Percentage
 Parents*	This year	221	38%
	Last year	131	31%
 Teachers	62		87%
 Students	15		10%

- Most teachers, a minority of parents and almost all of the Year 10 students responded to the surveys. Of those who responded to the survey, almost all parents and teachers said that students were safe and enjoyed attending the school.
- Almost all parents, thought that their children learned well because of good teaching and that teachers had helped their children to develop a good range of learning skills. Students also agreed with this view.
- Almost all parents and teachers thought that the school provided good opportunities for students to learn about community and environmental responsibility.
- Almost all parents and teachers thought that the school offered a good range of subjects and extra-curricular activities.
- Almost all parents liked the academic reports and meetings with teachers which kept them informed about their children's progress. A few parents said that they wanted more contact with teachers.
- Most parents said that the school listened to their views and acted upon them.
- Most students and the majority of parents were aware of the school's cyber safety policy. Approximately one quarter of teachers were unaware of this policy.
- Most parents and teachers thought that the school was well led.

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

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

How to contact us

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

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

P.O. Box 500008, UAE, Tel: +971-4-3640000, Fax: +971-4-3640001, info@khda.gov.ae, www.khda.gov.ae