

Inspection Report



Iranian Salman Al Farsi School

2014-2015



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School information



General information

Location	Al Qusais
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1995
Website	www.salman.uaeirschools.com
Telephone	04-2988173
Address	P.O.BOX:3167 Qusais, Dubai.
Principal	Serrolhagh Abedi
Language of instruction	Farsi
Inspection dates	8 th – 11 th December 2014



Students

Gender of students	Boys
Age range	6 - 18
Grades or year groups	Grade 1 - Grade 12
Number of students on roll	447
Number of children in Pre-K	NA
Number of Emirati students	0
Number of students with SEN	135
Largest nationality group of students	Iranian



Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	30
Largest nationality group of teachers	Iranian
Number of teacher assistants	0
Teacher-student ratio	1:15
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	33%



Curriculum

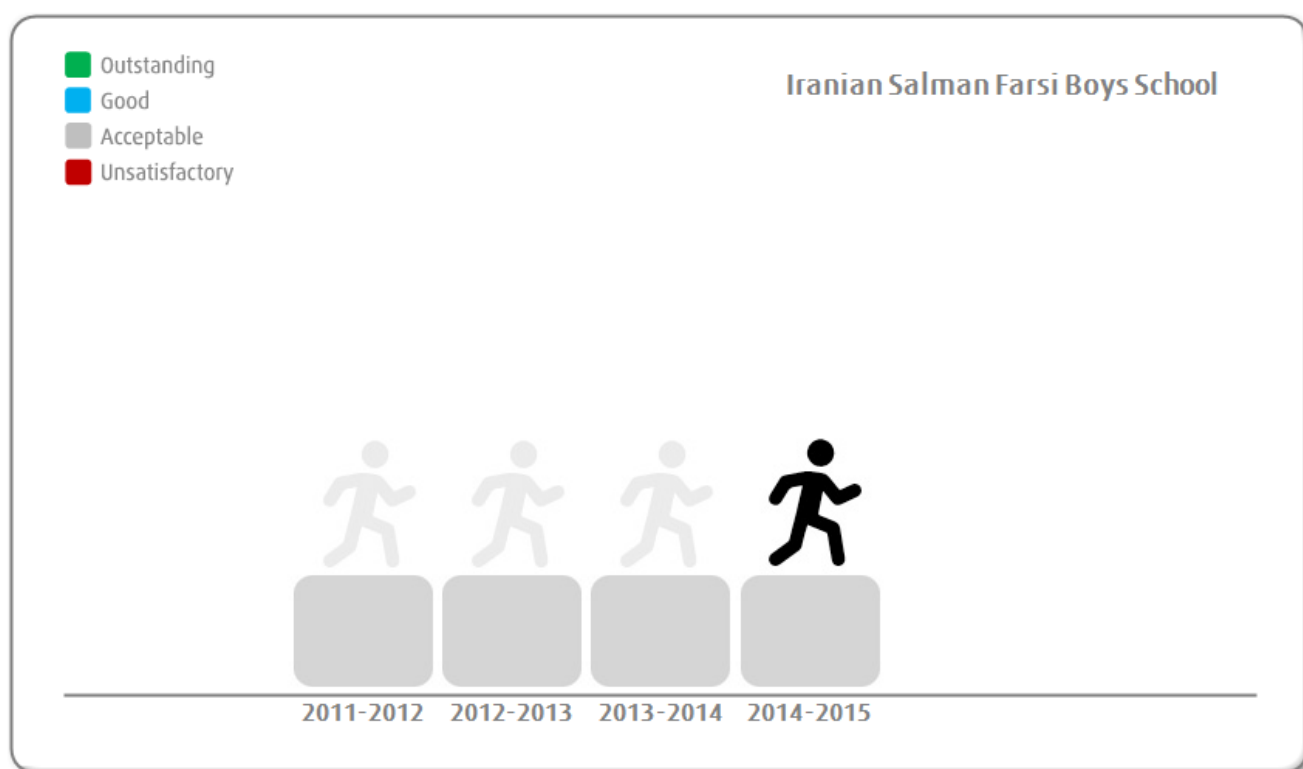
Educational Permit	Iranian
Main Curriculum / Other	Iranian
Standardised tests / board exams	Iranian Final Tests
Accreditation	NA



Dear Parents,

Iranian Salman Farsi Boys School was inspected by DSIB from 8th – 11th December 2014, and the overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **Acceptable**

In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by the school, inspectors considered six key aspects of the school's performance and standards. Inspectors looked at children's attainment and progress in five key subjects, their learning skills as well as their personal and social development. They judged how effective teaching was across the school. Inspectors considered how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside the classroom met the educational needs of all children. They judged how well the school protected and supported children. In addition inspectors judged the effectiveness of leadership and governance, including management, staffing, facilities and resources.



The inspection judgements were drawn from a range of evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observing children's learning in lessons, looking at their work, talking with children, meetings with staff, parents and governors, and reviewing the parents' and teachers' surveys.

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

Strengths

- Extremely positive attitudes and behaviour shown by students, and respectful relationships between students and staff throughout the school.
- Specialist staff provide good identification, support and provision for students with special educational needs.
- Partnerships between the school and parents were effective.

Areas for improvement

- Improve the quality of teaching across the school, and share good practice between teachers.
- Support the development of students' independent and critical thinking skills by increasing their access and use of technology.
- Involve students in the assessment of their own work and ensure they know how to improve.
- Comply with the requirements of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ministry of Education for the teaching of Islamic Education and Arabic.

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

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

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

Yours sincerely,

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau
Knowledge and Human Development Authority

A closer look at Iranian Salman Farsi Boys School



How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, the Iranian Salman Farsi School provided an **'Acceptable'** quality of education for its students.

- Students' attainment and progress were acceptable in key subjects. Students were enthusiastic learners and most were capable of developing their learning skills when given the opportunity.
- Almost all students were well behaved and had good attitudes to their learning. They had an acceptable understanding of Islam but a limited awareness of other cultures. Students' community and environmental responsibilities were not well developed.
- The quality of teaching varied across the school. Teaching did not always support the development of student's independent and critical thinking skills and the use of technology was limited. Teacher marking and assessments were mostly acceptable but did not involve students enough in the assessment of their own work.
- The quality of the school curriculum was acceptable. Students' inability to access and use technology ill-prepared them for future learning and work. The curriculum was adapted very effectively for students in the special educational needs programme but not for all students in the school.
- The school's child protection policy was clear and understood by most staff and students. Students were provided with helpful information about a safe and healthy lifestyle. Relationships between teachers and students were strong. There was acceptable provision for students with special educational needs.
- School leadership and school improvement planning were acceptable. Links with parents were strong and parents were generally positive about the school. Limited resources in lessons inhibited the development of students' independent learning and research skills.



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

- Students with complex needs made good progress in learning skills. However, in classrooms students' progress was limited. Senior leaders had developed effective provision for students in the special educational needs programme. This expertise was not shared with teachers and the quality of provision in lessons was variable.
- Specialist staff more accurately identified students' severe and complex learning difficulties through the use of diagnostic tests. Parents were involved and kept well informed about their children's progress and were satisfied with the support of their children.
- Specialist teachers provided effective support to students with complex needs. In classrooms support was more variable and less effective.


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

		Primary	Middle	High
 Islamic Education	Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
	Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
 Arabic as a First Language	Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
	Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
 Arabic as an Additional Language	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Language of instruction	Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
	Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
 English	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
 Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
 Science	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
		Primary	Middle	High
Learning skills		Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

↑ Improved from last inspection

↓ Declined from last inspection

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

	Primary	Middle	High
Personal responsibility	Good 	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Community and environmental responsibility	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable



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

	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

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

Overall school judgement

Acceptable

Key strengths


- Students demonstrated mature attitudes, positive behaviour and respectful relationships with staff and each other.
- The identification, provision and support for students with special educational needs by specialist teachers in the school's special needs programme was effective.
- Parental engagement and involvement in the school led to effective relationships between the school and home.


Changes since the last inspection

- Students' attitudes, behaviour and engagement in learning had improved, especially in the primary phase.
- Communications with parents had been improved through use of the school website, text messages and student progress reports.
- There were more rigorous systems for assessing and identifying underperforming students.
- Improvements were made in the staffing of a new special educational needs programme including additional specialists for speech therapy.

Recommendations

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise student attainment by:
 - using assessment data, including international benchmarking results, to plan lessons to match students' abilities and needs
 - sharing learning objectives with students, so they evaluate their own learning
 - ensuring greater consistency and quality of teaching, by providing appropriate training for teachers and by sharing good practice when identified
 - supporting students' learning through the use of technology and the development of independent and critical thinking skills
 - involving students more consistently in the assessment of their own work and ensuring that they receive regular feedback on how to improve.
- Ensure that the school fully complies with the UAE Ministry of Education requirements for the teaching and curriculum of Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language.

 Improved from last inspection

 Declined from last inspection

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

Primary

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as a First Language	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an Additional Language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Language of instruction	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
English	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- In Arabic as an additional language, students' listening skills were well developed. Most students understood and responded to instructions appropriately. The skills of reading and writing were not as well developed.
- In English, most students successfully took part in brief conversations and short role plays on familiar topics. They could read basic texts.
- Students made acceptable progress in mathematical and computation skills. The reliance on the course text book reduced the challenge and limited the achievement of the more able students.
- Students consolidated their theoretical understanding by effectively engaging in scientific investigations. They made acceptable progress in the skills of observation, measurement and the recording of their findings.

Middle

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as a First Language	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an Additional Language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Language of instruction	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
English	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
Science	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- In Arabic as an additional language, most students could listen and respond to instructions. Their writing skills, especially extended writing, were restricted because they had limited opportunities to write.
- In English, most students could find key information in short texts and conversed briefly about familiar topics. Students had limited vocabulary.
- In mathematics, most students made expected progress as observed in lessons and their workbooks. Students' thinking and problem solving required further development. Graph work was poorly presented.
- Most students' scientific knowledge was acceptable but conceptual understanding, scientific method, observing, recording and controlled experiments were insufficiently developed.

High		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as a First Language	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an Additional Language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Language of instruction	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
English	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
Science	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- In Arabic as an additional language, most students could read for different purposes and provide an oral summary. However their writing was limited to simple sentences and using basic vocabulary.
- Students in English could express ideas and opinions about issues such as climate change. Most could read accurately but writing was not well developed. Students were unable to independently construct accurate text.
- In mathematics, students had an acceptable understanding of the expected concepts and skills as prescribed by the requirements of textbook.
- Most students demonstrated strong knowledge of scientific concepts reinforced by mathematical understanding. However, their abilities to make predictions and hypotheses were weak.

	Primary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Students had positive attitudes to their learning and most were capable of increasing their learning skills when given the opportunity. In lessons, dominated by teacher talk, there were few opportunities for students to learn independently.
- Students were able to collaborate well but the planning and structure of lessons inhibited student involvement and group work.
- In the primary phase, students made connections to the real world. Students in the middle and high phases used prior learning to build new learning.
- Research was developed by a few teachers as homework assignments. The use of technology by students was very limited. A small number of students shared their learning on the school's website through filming and emailing to teachers.

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

	Primary	Middle	High
Personal responsibility	Good ↑	Good	Good

- Students demonstrated positive and mature attitudes to study.
- They were very well behaved and self-disciplined.
- Relationships between students and staff were positive. Students supported each other well and were sensitive to the needs of others.

- Students demonstrated a satisfactory understanding of healthy living.
- Attendance was good. However, punctuality in the morning and after breaks did not model good practice or expectations.

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

- Students understood the importance of Islam and were able to give examples of the relevance of Islamic values in their lives.
- Students had a basic understanding of Dubai's culture and some of the traditions of the UAE, such as games and sports. They knew the positive and negative impact of tourism in Dubai. However, they were less knowledgeable about UAE heritage.
- Students demonstrated a strong appreciation of their own Iranian culture and the multicultural nature of Dubai, but had limited awareness of other world cultures.

	Primary	Middle	High
Community and environmental responsibility	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Students understood their responsibility as members of the school community and took on various roles within the school including involvement in the school council. There were productive links with other schools and the local community.
- Most students showed a positive attitude to learning but very few students were seen to take or use their own initiative.
- Students' demonstrated respect for their school environment, but there was little awareness of wider environmental issues.

3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- In the middle and high phases, teachers' knowledge of their subjects was strong. Teachers in the primary phase had a limited understanding of how students learned.
- Lesson planning varied across subjects. A few teachers used more than textbooks to provide opportunities for students' active learning. However, with the exception of the special educational needs programme, lesson plans were narrow and did not take full account of the needs or starting points of all students.
- Classrooms did not provide an interesting learning environment and learning resources were limited, particularly technology.

- In the middle and high phases teacher–student interactions were effective. However, overall, too many lessons were teacher directed, limiting opportunities for students’ independent and active learning.
- Teachers’ strategies did not always address the needs of all students including strategies to challenge students and provide support for less able students.
- Most teaching focused on increasing students’ factual knowledge rather than developing their reflection and critical thinking skills.

	Primary	Middle	High
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Students at the end of each phase completed tests by the Ministry of Education in Iran. Systems were in place to gather internal assessment data, linked to the school's curriculum.
- Benchmark testing was not used to improve or modify the curriculum or to plan more effective teaching.
- Diagnostic assessments for all year groups were used to identify those students who might need additional support.
- Each subject teacher had identified areas for improvement for different ability groups, but the findings were not used as an integral part of lesson planning and delivery.
- Closed questioning limited assessment of students' learning. Improvements targets were not recorded on students’ work. There were only a few examples of peer assessment.

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

	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The curriculum was prescribed by the Ministry of Education in Iran. It did not fully meet the requirements of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ministry of Education for Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language.
- The curriculum was sufficiently well structured to provide continuity and progression in developing students’ skills and knowledge. Students were adequately prepared for the next stage of education.
- The school had attempted to enrich the curriculum by providing a few field trips for students and inviting external visitors to speak to students in the school. There were however, limited opportunities in lessons for students to develop their interests and enhance their learning.
- There were strong cross-curricular links in core subjects. Opportunities for developing research skills, enquiry and critical thinking were not regularly planned or provided.
- The curriculum was reviewed and developed when it was thought necessary. There was no systematic evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum, and as a result no modifications were made to improve students’ academic and personal development in lessons.

	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The curriculum was adapted very effectively for students with severe and complex learning difficulties. However, most teachers did not modify their lessons to consistently support the learning of all students. Curriculum options were limited. There was little choice for students in the middle and high phases who were directed to a pathway of study based on their previous year's attainment. Extra-curricular activities, including visits to places of interests and involvement in sporting events, were limited. Students in the special educational needs programme participated in trips designed to provide real life contexts for their learning. However, opportunities such as these, for other students were restricted. 			

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

	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures for child protection were clear to staff. Concerns relating to student welfare and health and safety were monitored by the school. There was appropriate supervision of students at all times inside the school and mostly on school transport. However, the school was not always vigilant in ensuring students wore safety belts or were seated when buses were moving. There were accurate records on the supervision provided by medical staff and school counsellors. There were regular checks of equipment, fire precautions and safety on the premises. Premises were suitable for students including those with special educational needs. Premises had been adapted well for use by students with a range of physical and learning needs. Students received guidance on a healthy diet and healthy living but this was not consistently applied due to the availability of unhealthy snacks. 			

	Primary	Middle	High
Quality of support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were positive and supportive relationships between teachers and students. Student behaviour was managed well. There were effective procedures to monitor student attendance but not for dealing with students' punctuality. Specialist staff accurately identified students with severe and complex learning difficulties and where possible supported class teachers. Support for students with special educational needs in lessons by class teachers was limited. Advice and support by counsellors and school nurses was available to students. Guidance on students' next steps in education, training or employment was provided to older students. 			


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

	Overall
The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leaders had developed high quality provision for students with a range of severe and complex learning needs in the special needs programme. However, the quality of education provided to these students in lessons was variable and was often not effective. • Specialist staff had more accurately identified students' severe and complex learning difficulties. Through the use of diagnostic tests the learning needs of students particularly in Grades 1 and 2, were identified. • Parents of children with severe and complex needs were informed regularly about their children's learning and progress. Specialist staff provided advice and guidance to parents on supporting their children's learning and development. However, classroom teachers did not effectively modify the curriculum or planning to meet the needs of these students'. • Individual learning plans were not fully developed for students with an identified need and the support provided in lessons did not sufficiently focus on their individual targets or specific needs. • The level of care, guidance and education provided to students with severe and complex difficulties enabled them to make good personal and academic progress from low starting points. However, less progress was made in classes. 	


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

	Overall
The effectiveness of leadership	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Principal and senior leaders were committed to school improvement. The school's vision was shared with staff, students and parents. • Senior leaders had a clear idea of their roles and responsibilities but other staff were less clear about their contribution to the development and success of the school. However, there was increasing accountability for their work. • Relationships were productive and communication between leaders was professional and supportive. • Senior leaders were aware of improvements needed by the school and had some capacity for school improvement. 	

	Overall
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school had a realistic view of its strengths and weaknesses. The self-evaluation processes were focused on the priorities and direction for the school. However, not enough had been done to make sure that the all key areas for improvement had been addressed. Professional development was too general and not focused on teacher training to bring about specific improvements in lessons. There was however, some sharing of good teaching practice. Improvement plans were detailed, identifying the areas that required improvement, but lacked specific links to student outcomes, as a key measure of success. There had been some progress in the implementation of the recommendations from the previous inspection report, but not all recommendations had been fully addressed. 	




	Overall
Parents and the community	Good 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental involvement in the school had improved notably through the involvement of the elected Parents Teachers' Committee. The committee was involved in all major initiatives in the school and worked closely with school management. Communication through the informative school website and the wider use of text messages to parents had improved the links between school and home and kept parents well informed. Regular written reports and parent-teacher conferences kept parents informed about their children's progress and how work could be further improved. Beneficial links with other Iranian and local schools were increasing, but links with the community and local business were under-developed. 	

	Overall
Governance	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance was undertaken by the Iranian Ministry of Education's local representatives. There was no representation from stakeholders although parents' views were sought and encouraged. Governors regularly visited and monitored the schools' actions but there was insufficient accountability from the school on academic outcomes. Governors' influence and responsibility for the school's performance was narrow and restricted. They did not focus enough on statutory duties such as meeting curriculum requirements. 	

	Overall
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The management of the daily routines and administrative procedures ensured the smooth daily operation of the school. • Teaching and administrative staff were appropriately qualified for their responsibilities in the school. In general, personnel were suitably deployed. • The school premises were suitable for the education of the students including those with additional or specific needs. However, classrooms were not always appropriately furnished to provide comfortable and efficient learning spaces for students. • There were limited resources for learning in the school including unsatisfactory provision of technology and equipment for science. This limited the progress that students could make and the development of their independent learning and research skills. 	

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

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

Responses to the surveys			
Responses received	Number		Percentage
 Parents*	This year	194	46%
	Last year	27	5%
 Teachers	24		65%
 Students	74		64%

- Parents, students and teachers were mostly positive about the school. Although, not all students and teachers were satisfied with the quality of education.
- Parents felt their children were making good progress in Islamic Studies and science.
- Students raised concerns about their progress in Arabic, mathematics and science.
- Most parents felt their children enjoyed attending school and the majority of parents agreed that they were looked after and safe.
- The majority of parents said that the school was well led and that the school listened to their views.
- Most students surveyed agreed the school was well led but a minority felt the school did not listen to their views.
- One fifth of the parents and students surveyed did not feel the school provided adequate resources.

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

What happens next?

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

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

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

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

How to contact us

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