




Sharjah American
International 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 Warqaa
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2005
Website	www.saisdubai.net
Telephone	00971-4-2801111
Address	Dubai Al Warqaa 1- P.O.BOX:74455
Principal	Mr. Mohammad Sultan Ibrahim
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	13 to 16 March 2017

Teachers / Support staff	
Number of teachers	133
Largest nationality group of teachers	Lebanese
Number of teaching assistants	27
Teacher-student ratio	1:12
Number of guidance counsellors	3
Teacher turnover	18%

Students	
Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	KG1-Grade 12
Number of students on roll	1606
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	590
Number of students with SEND	26
Largest nationality group of students	Arab

Curriculum	
Educational permit / Licence	US
Main curriculum	US / MoE
External tests and examinations	IBT, SAT1, SAT2, TOEFL, IELTS, DELF
Accreditation	NEASC Candidate
National Agenda benchmark tests	MAP, PBTS



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.

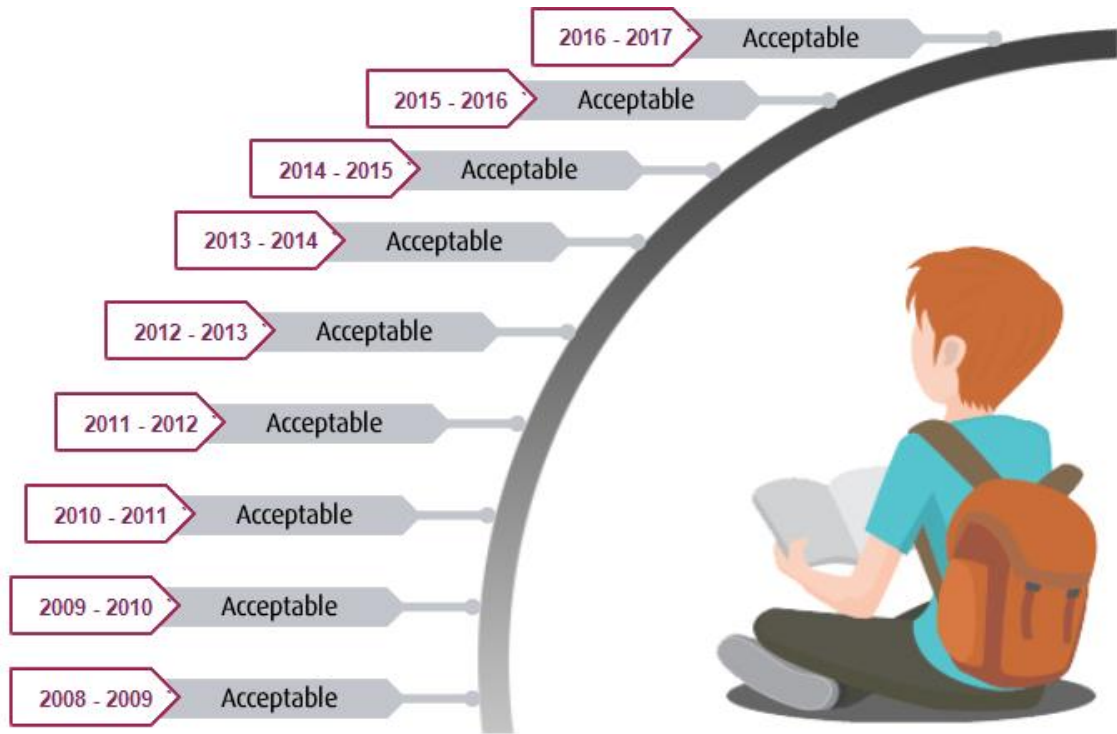
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

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 Sharjah American International Private School



- The school opened in 2005. It provides education for 1600 students from Kindergarten (KG) to Grade 12. The school population has grown consistently, year by year. The new principal joined the school on 1st March 2017 and has already initiated some significant developments. Teacher turnover has been consistently between 14 per cent and 19 per cent for the last three years, providing some stability.
- The school has remained acceptable since its first inspection in 2009. Over the years, there have been improvements in some academic areas; notably in the KG and in Arabic as a first language. Recently improvements have also occurred in Islamic education.
- Recommendations for improvement have consistently focused on raising students' attainment and increasing their progress. Recently, reports have emphasised the importance of teachers and students having higher expectations and the need to apply performance data from more rigorous internal and external assessments in order to measure success. There has been an emphasis on curriculum development year on year to match the needs of the students more closely and to improve the quality of teaching by careful recruitment and staff development.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



Sharjah American International Private School was inspected by DSIB from 13 to 16 March 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.

- Attainment, progress and learning skills for children in the KG continue to be good in all subjects. Students' attainment, progress and learning skills in most subjects in the other phases remain acceptable, but show some improvement in Islamic education, English and Arabic as a first language.
- The personal and social development of students is good across all phases of the school.
- Teaching in KG remains good. It is more varied in the rest of the school, where the majority remains acceptable. There are individual examples of excellent practice. Most teachers know their subject well, but a large minority lack strategies to engage successfully with students. Assessment processes and analysis of the information created are developing.
- The curriculum is enhanced well in the KG with a project based approach. In other phases, the curriculum is broad, balanced and is adapted to meet students' needs. However, a change to a different state's standards is being implemented as the school believes it is better suited to meet the needs of the students.
- The care and support of students are acceptable. Students feel safe but the school is implementing a new child protection policy and providing training for staff. Support for students identified with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is not consistently provided during all lessons.
- The owners, governors and new principal are sharing their vision and development plans with all stakeholders. Students, staff and parents are excited about changes already implemented and by the new direction being taken by the governors and leaders. Morale is high.

What the school does best

- The decisive strategic actions of governance which led to changes in leadership.
- The initial impact of the leadership in addressing the recommendations from the previous report, developing a new vision, challenging student behavior and supporting their well-being.
- The introduction of Islamic education into the KG and the increased progress in the subject in elementary, middle and high schools.
- The improved progress in English in the middle and high schools.
- The personal development and social responsibility of students in all phases.

Recommendations

- Raise students' attainment, increase progress and narrow the gender gap in almost all phases by:
 - implementing internal assessment processes that enable students to understand their next steps in learning
 - applying diagnostic tests and external benchmark data to monitor outcomes and create targets for individuals and groups of students
 - using assessment data effectively to inform curriculum development and adaptation.
- Develop an integrated performance management system that:
 - identifies strengths and areas for improvement in teaching which ensure focused individual and group professional development
 - applies performance data to increase staff accountability for student outcomes
 - addresses urgently the weak attainment in Arabic as an additional language in the middle and high schools.
- Ensure all staff understand and receive training in the new child protection policy.
- Strengthen the provision for students with SEND by:
 - improving the systems of identification
 - developing the capacity to construct detailed and measurable individual education plans
 - providing focused training for all staff to ensure more effective support and improved student outcomes in all classrooms.
- Increase the rigor of self-evaluation in all departments.

National Agenda Parameter



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

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

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

- The school does not fully meet the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter
- Attainment as measured by the National Agenda Parameter tests in English, mathematics and science is not secure.
- Middle leaders are yet to interpret and analyze data from the National Agenda Parameter tests and from the cognitive ability test (CAT 4). Currently, there is little evidence that internal data has been aligned or validated by external benchmark testing.
- Teachers are starting to use more activities to include subject skills that are relevant to the National Agenda. In English, there is a focus on improving reading. In mathematics, problem solving is developing. In science, there is increased emphasis on project work, and on acquiring investigative skills.
- The senior leadership team is aware of the need for change and this is being addressed in the key subjects. Teachers take part in school-led training on strategies such as differentiation and developing questioning techniques to encourage students' critical thinking skills. Subject leaders have introduced class assignments to encourage innovation. However, this is not yet embedded in teaching practices.
- Students are not yet aware of the National Agenda benchmark results or cognitive ability test outcomes. Although they have opportunities in school for extended, independent work, they need support to take more responsibility for their own learning, in order to achieve their potential.

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:

- The school's approach to innovation is emerging. Critical thinking is not a well-developed feature in most classes, with a lack of stimulus from teacher questioning. Learning technologies are largely used to refer to textbooks and not often to enhance learning. Work ethic does not provide the rigor to stimulate students' new ideas in their learning, although enterprise and entrepreneurship activities are emerging. Teachers' planning of lessons should provide more opportunities for students to develop independent learning skills. Curriculum design should increase the level of challenge to students' personal and academic development.

Overall school performance

Acceptable

1 Students' achievement

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

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

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑

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

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


6. Leadership and management

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


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 almost all English lessons and analysis of data from internal skills reports, shows that almost all groups of children make good progress in developing early reading skills and phonics skills of decoding. Reading and writing are less well developed. The introduction of grouped alphabet letters in KG1 has been a positive development. Opportunities for role play in KG1 and for children to present their learning in KG2 have supported the development of speaking and other literacy skills.
- In mathematics, internal skills data and classroom observations indicates that children are exceeding grade level expectation. In KG1, children are given many opportunities to explore numbers and their properties through play. Counting is a regular part of their daily routine. In KG2, children are able to perform addition of numbers up to 30, without the use of concrete objects, and record their operations. In most classes in KG2 children understand how to compile and read bar graphs. They can confidently name shapes and enjoy making patterns.
- A review of planning and scrutiny of children's work indicates that scientific processes are emerging through integrated, project based learning. As a result children's attainment and progress exceed curriculum expectation. KWL charts are used in many classrooms, enabling children to hypothesize by asking (K), "What do I know?" Then to predict and explore (W), "What do I want to discover?" Finally, to evaluate by asking (L), "What have I learned?" The projects provide an opportunity to explore, to research from different sources, to test their ideas, to record their findings in different ways and to present to an audience. Children often use Venn diagrams to compare or contrast their findings.

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

- Internal school data for Islamic education, shows very high attainment. However, in lessons and recent work most students demonstrate an understanding of the subject that is in line with Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum standards. They show an age-appropriate understanding of the Five Pillars of Islam and the Pillars of Faith. Students can recall facts and derive guidance from the Prophet's life (PBUH). They memorize a number of Surahs of the Holy Qur'an. Their recitations skills are adequate. Their understanding of Islamic values is better. Students' make good progress from their starting points.
- In Arabic as a first language, a majority of students attain levels that are above MoE curriculum standards in lessons and in their written work. School's data show much higher attainment. A majority of students can read and understand short passages about familiar topics. Their speaking and writing skills are weaker, although they can write a short paragraph using a limited range of vocabulary. They understand and apply simple rules of grammar. Trends of attainment are consistent. Students make good progress in lessons and in recent work. Generally the girls demonstrate better proficiency than the boys.
- School assessment information for Arabic as an additional language indicates outstanding attainment. However, in lessons and in recent work, the majority of students attain levels that are above MoE curriculum standards. They understand short passages and dialogue about daily routines. They can express themselves in short conversations. Their writing skills are developing. They can write a full sentence and read a short paragraph. In lessons, a majority of students make better than expected progress from their starting point. Trends of attainment are consistent for the last three years.
- In English, the majority of students confidently read a wide range of books. They use new vocabulary in line with grade level expectations. Their extended writing skills are limited. Weakness in grammar and spelling hinder development. In lessons and in their workbooks, the majority of students' make good progress.
- In mathematics, most students attain in line with curriculum expectations but do not perform as well as other students in international tests. They have adequate understanding of numbers, properties and operations. However, mathematical processes and the use of numeracy strategies are less well developed. Students' skills in problem solving and applying mathematical knowledge to real life situations is developing. Most students make acceptable progress in lessons from their starting points. The school has maintained consistent attainment over the past three years.

- In science, most students' attainment and progress are in line with the school's curriculum expectations. However, their attainment is weak when compared with international standards. Most students are developing their confidence and competence in science. Their work in class and in projects shows that they have an appropriate understanding of key concepts. Their skills of scientific enquiry are under developed. They can answer questions with right or wrong answers, but lack the skills of exploration or investigation.

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

- In Islamic education, most students attain levels that are in line with MoE curriculum standards. They demonstrate appropriate understanding of the Holy Qur'an, Hadith and Seerah. They refer to them for guidance and for moral lessons. Holy Qur'an recitation skills are weaker. Students demonstrate an appropriate understanding of the principles of worship and faith. They have good knowledge of Islamic manners, including those related to travel. Students make good progress in lessons and in their written work. Attainment levels have remained the same over recent years.
- Internal assessment information for Arabic as a first language, show very high attainment. However, in lessons and recent work, the majority of students demonstrate knowledge and language skills that are in line with MoE curriculum standards. Students can read and understand written and spoken texts of appropriate length that include unfamiliar words. They can speak and write about personal experiences using their own language. Students' make adequate progress in lessons and in their written work. Generally the girls make better progress than the boys.
- The school's data for Arabic as an additional language indicates outstanding attainment. However, in lessons and recent work, less than three quarters of students attain levels that are in line with MoE curriculum standards. For example, whilst students can express themselves in simple sentences using familiar words, their reading and writing skills are weak. They can understand spoken passages of short length. Students make acceptable progress in lessons, but there is a noticeable difference between that of the girls and that of the boys.
- In English, students' attainment is varied. Most internal assessment data indicates outstanding results, which are in contrast with external data that show most students' performance as weak. The majority of students can draw inferences from reading, respond to a setting and a plot. Most can express themselves confidently and are attentive when listening and collaborating with their peers, which is leading to better progress. Students' writing, questioning and critical skills are underdeveloped.

- In mathematics, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum standards. They make expected progress. Based on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test results, students do not perform as well as their international counterparts. They can apply and extend their prior understanding of arithmetic to algebraic expressions and can solve equations and inequalities. Their ability to reason abstractly and quantitatively is developing. In lessons and students' work, their progress is generally acceptable. However, girls achieve higher levels of attainment than boys.
- In science, most students' attainment and progress during lessons and in their written projects are in line with the curriculum standards. However, in external benchmark tests most students attain below the age-related expectations. Progress, as seen in lessons and over time, is acceptable. Students are learning more complex scientific principles and becoming more skilled in practical work. However, their critical thinking remains underdeveloped.

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

- In Islamic education lessons and in recent written work, most students attain levels that are in line with MoE curriculum standards. Students have adequate understanding of the Holy Qur'an, Hadith and Seerah and can refer to them for evidence of rulings or concepts, such as planning and safety in Islam. They have a better understanding of Islamic values such as collaboration and sincerity. Their Qur'anic recitation skills are not secure. Students' progress in lessons and in written work is good. Attainment is consistently high, but the girls make better progress than the boys.
- Students of Arabic as a first language, attain knowledge and skills that are in line with MoE curriculum standards. This is in contrast with the school's data which indicates higher attainment. Most students demonstrate adequate knowledge of grammatical and semantic features of language. Their language skills are acceptable. They understand written and spoken passages of varying length and topics. They can discuss opinions and structure arguments about written articles using technical vocabulary. They make good progress during lessons and this is illustrated in written work. Progress made by the girls is better than that of the boys.
- The school's data for Arabic as an additional language show outstanding attainment. However, in lessons and recent work, less than three quarters of students attain levels that are in line with MoE curriculum standards. Students can identify basic rules of grammar. They can understand written and spoken passages of short length. They find it difficult to discuss opinions or develop arguments about written articles in classical Arabic. Their writing skills are weak. Only a few can write a creative paragraph of reasonable length. Students' make acceptable progress in lessons. Generally, the girls perform better than the boys.

- In English, most students' performance against external benchmarks shows weak attainment. Students' speaking and listening skills are well developed and, in discussion, they are able to articulate their thoughts with clarity and confidence. While students make good progress in oral skills of persuasion and argument, they do not apply these skills sufficiently in their writing.
- In mathematics, most students achieve attainment and make progress in line with curriculum expectations. In external examinations, the performance of a large majority of Grade 12 students is weak. In lessons, most students are able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of real and complex numbers. They interpret functions to model relationships between quantities. Progress in lessons is acceptable. The more able students make limited progress.
- Students' attainment and progress in science are in line with curriculum expectations. In external benchmark tests, most students attain below age-expected levels. Generally, girls' progress is better than boys'. An analysis of students' written work confirms the acceptable standards observed during lessons. Students collaborate well when conducting experiments and show a greater understanding of scientific methods. For example, Grade 10 students can make predictions, design their own experiments and record their findings, in order to test the hypothesis they first developed.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The majority of students in all phases have positive attitudes to learning. They take some responsibility, but independent learning is not a strength in many lessons. Most children in the KG are enthusiastic about learning. Their communication skills vary but they are happy and willing to share what they know. A few students, especially in lower elementary classes, can become distracted if not challenged.
- The quality of student interaction in lessons is variable. Children in the KG are developing some self-reliance and collaboration skills when in their learning centres. In other phases, most students respond well when asked to collaborate. They share ideas and support one another. In Arabic, most conversations are held with the teacher. Elsewhere, students more confidently communicate their learning with each other during plenary sessions.
- Applying ideas and forming links between subjects are not marked features of students' learning. They do not acknowledge readily the transferable skills they are acquiring. In science, they make limited connections between concepts and real world examples. In English, in Arabic and in Islamic education, students make clearer connections to the real world, relating their learning beyond the classroom.
- Critical thinking, independence and collaboration are not embedded in students' learning. Whilst information technology is commonly used in classrooms in some subjects, research is superficial; relying on download, rather than more detailed analysis and assimilation of information gleaned. Too many students rely on teacher direction.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good	Good	Good ↑	Good

- In KG, children's attitudes are positive in the context of a safe and secure environment. In upper grades, most students have developed a responsible attitude. Students demonstrate that they are eager to improve and participate actively in class. Self-reliance is developing in the lower grades and increases with maturity in the upper grades.
- In all phases of the school, students display mutual respect and work co-operatively. In most subjects their behavior is good with occasional exceptions in specific classrooms. Students respond reflectively to the counselors' intervention and to the recently introduced positive behavior incentives.
- Students demonstrate an openness and respect for all nationalities represented in the school. Group work and arranging for students to work in pairs ensure students to get to know each other better. School-wide activities that celebrate the differences and unique characteristics of students serve to strengthen relationships amongst students. Relationships with staff are polite and cordial.
- Students demonstrate a good understanding of how to stay safe and maintain healthy life-styles. However, there is not yet a school-wide culture of healthy choices regarding food and nutrition. Many students bring less healthy food to school or generally avoid the healthier options in the cafeteria.
- Attendance is good. A minority of students are not punctual in arriving to school at the beginning of the day. Students are punctual to lessons.

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

- Students across the school demonstrate a clear understanding of the values of Islam and its relevance to life in the UAE. In their daily life, students apply Islamic values to their relationships; showing kindness, respect for, and acceptance of others.
- Students across the school demonstrate good knowledge and respect of Emirati heritage and culture. Their appreciation is clear in their active participation in cultural activities and celebrations such as the National Day, Martyr Day and Flag Day. Students can discuss the main features in Dubai and its development.
- Students in all phases of the school are well aware of their own cultures. They demonstrate a good understanding and awareness of other cultures. They talk about each other's cultural expectations and traditions, including food, art and history. Children in the KG, celebrate other cultures through the informative and interactive displays in corridors and their classrooms.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good ↑	Good

- Students have a clear understanding of their responsibilities to their school and within their local community. Students in the charity committee help to arrange school activities or events. They contribute to the wider community through participation in competitions, raising money for charity and contributing actively through the community service program in the school.
- Students have a strong work ethic. They have presented creative ideas in the science and mathematics Fair. They demonstrate being innovative by initiating activities or events. For example, the older students plan and run a business fair and read stories to the children in the KG.
- Students have good awareness of environmental issues. They make positive contributions such as taking responsibility for cleaning their classrooms. They are involved in recycling projects and they participate actively in the environmental and agricultural clubs. They are aware of the main global environmental problems.

3. Teaching and assessment

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

- Almost all teachers have strong subject knowledge but many lack understanding of how to ensure effective learning. Teaching in the KG is matched well to children's learning needs. They are given space to discover through well-planned, purposeful activities. In other phases, teaching does not consistently sustain students' curiosity, so that they want to learn the subject content and develop investigative skills.
- Most teachers use a common lesson plan, which lacks detail. Activities do not always challenge all learners. The most effective teaching is in well-managed lessons where students respond to high expectations of work and behavior. In some lessons the pace is slow with too much teacher direction and insufficient emphasis on active learning. Other lessons are usually efficiently time-managed and supported by adequate resources.
- The majority of teachers share the learning objectives, although not all students understand them. In a minority of lessons, teachers use wide ranging strategies to maintain interest; ensuring enthusiasm, motivation and positive behavior for learning. This is not consistent across the school. In better lessons, teachers' questions probe deeper understanding. Others fail to extend learning by such skilful questioning.

- Teachers do not use assessment consistently to plan students' individual learning. Consequently, many set tasks of similar complexity for all. The better teachers challenge with open-ended, collaborative tasks and give students time to reflect on their learning. In KG, children are developing skills of working together in groups or pairs with little supervision. Project based lessons link learning across curriculum areas and to the real world.
- Teaching to develop critical thinking, problem solving and independent learning is limited. Students are largely dependent on their teachers, particularly when the teaching methods used do not encourage independent thought or activity. In the KG, children know how to share, take their turn and work collaboratively. 'Mindfulness training' is encouraging teachers to think of new strategies to help children to become more self-reliant.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good ■	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Assessment processes are linked to the curriculum standards. Diagnostic tests are used to establish baseline attainment for each grade. The school conducts both formative and summative assessment across all grades. Whilst there is both variety and frequency of assessment, the internal data created is assessing acquired knowledge, rather than providing accurate, valid and reliable measures of the progress of individual students.
- The school has just started to use MAP benchmark tests to evaluate outcomes against curriculum expectations. The use of the CAT4 is a relatively new procedure and the school's knowledge of the application of CAT4 is under-developed. The school has yet to gain from the extensive and informative analysis that MAP produces.
- A considerable quantity of assessment information is produced internally but not related to benchmark or cognitive testing. The school analyzes internal assessment data to inform teachers about trends and to identify gaps in the curriculum. However, the analysis is limited to one source of information and not corroborated or verified with other sources of information. The absence of this validation makes it difficult for the school to track individual or group progress.
- Currently, assessment information is used to identify three levels of attainment in each grade. Therefore, any differentiation in planning or delivery of lessons is limited to three outcomes or, to a minor extent, three levels of teacher input or worksheet. Consequently, assessment only superficially addresses the needs of individuals or of identified groups.
- In the KG, teachers know their children well through internal formative assessment processes, which are in place to help inform planning to meet different children's needs. Across other phases, teachers have reasonable knowledge of individual students' strengths and weaknesses. Marking and feedback on students' work is not constructive or developmental. Most teachers do not provide feedback to students on how to improve their work. Self-assessment and peer assessment by students is used inconsistently.

4. Curriculum

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

- The curriculum has a clear rationale based on U.S. Common Core Standards. The school is currently following Michigan State Standards and New Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The curriculum is balanced but lacks sufficient breadth to meet the needs of all high school students. The school is reviewing the curriculum for Arabic as an additional language. The Arabic and Islamic education curriculum complies with MoE requirements.
- The continuity and progression of the planned curriculum is not consistently translated into lesson plans across all subjects and at all grade levels. Specific identified skills are not always addressed during lessons. Horizontal alignment is secure. Vertical alignment is being developed by collaboration across phases. The acquisition of skills, based on students' prior learning, is an emerging feature at most grade levels.
- The range of curricular choices is beginning to increase in response to students' interests and career choices. Students now have options in arts and music in most grades, with further humanities in the high school. These initiatives provide additional opportunities, such as those for students studying English as an additional language, rehearsing Macbeth for an upcoming performance.
- Curriculum analysis in each grade is building cross-curricular links and forging connections with real world contexts. There is some evidence of a skills focus in order to address the National Agenda priorities. The school has aligned to the UAE Framework standards to ensure that the curriculum is beginning to make these connections.
- Most subject leaders conduct four termly reviews of the curriculum to identify gaps and to make curriculum changes. MAP data from the first term informed the first stage of this development. Currently, as the curriculum cannot be reviewed coherently alongside assessment data, adjustments are not meeting the academic or personal needs of all students.
- UAE social studies is aligned to the MOE requirements and is taught from Grades 1 to 9. Grades 1 to 3 have one lesson per week. Grades 4 to 6 have two lessons and Grades 6 to 9 receive three lessons per week. Each is 45 minutes long. Grades 9 to 12 have electives offered for four periods per week. History is mandatory for Grades 11 and 12. The school is beginning to integrate UAE social studies as a cross curricular subject in the elementary school.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑

- The curriculum is being adapted to meet the needs of different groups of students, including those with SEND and the gifted and talented. This adaptation remains stronger in the KG where project-based learning provides the opportunity for most children to participate and to succeed. In other phases, lesson plans frequently feature differentiated learning opportunities but teachers do not always provide these in practice.
- The school has developed its extra-curricular provision and made links with local communities. These include partnerships with Dubai Parks and Resorts and the Al Futtaim business community. Links are forged with the American Universities in Dubai and Sharjah. For example, a group of students enjoyed local success in a robotics competition, and then took their project to China. Social contributions include visits to local retirement homes and orphanages, further support student learning.
- In the KG and lower primary, planned programs promote children's understanding of UAE culture. This includes an adaptation of the civic aspect of the social studies curriculum, to provide learning about UAE government. In upper grades the social studies department uses publications to support learning about local culture. In Arabic lessons, local UAE culture is often central to the lesson.

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

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

- The child protection policy has been upgraded, but it has not yet been shared with the staff, students or parents. Issues of emotional well-being, such as bullying, especially cyberbullying and general internet safety are inadequately addressed and staff have not received training recently.
- KG children are particularly well cared for. Routines such as checking the premises each morning and undertaking emergency evacuations are in place. Bus arrival and departure is safe and well-organized with seatbelts, security cameras, and GPS units. Security cameras also monitor movement throughout the campus. Fire protection equipment is regularly inspected, fire drills are conducted as required.
- Playground facilities are safe and well-maintained. All pillars, posts or supports are suitably protected to prevent contact injury. Regular inspections ensure attention to any immediate maintenance requirements. The school keeps accurate records of these repairs. Supervision of elementary and middle school students during recess periods is limited.
- Stairways have non-slip treads and exits unlock automatically during emergency evacuation. All trip hazards are clearly marked. Storage areas are secure and the KG facilities are well suited to the age group. Observation windows have been installed recently, between the corridor and some classrooms. Ramps ensure ground floor access for those with mobility impairments. There is no elevator access to the second and third floor.

- The school offers healthy foods alongside heavier carbohydrate options. There are two clinics with a full-time doctor and two nurses. They address classes on hygiene, well-being, first aid and nutrition. Diet and exercise are addressed through PE classes. Health records are maintained in the clinic and all medication is secured appropriately. Wellness and positive living are addressed through learning programs and assemblies.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Procedures for managing students' behavior are adequate. A recent 'Heroes' initiative offers positive behavior reinforcement. The revised students' handbook provides students and parents with clear expectations and consequences for inappropriate behavior.
- The school's approach is adequate in promoting attendance, but punctuality at the start of school remains an issue. This is associated in part with conflicting information between the attendance policy and the students' handbook.
- The owners, the advisory board and senior leaders promote an inclusive ethos. Currently the school's admissions policy advises that it is unable to accept students with severe or complex special educational needs. However, in practice the school willingly accepts applications for students with SEND as long as they can benefit from the programs the school provides.
- The school has appropriate systems to identify students with SEND and the gifted and talented. The school uses a variety of assessment tools to identify these students. Parental input is an important aspect of the assessment process. In some cases, there is a significant delay between referral and a decision on the need to provide support.
- There is considerable investment in resourcing the SEND department. Since the previous inspection, the school has restructured to provide full time co-ordination of SEND. There is an additional counselor also in post. Individual education plans (IEPs) identify students' need. The IEPs provide insufficient advice on how to meet students' needs in the classroom. Where there are identified strategies, they are rarely implemented during lessons.
- The well-being and personal development of all students are routinely monitored. Positive student and staff relationships ensure that impromptu conversations are valuable elements in support of more formal interventions by the counselors. Information gained is used to provide effective personal and academic support. A recently appointed academic counselor ensures college and career planning for senior students.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Acceptable

- The owners, advisory board and senior leaders promote an inclusive ethos which is reflected in everyday life in most areas of the school. The school does not exclude students on the basis of SEND as long as they can benefit from the programs offered. Despite this inclusive ethos, only twenty-six students are currently identified as SEND.

- The school makes use of a variety of assessment tools to identify students with SEND. The school uses this information to develop IEPs. In many cases, specific student targets and guidance for teachers on differentiation and the next steps for students are lacking.
- The SEND department communicates students' progress regularly through formal and informal reports. This is initiated by the SEND co-ordinator, learning support specialists and some class teachers. Parents consistently engage with their children's program and their feedback is sought. Parents comment positively on the communication from the SEND department, but some express concern about inconsistent communication from classroom teachers.
- The school makes adequate modifications to the curriculum to meet the needs of most groups of students. Modifications, however, do not consistently translate into the implementation of effective teaching strategies. As a result, student outcomes are not always maximized and barriers to learning are not always diminished.
- Frequent student assessments aim to inform whether teaching is leading to progress for students with SEND. Internal assessment data indicates progress is above expectations for many students across most subjects in all phases. The most recent proficiency report, indicates most students are keeping pace with their peers and, in a minority of cases, are out-performing them.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- Developments initiated since the previous inspection have been built upon significantly by the recently appointed new principal. His vision is shared by leaders at all levels, and his energy and enthusiasm for change is appreciated by all students and their parents. All leaders are committed to improving outcomes of students in line with national priorities.
- The new leaders are committed to a change to Californian curriculum standards, which they believe better suit their students. Therefore, not all leaders have secure knowledge of the curriculum, but a new US curriculum co-ordinator has been appointed to lead this transition. The principal is sharing his expectations well and is beginning to establish a more positive learning environment.
- There is substantial restructuring of leadership roles with several new appointments. As a result, roles and responsibilities are evolving. However, with the strategic vision so clearly communicated, staff commitment is evident and morale throughout the school is high. Students understand, and are enthusiastic about the new direction.
- Leaders at all levels indicate their understanding of the need for improvement; especially in teaching, learning and use of assessment. The new principal is highly innovative and fiercely committed to school improvement. The majority of senior and middle leaders have the capacity to innovate and to improve outcomes within their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders had already begun to address some areas for development identified by the previous inspection report. However, more significant steps are currently being taken. While some structural and policy changes are already impacting positively on students' outcomes, many initiatives are too recent to create measurable improvements in performance.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- Self-evaluation in preparation for this inspection was insecure, reflecting an inadequate understanding of performance data. This was undertaken during the transition between the two principals. Throughout the period since the previous inspection, governors undertook extensive self-evaluation, leading to significant changes in leadership. Those now in post are evaluating every aspect of the school, effecting immediate changes. However, outcomes as yet cannot be established.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning had begun before the leadership change. It remains an emerging feature of the school. Current leaders acknowledge the inadequacy of the present system. They are making rapid changes, but cannot currently apply students' performance data and so hold teachers accountable for outcomes.
- School improvement plans, including the action plan to address recommendations from the previous report, lack coherence. They include appropriate time targets, but lack measurable outcomes. This is because data is not widely available and not interpreted adequately.
- There has been little progress towards meeting the recommendations of the previous report. Recent structural and policy changes have the potential to initiate improvements but it is too early to evaluate success. Immediate steps have been taken to improve students' behavior and to develop a more positive learning environment. Raising staff expectations, curriculum adaptation and monitoring of classroom practices are not yet strong features.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- The school is successful in engaging parents as partners in their children's learning. Those who are aware of it, value the role of the advisory board representing them in challenging school effectiveness and contributing to school improvement. However, some parents are unaware of the board's existence or of its role.
- Parents are delighted by the regular communication they receive through many different media. They particularly appreciate the on-line portal through which they can monitor their children's performance, access guidance on homework or project tasks and interact directly with teachers. However, they are also pleased that this does not prevent direct conversation in school on a regular basis.
- Reporting is regular and parents appreciate the detailed reports on their children's attainment and progress against internal standards. In the KG, weekly newsletters keep parents informed of the themes and learning focus. Teachers use a variety of social media platforms to update parents on class projects.
- Parents speak with enthusiasm of local community links and opportunities for students' wider involvement. They encourage their children's interactions with local homes for the elderly and orphanages. They value the contributions of the American Universities of Dubai and Sharjah to enhance academic education. They are proud of the students' outcomes in a recent robotics competition in Shanghai.

Governance

Good ↑

- The advisory board is chaired by the owner and includes many parents, some students and staff representation. All the principal's plans and recommendations are discussed by this panel. They regularly question and challenge the principal. The owner often leaves meetings to allow full and frank discussion, but remains available nearby to respond to questions.
- The owners are educators with national and international experience. All members of the advisory board have a significant stake in the school's performance. Therefore they hold the school leaders to account for all actions and outcomes. They regularly monitor the work of the principal as he exercises his executive responsibility for the vision they clearly share.
- The governors' and owners' imposition of increased accountability for student outcomes led to the change of leadership. There is substantial investment of time, energy and financial resources by the owners who are giving the new principal full control over recruitment and development plans, on the sole condition that he can illustrate the potential educational outcomes of every decision.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Acceptable

- The school has established clear routines and procedures for students and teachers throughout the day. Students are comfortable in these routines. The staffing schedule is organized to provide appropriate instructional time for every student in every subject. Supervisory staff are deployed throughout the building and in the playgrounds. There are regular safety inspections and repairs are attended to as needed.
- Almost all teachers have a degree in a related subject. However, the majority do not have a teaching qualification. This deficiency is limiting the capacity to raise students' attainment and progress in almost all key subjects. Professional development is not resulting in significant improvement to teaching. This is reflected in the external assessment data.
- There is a large computer suite and sufficient teaching materials to support learning. Recent improvements include refurbishment of the library, new classroom furniture for Grades 6 to 12, additional windows installed in part of the boys' section. A new science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) laboratory is being installed. The current science laboratories are under-used. There is currently no access for those with mobility impairments to the second and third floors.
- Most rooms have interactive whiteboards that are regularly utilized. The library contains limited learning resources. Many students have been issued with a tablet computer. Increasingly aspects of teaching, learning and assessment are conducted through the school's portal. Parents have access via the portal to their children's records enabling them to support their children and reinforce teaching. Other resources for independent research are limited.

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	
 <p>Parents*</p>	2016-2017	195
	2015-2016	89
 <p>Teachers</p>	105	
 <p>Students</p>	273	

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

- A minority of parents, a large majority of eligible students and most teachers completed the survey this year.
- Almost all parents who responded to the survey, are pleased with the quality of education received by their children.
- The majority of students who responded to the survey, feel confident about their use of both Arabic and English. A majority appreciate the increase in extra-curricular activities, but would like further options.
- The majority of parents who responded to the survey, are pleased about their children's experience of Islamic education and culture. Most parents feel the school is developing their children's ability to apply technology to their learning.
- Almost all parents feel that the school is contributing to their children's personal development, but a number of students and staff feel that behavior remains a concern in some phases.
- Most parents consider teaching to be a strength of the school, but a minority of students express concerns about the approach of a very few teachers, which is being addressed by the school.
- All parents and teachers feel that children are safe at school and on transport. However a minority of students express concern about bullying behavior.
- Most parents, students and staff have confidence in the new leadership and especially the principal.

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