



Mirdif Private School

 Curriculum: US

Overall Rating:

Acceptable



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

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



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School information



General information	
Location	Al Mizhar
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1995
Website	www.mirdifprivateschool.ae
Telephone	00971-4-2883303
Address	P.O.Box.79195 Mirdif - Dubai
Principal	Randa Ghandour, رندا غندور
Language of instruction	English, Arabic
Inspection dates	6 to 9 February 2017

Teachers / Support staff	
Number of teachers	64
Largest nationality group of teachers	Lebanese
Number of teaching assistants	26
Teacher-student ratio	1:14
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	20%

Students	
Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-13
Grades or year groups	KG 1-Grade 8
Number of students on roll	895
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	NA
Number of Emirati students	637
Number of students with SEND	27
Largest nationality group of students	Emirati

Curriculum	
Educational permit / Licence	US
Main curriculum	US
External tests and examinations	IOWA
Accreditation	Candidate NEASC
National Agenda benchmark tests	MAP, CAT4.



The DSIB inspection process



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

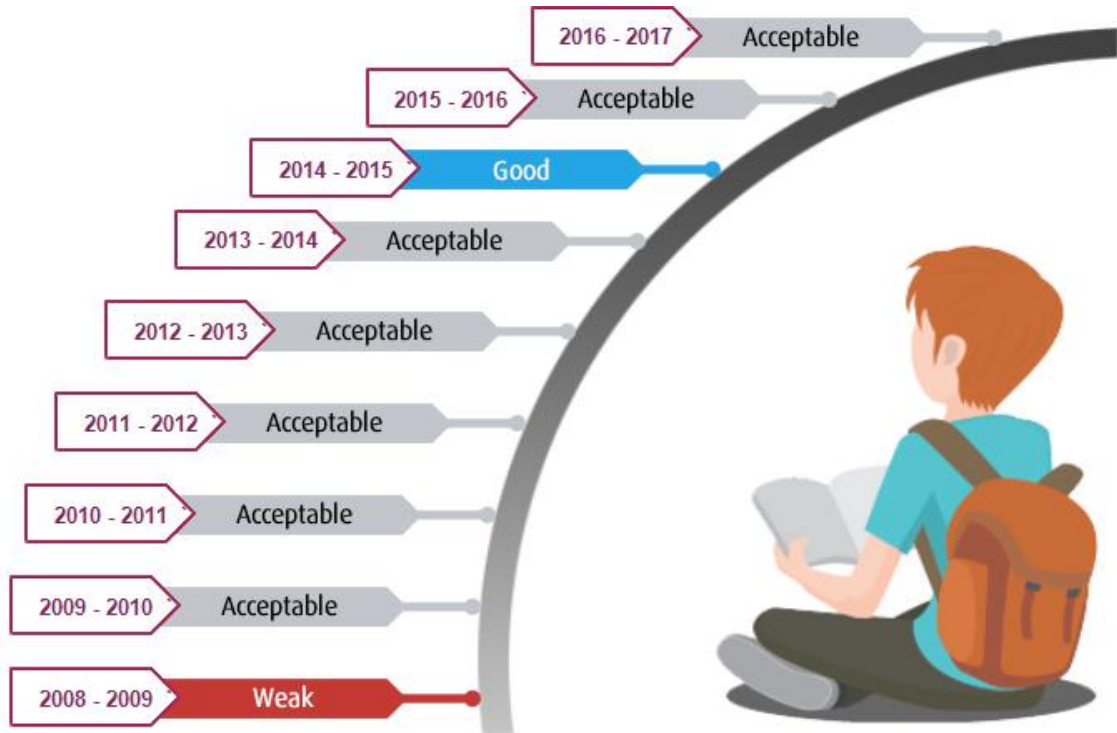
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students’ learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

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

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

Inspection journey for Mirdif Private School



- Mirdif Private School opened in 1995. Since then the quality of education has fluctuated between weak and good. Currently it is acceptable. The principal has been in post for 21 years. Of the 64 teachers, 12 are new to the school this year. There are 895 students aged from 4 to 13 years on the roll, 19 fewer than the previous year due to the school closing Grade 9 this year. Grade 9 was closed to maintain the school as a primary and middle school.
- The three previous inspections acknowledged strengths in students' personal and social development, especially their understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures. Strengths in attainment and progress were noted in Islamic education. The school's provision for health and safety and its relationships with parents and the community were outstanding.
- Recommendations following the previous three years of inspections have focused upon the need to improve students' achievement through better teaching, to strengthen assessment systems and the school's governance.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



Mirdif Private School was inspected by DSIB from 6 to 9 February 2017. The overall quality of education provided by the school is **acceptable**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- The attainment and progress of English, mathematics and science in Kindergarten (KG) and Islamic education in the elementary and middle phases, and Arabic as a first language in elementary phase are of a consistently good quality. Most other judgements are acceptable. Students' learning skills are good in KG. Children cooperate when working in groups, investigating, discovering and developing new knowledge and skills. In the elementary and middle phases, students' learning skills are acceptable.
- Students' personal and social development are good or better, the highlight being the very good or outstanding understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures.
- Teaching and assessment judgements are good in KG, and acceptable in the elementary and middle phases. Most teachers have strong subject knowledge. In KG, teachers understand well how children learn, whereas in other phases this is inconsistent. The quality of teachers' questioning is variable and the teachers' expectations for what students can do is not always matched to their abilities.
- The quality of curriculum design and its adaptation are good across all phases. It offers choice and variety, and provides opportunities to develop a balance of knowledge, skills and understanding. It is suitably adapted to cater for the range of students' needs.
- The high quality of provision for the protection care, guidance and support of students is a feature of the school, particularly health and safety including arrangements for child protection, which are outstanding.
- Most aspects of leadership and managements are acceptable. However, the partnership with parents is outstanding and management staffing, facilities and resources are very good. The new leadership share a vision for an inclusive school and have implemented new systems to bring about improvement. However, the impact on student achievement is as yet variable.

What the school does best

- The consistently good quality of provision in the KG which provides a broad range of literacy and numeracy learning opportunities to support the development of children's knowledge, skills, understanding and their social and emotional development.
- The good achievement of students in Islamic education in elementary and middle phases and the very high levels of understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures across all phases.
- The outstanding provision for health and safety, the relationships with parents and the community, and the good provision for student care and support.

Recommendations

- Develop the quality of teaching, particularly in English, mathematics and science in the elementary phase, by ensuring that students benefit from consistently challenging, purposeful, productive and high quality learning experiences that more closely match their needs.
- Make better use of the school's rich array of assessment data:
 - to identify the learning needs of individuals and groups of students, and
 - to set clear, appropriate, individual learning targets, to ensure better achievement in all content areas.
- Improve the development and use of the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning processes to identify more accurately the strengths and address areas for development in a systematic, measurable manner.
- Ensure that all students' achievement is enhanced by high-quality governance that:
 - is broadly representative of stakeholders, to provide additional perspectives to the school's decision making
 - holds all leaders to account for the school's actions and outcomes
 - supports the employment of additional US qualified, trained and experienced teachers and leaders.

National Agenda Parameter



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

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

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

- Students' attainment based on the National Agenda Parameter benchmarks is below expectations in English, mathematics and science.
- The school does not fully meet the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- Students have carried out two rounds of MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) testing. Staff are becoming more confident at analysing the results. Senior staff and teachers consider the projected student progress targets indicated by the test reports. They share the results with parents and with individual students. The school plans to ensure improved MAP results, but the plan lacks sufficient detail.
- The school first participated in the TIMSS external benchmark tests in 2015. Staff have amended the curriculum in English, mathematics and science to reflect their knowledge of TIMSS tests and students' results in international benchmark tests. In English, teachers are focused on improving students' reading comprehension skills. In mathematics and science, curriculum gaps have been filled.
- The school uses a wide range of processes for supporting students who are finding their work challenging. However, teachers are in the early stages of supporting the learning needs of different groups of students. Teachers have not yet embedded critical thinking or meaningful investigative projects into their classroom practice.
- Students who took the MAP tests have set their own goals for improvement. They use online practice tests to ensure enhanced question familiarity. Some research tasks are carried out at home, but research skills are not yet embedded into classroom practice.

Overall, the school's improvement towards achieving its National Agenda targets is not secure.

Innovation in Education

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









Promoting a culture of innovation:

- There is a strong commitment from the school's senior leaders to promote and embed an innovative culture across all phases of the school. A school-wide, student-friendly definition includes the 5I's of innovation; imagination, invention, initiative, implementation and inquiry. These are effectively modelled and systematically developed, during dedicated innovation lessons in Grades 4 to 8. In KG, children demonstrate creativity and reflection through experiential learning opportunities. Schoology, an online management system, is used from Grades 3 to 6 for all learning tasks, projects, assessments and homework, while students in Grades 1 and 2 use age-appropriate technology to support their learning. In lessons, teachers pose a range of problems for students to solve, such as methods to reduce the use of non-renewable resources.

Overall school performance

Acceptable

1 Students' achievement

		KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Not applicable
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good ↑	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good ↑	Acceptable	Not applicable
English 	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Good	Not applicable
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
Science 	Attainment	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Not applicable
	Progress	Good ↑	Acceptable	Good	Not applicable
		KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills		Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Not applicable
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good ↑	Very good	Outstanding	Not applicable
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good	Not applicable

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
Assessment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Not applicable
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Not applicable

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not applicable
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Not applicable




6. Leadership and management

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


Main inspection report




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	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good 	Good 


- In English, the majority of children have well-developed skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing that are above the US Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Assessment shows they are proficient in all areas of literacy as measured against age-related standards. Children use their language skills in all content areas, as observed in lessons and in their daily work. This results in good progress and the everyday application of their speaking, reading and writing knowledge for meaning and purpose.
- In mathematics the majority of children make better than expected progress and reach levels that are above curriculum standards. This is also reflected in assessment data. The quality of children's work and observations in lessons indicates that most children have good number and operational knowledge, when compared to their starting points. They are able to demonstrate well their understanding of measurement, geometry, addition and subtraction. However, a lack of opportunity in lessons, to use their knowledge and skills in real world applications prevents them from developing a deeper grasp and understanding of their mathematical learning.
- The knowledge and skills of the majority of children are above curriculum standards in science. Their ability to use these skills in real world applications results in better than expected progress, when measured against their starting points and the learning objectives of the curriculum. Assessment information and children's work indicate that they have an understanding of the world that is advanced for their age. In lessons they make good progress when discussing the weather, their five senses and the seasons. Their curiosity about the world sometimes results in questioning and independent problem solving.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students' attainment levels in internal assessments exceeds curriculum expectations. Students understand Islamic concepts and principles well; a majority memorize a few extra Surahs from the Holy Qur'an and the Hadeeth. Students know, adopt and apply Islamic values in their daily lives. A majority of students demonstrate better than expected progress in lessons.
- In Arabic as a first language, a majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum expectations. They show strong skills in reading and listening. Their writing is less secure although high achievers write well using correct punctuation. The majority of students make better than expected progress from their starting points. They accomplish almost all aspects required in each lesson objectives.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. They have adequate skills in reading and listening. Their speaking skills are stronger. Students' writing skills are improving, but they are more confident commenting on pictures than writing freely and independently. Students' progress is better than expected in relation to individual starting points, especially when they are engaged with real-life situations.
- In English most students' attainment levels are in line with age-appropriate CCSS. Most students make the expected progress in relation to their starting points and the CCSS. Internal data, lesson observations and scrutiny of students' work indicate that they meet curriculum standards. Students develop oral and aural communication skills in lessons and over time, which enables them to discuss, explain and make presentations.
- In lessons and over time, most students make the expected progress in mathematical concept development and calculation skills, and attain levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. External tests show a wide variation in progress across classes. Students' calculation skills are better than their reasoning skills.
- In science most students attain in line with the next generation science standards. Most students make the expected levels of progress in relation to their starting points. They demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding of scientific concepts in line with age-appropriate expectations. This is supported by some of the students' external assessment data. Students' progress in lessons is often hindered by excessive teacher intervention in hands-on activities.

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

- In Islamic education a majority of students attain levels in internal assessments above the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum expectations. They demonstrate an appropriate understanding of Islamic concepts and principles. A majority of the students memorize a few extra Surahs from the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth. The culture of tolerance and co-existence are understood by a large majority of students. A majority of students demonstrate progress in lessons and in mid-term examinations that exceed expectations.
- Most students have attainment levels that are in line with curriculum expectations in Arabic as a first language. They demonstrate secure competencies in most of the skills. However, their writing is not improving and they lack the ability to speak fluently at times. Progress is better when students are actively engaged in topics related to their real life. For example, in Grade 6, students take the lead in presenting methods of creativity.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. They are secure using common words such as like and dislike when speaking, but their ability to answer questions fluently is sometimes limited. Writing skills are below expectations. Progress is better when students are more engaged and when the topic is related to their own lives. For example, Grade 8 students become more engaged when learning about healthy habits.
- In English most students attain levels that are in line with the curriculum standards. This is evident in lessons and in their recent work. A majority of students make better than expected progress from their starting points. They have well-developed speaking skills and can discuss viewpoints, make presentations and engage in lively debates. Students also make good progress in reading. They think critically during class discussions and presentations. Although they can write on a variety of topics, their ability to edit and improve their writing is underdeveloped.
- In mathematics, most students make the expected progress and attain levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. Students' results in external tests are weak. In internal tests, attainment levels are acceptable overall. There are recent signs that students are making better progress. For example, students are increasingly confident in mental calculations, manipulating numbers and predicting the outcomes of mathematical calculations. Structured worksheets and short-response oral questions hinder the development of mathematical reasoning skills.
- Students make good progress and demonstrate an acceptable level of attainment in science. Students' external assessment data suggest lower levels of attainment in comparison to their results in internal assessments. The progress the different groups of students make in lessons is better than expected; students are consistently challenged to engage in hands-on activities that enable them to draw conclusions.

 High		
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	Not applicable	Not applicable
Mathematics	Not applicable	Not applicable
Science	Not applicable	Not applicable

- Not Applicable

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable

- Students' engagement and responsibility for their own learning varies; it is better in the KG than in the higher phases in most subjects. In Arabic, students are more engaged in learning particularly in elementary. Students in all phases work independently for relatively long periods of time. In KG, children work well independently and in small groups. They show initiative and are eager to complete their activities.
- When given the opportunity, students can work in groups and collaborate to support one another. This is strongest in the KG phase. Children collaborate well. Their communication skills are strong and enable them to help each other in their learning. In higher grades students find it difficult to communicate their learning using clear and correct English.
- Students across the phases can connect their learning to the real world and to their own lives in response to teacher prompting. Students build on their prior learning especially when the teacher starts the lesson with links to previous lessons and topics. Students' ability to connect areas of learning independently is still a developing feature. When prompted, children in KG make connections to their experiences outside of school.
- Although the school provides innovative ideas and classes, students' ability to innovate is still developing. They use learning technologies in several subjects to run basic research, but this is not extended to enquiry or problem-solving. Children in KG use technology to support and extend their learning. They can choose programs on tablets and regularly interact with smart board software. Their critical thinking and problem solving skills are in early stages of development.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Not applicable

- Students generally have positive and responsible attitudes. A majority respect the classroom rules, and listen carefully to the teachers' feedback. However, middle school students occasionally show a lack of enthusiasm.
- Most students are consistently self-disciplined and respond well to others. They know how to work together harmoniously, although there are a few instances of bullying.
- Students are usually keen to help each other, for example, by spreading awareness of donations through the Box Appeal. As a result, relationships amongst different groups are strong, and the support provided for students with SEND is genuine and supportive.
- Students practise safe and healthy living. They participate in cleaning the school, and present their understanding of healthy life styles. Students care about personal hygiene; they support the UAE National Agenda targets on achieving a world-class healthcare system to ensure a longer healthy life.
- Attendance over the last three terms is around 97%. A significant number of students arrive late to school each morning, and they are not always punctual in attending lessons.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good ↑	Very good	Outstanding	Not applicable

- Most students demonstrate appreciation of Islamic values and understand how they influence daily life in the UAE. Students across the school organize and participate in Islamic events, such as Ramadan and Eid al-Adha. The values of tolerance and co-existence are prevalent most of the time.
- Students understand a wide range of elements of Emirati heritage and culture. Children in KG compare past and present UAE developments. Students and parents participate enthusiastically in events linked to the UAE such as National Day, Flag Day and Martyrs' Day.
- Students are appreciative of their own culture and have respect for the cultures of the 47 nationalities in the school. In the middle phase, students are more aware of other cultures in terms of food, dance, dress and attitude. In KG, the children can recognize some flags of different countries and identify famous landmarks such as the pyramids, and Burj Khalifa.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good	Not applicable

- Students across the school show responsibility and contribute actively to the life of the school and wider communities in a number of ways. They show consideration for others through the students' council making suggestions, for example, to reduce the amount of homework and the rate of bullying. They have a positive effect on the wider community through the different donation campaigns like The Red Box to help the workers in many places in Dubai.
- Students have a positive work ethic and are developing a range of skills, mainly through the innovation lessons. They participate in many creative team projects such as the water wheel and they conduct a bake sale every term.
- Students show a good understanding of environmental sustainability and are involved in various projects about health and welfare. They look after the vegetable garden to highlight environmental sustainability. They visit Tadweer Waste Treatment centre to learn about the benefits of recycling.

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable

- Most teachers have a secure subject knowledge in most subjects, but their understanding of how students learn is variable. In KG, teachers are well qualified and secure in their knowledge of how children learn best. In the better lessons in other phases, teachers encourage students to learn actively through well-planned hands-on activities. In too many instances, however, teachers dominate lessons and intervene too often instead of allowing students to apply what they have learnt and to learn independently.
- In general, lesson planning is appropriate and especially effective during the double periods. In the KG, lesson plans clearly show the learning objectives which are shared with the children before each lesson. In other phases, learning objectives are not always measurable or written to describe what students will be learning, and planning does not always optimise progress. Some small group activities are purposeful and make good use of resources resulting in better achievement.
- Teachers' questioning techniques vary across the school. In the KG, interesting dialogue consistently takes place between teachers and children during the focus groups. Elsewhere, some of the questioning is challenging and enables students to think critically, particularly evident in middle school English lessons. However, questions are too often shallow and do not allow students to elaborate on their answers.
- In the better lessons, teachers adjust their teaching to meet the learning needs of the different groups of students. In Islamic education, teachers manage this consistently well. In other subjects, teachers are less effective and often have the same expectations for all students regardless of ability. In KG some small group activities are purposeful and make good use of resources resulting in better achievement. However, some learning centers do not provide challenge for all children and often lack rigour and purpose.

- Students have too few opportunities to learn independently without teacher intervention or guidance other than in the KG. Some questioning promotes critical thinking, but teaching to promote innovation and problem-solving skills are still in the early stages of development. In the KG, there are opportunities for discovery and innovation but insufficient opportunities for critical thinking and problem-solving.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable

- Teachers use a wide range of approaches to internal assessment, including observation, tests and questioning. In KG, these approaches are well aligned to the school's curriculum standards in English and mathematics. Staff are working to align the approaches in KG science and in English, mathematics and science in the other phases, to relevant standards.
- The school uses a variety of external tests including MAP and IOWA to benchmark students' attainment against the performance of students internationally. Staff are starting to use tests of students' cognitive abilities to match teaching approaches to the learning styles of individual students.
- Working with all teachers, senior staff have improved the way in which they and other leaders analyse internal and external test data. The variety of external tests used means that there is, at times, conflicting data which causes difficulties in evaluating students' progress. Good practice includes teachers discussing the results in external tests with individual students, and students setting themselves goals for improvement.
- The use of assessment information by teachers to match tasks and activities to the learning needs of students is variable across subjects and classes. There is some good practice in Islamic education. In mathematics and science, teachers often use short, online tests at the beginning of each lesson to ascertain appropriate starting points for each student. Overall though, this is underdeveloped.
- Using the wide range of assessment data, teachers have an increasingly accurate knowledge of students' strengths and academic development needs. They do not always use this knowledge effectively to challenge higher-attaining students and accelerate their progress. The quality of daily feedback to students from teachers and the use of student self-assessment are inconsistent.

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Not applicable

- The curriculum is based on the US Common Core Standards. It is broad, balanced and provides a range of subjects that develop students' skills, knowledge and understanding. All courses closely follow the school's authorized curriculum. Arabic, Islamic education and UAE social studies follow the MoE curriculum. Statutory requirements are fully met for both curricula.

- The curriculum builds on students' knowledge and achievements in core subjects. Its design is purposeful, deliberate and creative. A broad range of courses provides for continuity and progression in students' learning within grades and across phases.
- Children in KG exercise choice through carefully planned learning centers and play activities that aim to develop a range of skills. Elementary phase students engage in subjects such as art, music and ICT, adding breadth and knowledge to their learning. After-school programmes provide clubs and sporting activities linked to students' interests and ambitions. Currently 26 clubs are available including drama, photography, karate, story-telling and dance. Participation rates are high.
- Cross-curricular links, although planned in a majority of subjects, are not strong features in most lessons. In the better lessons, well-planned schemes of work embed links across subjects. This integrated learning is evident in the US and UAE social studies classes. Students effectively apply their skills across subjects, refine their critical thinking and engage in independent learning and research.
- The curriculum is reviewed regularly by school leaders and teachers to ensure that the needs of the students are met and that it is more closely aligned to the CCSs and the MOE curriculum. Internal and external assessment data, teacher input and best practices are integral components of the curriculum reviews.
- The UAE social studies curriculum is carefully planned and is taught as a separate class from Grades one to eight. In the KG, social studies is integrated into lessons. The MoE curriculum provides for continuity and progression. Teachers further enrich the curriculum with a range of activities within the classroom and school. High expectations and lessons that include critical thinking and innovative activities, increasingly allow students to think deeply, make connections between the UAE and the wider world and better understand the world in which they live.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Not applicable

- Specialist SEND staff provide advice for teachers on planning lessons and adapting the curriculum to meet the learning needs of all students. They also provide direct support for students both in lessons and outside of the classroom. However, this is not consistently effective in practice.
- Students engage in enhanced and innovative activities across the school in core subject areas, in information technology (IT) lessons and Golden Time, and in a weekly innovation class for Grades 4 to 8. An innovation plan for the school helps guide student projects, but is not being implemented effectively to propel students toward truly innovative design solutions that address personal, global, and environmental issues.
- Student exposure to Emirati culture and UAE society occurs in daily Islamic, Arabic, and social studies lessons. National agenda coverage is evident in all curricular areas across the school. Students and staff participate in school wide celebrations of National Day, Flag Day, and Martyrs' Day. Children in KG enjoy tasting the traditional foods of the UAE during the celebration of National Day.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not applicable

- The school has formal policies and procedures for safeguarding and protecting students from harm and all forms of bullying. There are regular and effective systems in place to identify risks. Students are well supervised around the school. When safety issues arise, the school reacts quickly to resolve problems and keep students safe in a sensitive and confidential manner.
- Student safety and hygiene are a priority for the school. The arrangements to ensure health, safety and security are comprehensive and well organized. This is evidenced by the presentations for student that include diabetes education and the prevention of obesity. All visitors are required to sign in at the entrance gate. Bus arrival and dismissal plus parent drop-off and pick-up are well supervised and orderly.
- The indoor and outdoor areas are all well maintained and checked daily. The quality of maintenance and record keeping is detailed and up to date. Medical and incident reports, including records of student vaccinations, are accurate and current.
- The premises and facilities are safe and adequate for staff and students. The indoor and outdoor areas have ample spaces for learning. The outdoor play and physical education areas are shaded and equipment is regularly checked for safety. Although ramps are available for access to the ground floor, there is no elevator for individuals with mobility issues.
- Provision for, and promotion of healthy living is a strong feature of the school. Students understand the importance of healthy food choices as is evidenced by their snacks and lunches. The canteen also provides mostly healthy choices. The physical education curriculum supports the components of healthy living and student well-being in the school.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Not applicable

- The atmosphere on campus is warm and friendly. Students are open and communicate readily with teachers and support staff. Behavior is well-managed with clear expectations that assist in the maintenance of an overall positive atmosphere. There are warm and caring relationships between the teachers and children in the KG. The well-being and personal development of all children is a priority.
- A very good rate of attendance is maintained through the close monitoring of students and the high expectations of support and instructional staff. Parents are contacted immediately to check the accuracy of postings for absences and tardiness.

- The school accepts students with a wide range of needs, but the building structure does not allow access to all parts of the campus for those in wheelchairs. Students who are gifted and talented have not been identified by the school.
- Students with SEND receive instruction from classroom teachers and from specialist staff, both in lessons and outside of the classroom. Their learning is enhanced further through the use of teaching resources.
- The counsellor guides students, advises staff and parents, and produces a monthly newsletter covering character education issues with tips and suggested book titles and websites. Mindfulness and behavior management training equips teachers to support and guide students in the classroom. Brain breaks for students in need of a sensory option, energise them and enable them to refocus and return to work.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Acceptable

- The school leadership demonstrate strong support for the instruction of students with SEND. The leadership of inclusion is being established to guide and support the daily instruction provided by SEND staff, shadow teachers, and classroom teachers.
- Students identified within the wide range of SEND categories are accepted for enrolment. Some are accepted for enrolment on condition that shadow teachers, occupational and speech therapists are available to provide the necessary support.
- Parents are appreciative of the acceptance and support of their students with SEND, by the staff, administrators, other students and families at the school. They have frequent, and often daily, contact with the shadow teacher in addition to SEND staff, to ensure progress and to give attention to instructional and behavioral issues that arise.
- Instructional planning is individualized and curriculum modifications are provided by most classroom teachers, by shadow teachers, and by the SEND staff. The SEND staff advise and build the skills of subject teachers during the weekly planning time that is set aside for each grade level team.
- The progress of students with SEND is now monitored through an online tracking system that illustrates the monthly growth in both mathematics and reading.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- The senior leadership team (SLT), including newly appointed senior and middle managers, work hard to improve the school's performance. They are reviewing the guiding statements to align them to 21st century learning expectations. Improved procedures for monitoring teaching, professional development and assessment are beginning to have a positive impact on classroom effectiveness. The SLT exhibits a commitment to an inclusive school that promotes UAE priorities.

- There is a developing understanding amongst school leaders of the curriculum and effective practices in teaching. They are ambitious in their aim to accelerate students' achievement by promoting best practice and holding teachers to account. Teachers' involvement in the analyses and use of internal and external assessment data is at an early stage of development. Consequently, their ability to adapt the curriculum and adjust their teaching practices are inconsistent.
- Professional relationships and effective communication systems are clearly established. A more collegial approach to decision making is enhancing levels of staff participation and engagement. Middle leaders are increasingly accountable for higher levels of achievement in the subject areas.
- Improving assessment systems result in more accurate understanding of students' achievement levels. Middle leaders show a commitment to investigate and trial improvement strategies, such as the school's innovation initiative. However, many initiatives are in their early stages of implementation, therefore their impact on improved student achievement is as yet variable.
- School leaders have improved some aspects of the school. Middle leaders benefit from the SLT's analysis of external benchmark assessment information. Some are able then to create action plans for their subject areas to improve student achievement. However, levels of capacity vary from one subject leader to another. The SLT ensures that the school is compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- All leaders and staff are involved in self-evaluation processes. Inspection reports and survey results, coupled with evidence from monitoring, provide the basis for the identification of areas of success and priorities for development. Although internal and external data are also analysed, this key part of the process is underdeveloped. Middle leaders are not involved in finalizing judgements.
- The analyses of data is more secure in the KG phase and in Islamic education. A range of monitoring strategies are used to evaluate teaching for effective learning, although the quality of these is variable in different phases and there is insufficient focus on the impact of teaching on students' achievement. The opportunities for professional development are increasingly aligned to evaluation of teaching. KG teachers benefit from phonics training.
- School improvement plans adequately describe key priorities for development which are highlighted in the self-evaluation process. The key priorities are broad ranging, and address the school's and the UAE's national priorities. However, they do not have clear and measurable targets, success criteria, time frames and key performance indicators, to enable the school to measure its success in terms of improved student achievement.
- The school's self-evaluation indicates that half of its previous key priorities are fully met, and others partially. However, of the three broad recommendations from the previous inspection report, the results are more variable. While some aspects of teaching to improve levels of achievement are more secure, variability limits the overall impact. Furthermore, school's leaders are not consistently held to account for the lack of improvement in students' outcomes.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Outstanding

- Parents are active partners with school leaders and teachers in their children's learning. They are involved in the life of the school through a wide range of activities, including the advisory board. Their views and ideas are valued and they contribute regularly to plans for improvements in the school. They are also effectively involved in planning their children's personalized school experience.
- The school uses a wide range of methods, including technology, to communicate with parents. Families consider themselves as partners with the leaders and staff of the school and feel free to ask questions, share concerns and offer suggestions. They are kept abreast of their children's weekly lessons and targets, as well as school events, through emails, newsletters and the school's online website.
- Reporting about academic and personal growth is ongoing, both informally and in a more detailed format, through report cards. Parents are informed about their children's learning, their strengths and areas for improvement. Parents appreciate that teachers know their children well and work with them to be contributing members of the school community.
- The school has developed strong ties with the local community. Families and students are regularly involved in fundraising events for charities and participate in educational field trips to companies and local organizations. This allows for a more enriching learning journey. However, there is little evidence of relevant international partnerships to develop students' sense of a broader connection to the global community.

Governance

Acceptable

- The governing board, consisting of three family members, one of whom is the principal, meets twice per term, occasionally inviting senior staff or parents to share information. However, opportunities for regular, direct parental input are few. The parental advisory board has minimal contact with the governing board. A recently developed strategic plan has been proposed to address the identified deficiencies by increasing representation, clarifying the governing board's roles and responsibilities, and establishing subcommittees.
- The governing board monitors the work of the school. However, unclear lines of responsibility of its members impede reflective, wise practice, and restricts effective performance management of senior leaders. Critical questioning about students' achievement and personal development is limited. Too many strategic actions lack clear measurable improvement targets.
- The recommendations from the previous inspection report have been met in part. The newly-appointed senior leaders bring a wealth of pertinent US school leadership experience. Governors ensure the school is adequately staffed and has ample resources. They hold school leaders to account, but the impact on students' academic outcomes has not been evaluated.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Very good

- All aspects of the schools daily operations are facilitated in an incisive and professional manner. Routines and procedures are well understood and efficiently implemented. Whilst effective bus transportation ensures that a majority of students arrive at school punctually, a significant number of other students are regularly late. The movement of students around the school is well organized. Lessons begin and finish on time. The KG schedule is appropriate for the age of the children.
- The school is adequately staffed. The early impact of the newly appointed senior leaders is clear. Improved staff processes of self-reflection and professional development are evident, as are more rigorous data analysis and tracking of student progress. The school is beginning to be more confident in its self-knowledge. KG teachers' collegiality and their sharing of best practice are an example for the rest of the school.
- The school provides an impressive range of facilities. Appropriately-sized classrooms allow for a broad range of learning experiences. Students with mobility issues have access to all ground floor facilities, but there are no lifts to facilitate access to higher floors. Specialist rooms further enhance the learning experience. The KG, learning centers, reading and discovery areas, together with corridors and outdoor areas, are conducive to teaching and learning.
- A rich array of relevant resources are available to support the learning process. The school library has ample fictional texts in English to support reading for pleasure. However, texts in Arabic are fewer and less attractive. There are ample IT resources for KG and early elementary classroom use. Beyond Grade 3, students bring their own devices to support classroom research, problem solving, recording and presenting.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
 Parents*	2016-2017	41
	2015-2016	31
 Teachers	45	
 Students	0	

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

- Overall, those parents that responded to the survey express high levels of satisfaction with most of the school's provision. Almost all parents are satisfied with the quality of the education provided, in this safe and well-resourced school, where teachers know their children's strengths and weaknesses and care for their children.
- They agree that students in the school are well behaved and respectful of teachers, and that their children enjoy school. They have a good understanding of their children's progress and next steps in learning through their meetings with teachers and through written reports.
- Almost all parents feel that the school promotes their children's literacy and love of reading in English and in Arabic, and that teachers support their children's learning by helping them to develop the skills to use learning technologies to conduct research and to work independently.
- Almost all students that responded to the survey are satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school. They feel that their teachers know them well, have high expectations and encourage and support them. They agree that they read English and Arabic well, and they have a good understanding of Islamic values.
- Almost all teachers that completed the survey have positive views of the schools' operations.

What happens next?

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

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

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

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau
Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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