



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

Greenfield Community School

Curriculum: IB

Overall rating: Good

[Read more about the school](#)



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“Don't look behind to see who is following you, but look forward to be ahead”



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School information

General information 	Location	Green Community
	Type of school	Private
	Opening year of school	2007
	Website	www.gcschool.ae
	Telephone	04-8856600
	Address	Green Community (Dubai Investment Park) PO. Box 282627
	Principal	Andrew Wood
	Language of instruction	English
	Inspection dates	21 to 24 March 2016
Students 	Gender of students	Boys and girls
	Age range	4-18
	Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
	Number of students on roll	1319
	Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
	Number of Emirati students	12
	Number of students with SEND	87
	Largest nationality group of students	UK
Teachers / Support staff 	Number of teachers	107
	Largest nationality group of teachers	British
	Number of teaching assistants	30
	Teacher-student ratio	10
	Number of guidance counsellors	1
	Teacher turnover	11%
Curriculum 	Educational permit / Licence	IB
	Main curriculum	IB
	External tests and examinations	IBDP, IBT
	Accreditation	IB, CIS, NEASC
	National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT

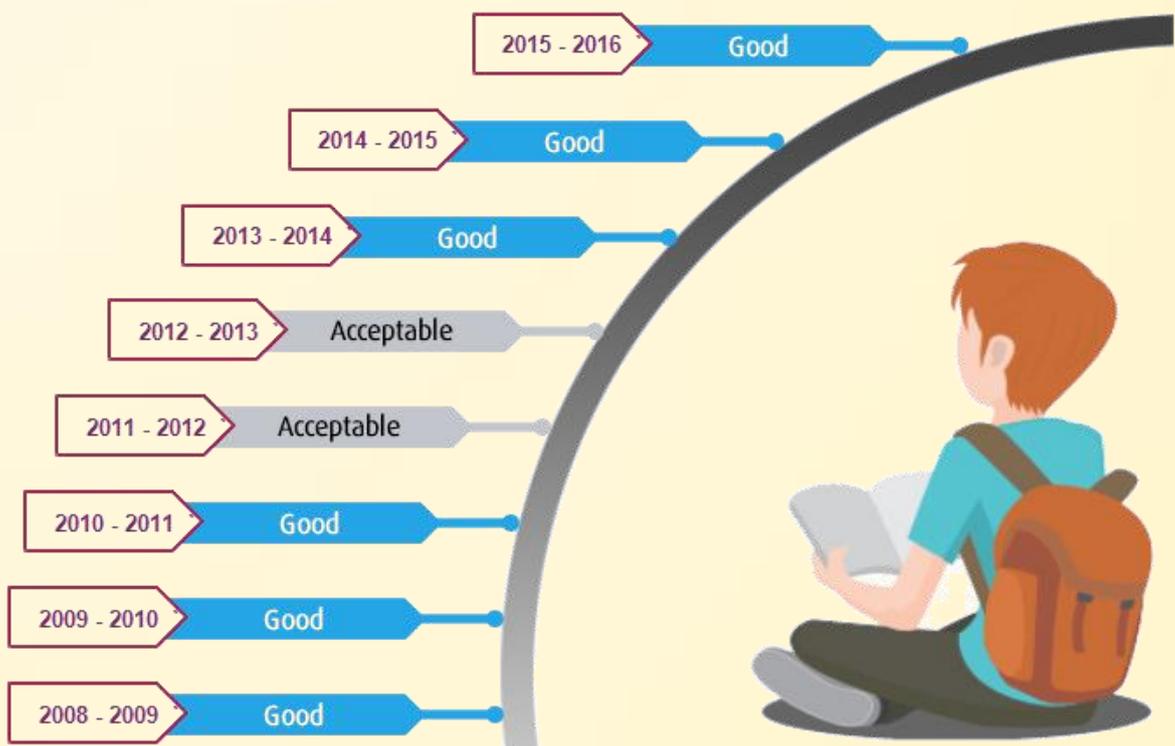


Summary for parents and the community

Greenfield Community School was inspected by DSIB from 21 to 24 March 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **good**.

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





How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, the school provided a **good** quality of education for its students.

- Students' attainment and progress varied across subjects and phases. In English, attainment and progress were stronger in the Middle Years' Programme (MYP) and the Diploma Programme (DP) than in Kindergarten (KG) and Primary Years Programme (PYP). Students' learning skills were good in all phases and students were actively engaged in their learning,
- Students' personal and social development was outstanding in KG and PYP, good in MYP and very good in DP. Students' behaviour, attitudes and relationships with teachers were positive. Students showed appreciation of Islamic values, Emirati and world cultures, and a sense of community responsibility. These were especially strong in KG.
- Most teachers knew their subjects well. Lesson planning was well-organised and generally took account of students' learning needs. However, in some lessons students were not challenged and did not make enough progress. This was especially apparent in mathematics. The school used a range of internal assessments but academic expectations were often not high enough.
- The International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes provided a sound curriculum base that developed a balance of knowledge, skills and understanding in most subjects. However, more rigorous standards and higher expectations were needed in the PYP and MYP.
- Health and safety were outstanding. The school environment was safe, clean and secure. Relationships were very positive throughout the school and behaviour management systems were clear and effective. Identification and provision for students with SEND was strong and provision was being extended to students who were identified as gifted and talented.
- Senior leaders had created an inclusive ethos and had improved some key aspects of the school. However, inconsistencies in curriculum, assessment and teaching required decisive action. Parents were active partners in their children's learning. The Taaleem Executive Board provided stability and continuity, consulting regularly with stakeholders through the Advisory Board. The day-to-day management of the school was well organised, effective and efficient.



What did the school do well?

- Greenfield Community School had a warm friendly atmosphere that was inclusive of students with a range of special educational needs.
- In English, the attainment and progress in the MYP and DP phases were very good.
- In Arabic as an additional language, attainment had improved in the PYP and progress had improved in the MYP. Both were now good.
- Students' personal and social development was strong.
- The CP was a valuable source of highly individualised pathways for students with a range of needs, interests and aspirations.



What does the school need to do next?

- Systematically benchmark the PYP and MYP curricula against recognised high quality standards in the key subjects in order to increase rigour and provide appropriate challenge.
- Systematically align internal assessments with the identified curriculum standards to provide a baseline for measuring students' progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching across subjects and grade levels by:
 - aligning unit and lesson planning to the curriculum standards and assessment criteria to ensure that students make at least good progress in all learning
 - regularly and systematically monitoring the quality of teaching
 - moderating teacher appraisal judgements to ensure consistency amongst senior leadership team (SLT) members.
- Improve attainment in Arabic as a first language by raising teacher expectations of what students can achieve and align delivery with curriculum expectations.



How well did the school provide for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)?

- Parents were involved in the education of their children at all stages.
- Communication between the school and parents was positive. Parents received regular informative reports and attended regular meetings about the progress their children were making.
- The school effectively tracked the progress made by students with SEND, using data analysis from external testing, internal teacher assessment and a case study approach. This information showed that over time students became better prepared for the next stage of their lives.
- Summative assessments were modified to make them accessible to students with SEND.
- The school focused on students' readiness to learn and participate in lessons.

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 intent 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. This academic year, KHDA introduced 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.

Main points:

- The school met the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter.
- Progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets was as expected. The school had promoted the importance of the National Agenda to the majority of its key stakeholders but parents were unclear about its nature and importance.
- The school did not systematically align its curriculum to TIMMS and PISA. This was particularly evident in mathematics, where different curricula were used, creating a lack of continuity and progression across phases.
- Teachers generally used questioning well to facilitate students' critical thinking and enquiry in their learning. However, this was not consistent and was especially weak in mathematics.
- Students were able to make good use of learning technologies to support their research and enquiry.

Innovation in education

The *UAE Vision 2021* sets out the National Agenda 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'. It provides a basis for evaluating public and private schools in order to deliver a world-class education for all children in the UAE.

Innovation is driven by a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. It is based on curiosity, the willingness to take risks, to experiment and to test assumptions as well as questioning and challenging the status quo. Being innovative is about looking beyond what we currently do well, identifying the great ideas of tomorrow and putting them into practice.



Promoting a culture of innovation:

- School leaders were aware of the national innovation agenda and had started to review their strategies for promoting a culture of innovation. They had considered using action research as a tool for building staff capacity and increasing knowledge about how innovation can transform learning, teaching and leadership. However, this was underdeveloped. The curriculum provided many opportunities for students to apply their learning to a wide range of real life contexts to support their units of inquiry. They were encouraged to 'think outside of the box' to generate innovative ideas and solutions in their projects. Some teachers were skilled at promoting this in lessons.

Overall school performance

Good

1. Students' achievement

		KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good ↑	Acceptable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good ↑	Not applicable
English 	Attainment	Good	Good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
	Progress	Good	Good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Mathematics 	Attainment	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable
Science 	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good	Good

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

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Good	Very good ↑
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

4. Curriculum

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding

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

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding

6. Leadership and management

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



Main inspection report

The Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) is responsible for inspecting and reporting on the standards reached by students and the quality of education provided in Dubai's private schools.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale



Using this scale, the *Main inspection report* contains the judgements about the different aspects, phases and subjects that form the work of the school.

It provides the reasons for the answers to the questions in the *Summary for parents and the community*:

- How well did the school perform overall?
- What did the school do well?
- What does the school need to do next?

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	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
Science	Good	Good

- In English, children were articulate and could express themselves easily and clearly. They used well-developed speaking skills to communicate their thinking, emotions and needs. Children demonstrated good listening skills and followed instructions well. Most could identify letters and their sounds, and the majority started to blend simple words when attempting reading. Children with SEND received appropriate individualised support.
- In mathematics, children's attainment and progress were inconsistent but overall were acceptable. Children made better progress in lessons where they had opportunities to explore a new phenomena and gain new knowledge. For example, in a lesson introducing measurement children compared real objects (heavier – lighter). Children had acceptable knowledge and understanding of number.
- In science, children demonstrated good understanding of how the world works around them. They freely explored new concepts and acquired and practised new skills by following their personal enquiries, using open-ended learning centres set up on the KG playground and in classrooms. Age-appropriate research skills were skilfully developed, often with the help of meaningfully used technology. In lessons and over time children progressed well.

PYP

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students demonstrated levels of knowledge and understanding that were above curriculum standards. Students were able to understand the concepts and apply what they had learned in their daily lives. They knew the Five Pillars of Islam and the prayer steps in detail. Their knowledge about Prophet Mohammed's (PBUH) life was solid. In lessons, the majority of students made better than expected progress in relation to appropriate learning objectives. Students' memorisation and recitation skills were more developed than other skills.

- In Arabic as a first language, most students demonstrated levels of understanding in line with curriculum standards. They listened attentively and responded accurately using appropriate vocabulary. Students had a basic understanding of grammar and adequate reading skills. Their writing was neat and legible, and they were beginning to produce short descriptive texts. Their ability to identify and distinguish between structural forms was less well developed. Their progress was good; they were able to talk about themselves and express their likes and dislikes.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the majority of students demonstrated levels of knowledge and understanding above expectations. Listening was the most developed skill and students were able to understand the teachers' spoken language. Writing skills were developing at a good rate. There were opportunities for students to write independently. However, speaking skills were less developed. Progress from the students' starting points was good, especially in listening, writing and reading.
- In English, students' attainment was good when measured against national and international standards. In Grade 1, students built on the skills learned in KG and used their knowledge of letters to blend and read words. They wrote independently with some accuracy in spelling. Students used verbs to start instructions, for example, how to build a paper aeroplane. They continued to develop their literacy skills throughout the phase. They listened carefully in lessons and became increasingly articulate speakers. By Grade 5, students could research topics and confidently make presentations to others. Most students read a variety of fiction and non-fiction with enjoyment and understanding. Girls' writing had improved more rapidly than boys'.
- Students' attainment in mathematics was in line with expected standards across the PYP. However, there were gaps in content coverage and in practice of key mathematical concepts and skills which resulted in variations in students' performance in national and international tests. Students' knowledge, skills and abilities in mathematics, particularly their mental calculations, were underdeveloped and underutilised in day-to-day learning. Few strategies, techniques and methods were used to offer students choice in their learning when presented with mathematical problems. As a result, students' progress was only acceptable.
- In science, the majority of students demonstrated knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts that were above national and international expectations. Students of all abilities were enthusiastic learners who made better than expected progress and demonstrated good scientific knowledge in lessons. For example, Grade 4 students were able to use appropriate techniques to carry out investigations in biology. They worked collaboratively in groups to share their knowledge and understanding with peers, using appropriate scientific vocabulary.

MYP

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

- In Islamic education, attainment was in line with curriculum standards. Students' knowledge and understanding of different types of prayer, Islamic etiquette, morals and values was in line with expectations. Students' ability to make reference to the Holy Qur'an in debates and discussions was underdeveloped, as were their recitation skills. The majority made expected progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the learning objectives of most lessons. The majority of students made appropriate progress in their knowledge of Seerah.
- In Arabic as a first language, students' attainment and progress were acceptable. Listening was the strongest skill. Most students understood standard Arabic and responded appropriately. However, they tended to use the short form of language for spontaneous discussions. Most students were able to write extended articles and stories but their abilities to edit and redraft their work, and combine sentences into paragraphs were underdeveloped. Most students made acceptable progress in comprehension of unfamiliar literary, discursive and factual passages. Students made better progress in writing dialogues or description, for example. They demonstrated adequate skills of expression in clear Arabic but did not necessarily use grammatically correct forms.
- In Arabic as an additional language, students quickly learned to recognise letters and their associated sounds. Beginners had a growing understanding of joining letters to make words by sounding out the letters. Students at the intermediate and advanced levels demonstrated appropriate skills of decoding and pronunciation of cursive script. Students' development of vocabulary, expressions and phrases was solid. Reading comprehension skills were adequate but limited to familiar texts. Listening skills were good for most students and they were able to respond to teacher questions. However, communicating their own ideas in correct Arabic was a major weakness. Students made good progress from their starting points. Most were able to write a few short, simple notes but spelling and flow of writing were weak.
- In English, students' attainment was very good when measured against national and international standards, including IBT results. Students could write fluently for different purposes. They demonstrated excellent reading skills when studying texts such as 'Romeo and Juliet'. Many students used laptops and tablets to carry out research independently. They were confident, articulate speakers and Grade 6 students eagerly discussed language and meaning in Blake's poetry. They demonstrated strong critical thinking skills and supported their literary analysis with well-chosen quotations. By Grade 10 all students were able to construct logical, persuasive essays that demonstrated fluent command of vocabulary. Students with SEND and English as an additional language (EAL) made very good progress.

- Students' attainment in mathematics was in line with the curriculum standards currently used by the school. However, there were significant gaps in students' mathematical skills and students had not developed the skills needed to reach higher levels of attainment in national and international tests, or to optimise their potential. This was caused by a lack of rigour in curriculum planning and for continuity in mathematical learning. Internal testing reflected low expectations. Students' progress in lessons and over time was too slow and had not been considered or analysed by teachers.
- In science, the majority of students demonstrated knowledge and understanding that were above expected standards. Students were able to make effective use of learning technologies in the classroom. They effectively discussed and explained their learning and collaborated well. Almost all students demonstrated awareness of the importance of science and its relevance to, and impact on, life. Grade 10 students had good practical science skills when planning and carrying out laboratory based investigations.

DP		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- In Islamic education, most students attained levels that were in line with curriculum and national standards. They had basic knowledge about Islamic laws, for example, conditions of marriage and divorce in Islam. Students' knowledge of Seerah was in line with curriculum expectations and they could talk about some factual events from the life of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). However, their ability to link knowledge of Islamic values to life was limited. Most students made expected progress as measured against lesson objectives but their ability to memorise and recite the Holy Qur'an was less developed.
- In Arabic as a first language, attainment and progress were acceptable. Most students read appropriately and were able to analyse and interpret literary texts to an acceptable level. Students' abilities to write creatively were developing at an expected rate. Students made adequate progress in their persuasive and argumentative skills, both orally and in writing.
- Students' attainment in English literature and language was very good. Students demonstrated very good understanding of a range of demanding literature and they critically analysed and discussed texts such as 'The Dubliners' and 'Medea'. Grade 12 students' literary appreciation skills were highly developed. They were able to review their writing, reflect on strengths and weaknesses, and knew what to do to improve their work. Grade 11 students demonstrated a serious and committed approach to the subject. Students' very good progress was shown in their high quality written work.

- Students' attainment in mathematics was in line with curriculum standards. Weaknesses in curriculum provision and in the teaching of mathematics over time had limited the progress students made. Students were not adequately prepared to study mathematics at a higher level (HL), and a HL mathematics course was not taught. Students' skills in using a range of mathematical methods and strategies for solving problems were adequate. Consequently, their attainment over time in national and international assessments had been variable. Students' mathematical progress in lessons had not been thoroughly analysed by teachers. There was little tracking or monitoring of their skills and abilities in relation to their starting points.
- Students' attainment in the sciences was acceptable. Most students were working at levels that were in line with curriculum standards and they made expected progress. Students were able to communicate understanding of complex and abstract scientific concepts, demonstrating competence in their use of scientific language. Problem solving, investigation and the use of critical thinking were developing at an acceptable rate. Sound project and investigative work was a positive feature of this phase.

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students were positively engaged in their learning throughout the school and routinely took responsibility for leading their own learning and development. They regularly participated in giving and receiving constructive feedback, formally and informally, to help them improve the quality of their work.
- Communication and interactions between students were cordial, productive and purposeful as they supported one another in both structured and unstructured activities. They worked collaboratively to produce good quality work, in pairs and small groups, and were at all times polite, caring and helpful.
- Students could apply their knowledge and understanding to a range of real life situations, which prepared them well for their next stages in learning. This was particularly evident in the Kindergarten where children enjoyed exploring and inquiring independently in the outdoor learning spaces.
- Students across all phases used a range of learning technologies independently to research information to support their lines of inquiry. They were able to think 'outside of the box' to solve problems and understood the role of innovation in generating new ideas, approaches and solutions. Their critical thinking skills were less well-developed and varied across subjects and grade levels.

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

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Good	Very good 

- Students' personal development was strong, especially in the KG and PYP. Most students demonstrated positive attitudes, particularly when learning activities engaged their attention. Children in KG were proactive and resilient in their learning. In the PYP, students consistently demonstrated strong self-reliance. They thrived on critical feedback from teachers and peers.

- Student behaviour was mostly respectful and caring. Behaviour expectations were clear and positive. Students were self-disciplined and the need for adult intervention was rare.
- Relationships amongst students, and students and staff were strong, showing trust and mutual respect. Students were sensitive to the needs and differences of others and many instances of caring behaviour were observed.
- Students across the phases showed increasing understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy and followed school advice about healthy lifestyles.
- Attendance over the last full term was good, although during the time of inspection it was lower. Students were generally punctual to school and to lessons.

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good

- Students demonstrated a clear understanding of Islamic values and the importance of Islam in modern Dubai. They respected and appreciated Islamic traditions. Children in the KG were especially knowledgeable and were able to talk about the mosques, fasting, expectations of clothing and behaviour.
- Students demonstrated a positive attitude towards the heritage and local traditions of the UAE and could explain their relevance to people in Dubai. They could describe some of the main sporting activities which were traditionally enjoyed in Dubai, for example, dancing, Al Youlah, horse racing, and camel racing. They were also able to describe a range of Arab cuisine dishes.
- Students demonstrated clear understanding and awareness of their own culture. The majority of students were familiar with other countries' cultures.

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good

- From KG onwards, students were encouraged to carry out responsibilities without teachers' direct instructions. Their ideas were taken seriously and they had participated in activities such as planting a small garden. Older students were active members of the school community. They took part in a range of social clubs, sports, celebrations and national events. As volunteers, students made worthwhile contributions to social action both locally and globally, for example, raising funds to support Dubai workers during the Shoe Box campaign, and through their visit to Tanzania.
- Resilience and cooperation were part of the daily routines of most students. They had positive attitudes to work. They were aware of a range of independent approaches to tackling challenging tasks and situations and, when they faced difficulties, they knew where to seek support. In the MYP, Grade 10 humanities students held a 'Business Fair' to showcase innovation skills and entrepreneurship.

- Students cared for their school and its environment. Younger children responsibly discarded garbage into appropriate recycling bins during break times. Older students were aware of the efforts and measures the Dubai government took to maintain the cleanliness of the city. The Eco-Club had led several initiatives focused on the creation of the Greenfield Gardens. However, older students did not express a deeper understanding of world climate change.

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Teachers generally demonstrated at least acceptable, and often good, subject knowledge. This was particularly strong in English. In the PYP, Arabic teachers presented a good model of knowing the particular needs, interests and delivery modes preferred by the age group. However, in some curriculum areas and phases teachers lacked understanding of how students learn their subjects.
- Most teachers planned lessons well. They took into account students' individual learning needs when planning activities and made sure that all groups of students were successful learners. However, in some lessons teachers did not ensure that students with SEND received the dedicated support they needed. Most teachers made excellent use of learning technologies, as well as ensuring that lesson pace allowed the majority of students to learn consistently.
- Teachers' use of questioning was variable. Where it was used well, it promoted strong critical thinking. In other contexts it was not well thought out and therefore did not significantly impact on learning. Teachers in KG stimulated and led some interesting conversations. In English and science across the phases, questioning was strong, whereas in mathematics questioning needed development.
- Lesson plans made reference to differentiation to accommodate the needs of different groups of students. Where required, individual education plans (IEPs) also had details of curriculum modifications and these were followed by the teacher. Teachers made sure that learners of English as an additional language had very good support. They often paired them with buddies whose first language was English, and discussions were very supportive.
- In the best lessons, teachers encouraged students to develop critical thinking skills. Teachers structured learning through enquiry-based activities and students were expected to take responsibility for their own learning most of the time. Teachers frequently promoted lively class discussions. Some teachers and students made very good use of technology to enhance enquiry and independent learning skills but this was inconsistent across the school.
- The quality of teaching of Arabic as a first language was variable. It was more effective in PYP than in the upper phases. Teachers planned for three groups of students but in practice students were given similar tasks. High achievers were not adequately challenged. In addition, there were few opportunities for students to discuss, interact and extend their speaking skills. In the majority of the lessons in Arabic as an additional language students progressed well as a result of engaging teaching.

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Assessment	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- In almost all subjects, internal assessment procedures were consistent and linked to the school's curriculum standards to provide measures of students' progress.
- The school did benchmark some assessment outcomes against national and international standards but this was not consistent across all subjects. Assessment was not embedded as part of day-to-day routines. This made it difficult for the school to set whole school and individual student academic targets that were challenging and aspirational. Parents were generally well informed in relation to the internal and external assessment results.
- Analysis of assessment information was well organised but the analysis lacked depth. It was not consistently used to monitor students' progress.
- The use of assessment information to inform teaching and curriculum planning had developed since the last inspection but not consistently. In mathematics, for example, assessment data was not used effectively to plan for curriculum progression and this affected students' progress. However, in English in the MYP there was formative feedback to students. This lacked specific information about next steps in learning.
- Teachers had varied knowledge of students' progress, strengths weaknesses. In the majority of lessons observed students were involved in self-assessment using clear, skill-based success criteria. However, while students knew what was expected of them on a lesson by lesson basis they did not receive sufficient information on their medium to long term academic targets, or support for what they could do to improve their levels of academic achievement.

4. Curriculum

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The basic design of the IB curriculum framework was sound. However, the academic content was not sufficiently rigorous. The curriculum was reasonably broad. It developed a balance of knowledge and skills in most subjects. Arabic and Islamic education were aligned to the MoE curriculum. The KG curriculum framework offered an age and developmentally appropriate platform for early learning.
- There was steady progression in most key subjects but this varied across subjects and grade levels. In mathematics, curriculum planning was weak and there was no cross-phase coherence. Efforts to increase academic rigour in the PYP and the MYP by aligning to different international standards had created a lack of continuity.
- The range of curricular options within the Diploma Programme provided older students with ample choices to develop their talents and aspirations. However, higher level mathematics was not offered, which significantly limited students' options for higher and further education. The Career-related Programme offered a valuable alternative to the DP, providing multiple highly individualised pathways using DP standard level courses, BTEC, work placements and some specialised external courses.

- Cross-curricular links were fully integrated into the PYP curriculum through transdisciplinary themes and units of inquiry. The MYP consisted mainly of discrete subjects and the required interdisciplinary units were being developed, for example, between Arabic, Islamic education and science. In the DP, theory of knowledge classes helped students synthesise their learning from different areas.
- The school conducted regular reviews of its curriculum in relation to students' achievements, aspirations and Emirate and national priorities. These reviews ensured good provision in most subjects and phases. For example, the school day had been extended to include time for extra-curricular activities and core DP requirements. In English, leaders had reviewed PYP grade level expectations and 'backward-mapped' DP benchmarks into the MYP.
- The school integrated the UAE social studies through various subjects across all phases.

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding

- Curriculum modifications that met the needs of different groups of students were evident. KG students, who were mainly non-English speakers on entry received 1:1 support and the units of inquiry had been adapted to suit their limited English proficiency. Across phases, curriculum intervention programmes ensured that EAL and the learning needs of students with SEND were well met.
- After-school activities were designed to encourage action and enquiry. These included a range of activities, such as sports, World Challenge, Model United Nations and Duke of Edinburgh Award. Entrepreneurship was actively encouraged throughout the school and students had opportunities to develop mother tongue languages through a wide range of courses including Arabic, French, German, Urdu and Hindi.
- The curriculum reflected an international school community in a UAE setting and emphasised students' responsibilities as local and global citizens. These concepts were reinforced by regular visits to places of interest, such as Eco Venture and Mirdif City. Students were very knowledgeable about Islam and its importance within their culture. They had a keen understanding of combating pollution and protecting their immediate environment.
- The school provided four Arabic lessons of 40 minutes per week for KG1 and KG2. There were 49 Arabic as a first language children and 103 children who learned Arabic as an additional language. The curriculum for children learning Arabic as an additional language mainly focused on speaking skills, and for children learning Arabic as a first language the curriculum was in line with the MoE requirements.

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

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The school had developed and implemented rigorous safeguarding procedures and policies. These were shared with students, staff and parents so that all community members were aware of cyber-bullying and child protection policies. There was regular safeguarding training for staff. Bullying incidents were rare but students were aware of how to deal with bullying should it occur.
- The school environment was very safe, clean and secure for the whole community. Student supervision was of a very high standard and necessary safety checks were regular and rigorous throughout the premises and on the school buses. There was little evidence of litter and students were conscious of the need to care for their school environment.
- The quality of maintenance of the buildings and grounds was exemplary. The welfare and support team kept detailed and secure records of incidents. Fire drills were undertaken regularly and all health, safety and welfare records were up to date. Appropriate risk assessments were carried out before all activities outside the school.
- The excellent premises and facilities provided an environment that was conducive to learning for all students. Very good provision was made for students with SEND, including excellent wheelchair access.
- In lessons and around the premises there was much evidence to support the school's determination to promote safe and healthy living. Students were very knowledgeable about making appropriate choices, and participated in many activities related to exercise and diet. Many aspects of living a healthy life and being a positive and proactive member of society were features of the excellent displays throughout the school.

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Care and support	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding

- Relationships throughout the school were very positive. There were clear systems for the management of behaviour, including a 'traffic light' system that was well understood and followed by students. The school was proactive in promoting positive behaviour through initiatives such as 'IB Learner of the Week' and 'PE Superstar'.
- The school had effective systems in place for the close monitoring of punctuality and attendance. Parents were contacted on the first day of unauthorised absence. If attendance was a repeated concern, parents received a letter and were expected to sign a pledge agreeing to improve their children's attendance. Punctuality was well monitored and students arrived on time for school and for lessons.
- There were very effective systems in place for the identification of students with SEND. The school was developing effective systems to identify students who had gifts and talents.

- Individual education plans for students with SEND were very detailed documents that were used well by teachers to support students in their academic goals, personal development and readiness to learn. The school was developing its provision for students who have gifts and talents, for example, by establishing appropriate links with external organisations.
- The school provided strong support for students' transition from one phase to the next. The advice students received when considering career choices and potential university destinations was highly effective. The school had very strong counselling services and the interventions to support students who arrived in the school with limited English proficiency were very successful.

Provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities

Very good 

- The Head of Student Support was a member of the senior pedagogical team. The school's ethos was highly inclusive. It promoted acceptance of difference and high expectations for all. Procedures were very clear and well understood by staff. They were generally well implemented although there were some inconsistencies. Staffing capacity was somewhat stretched, which limited the rigorous monitoring of provision in order to resolve the inconsistencies.
- Clear structures were in place for the identification of need and the school used appropriate categories. Parents were involved at an early stage. The school allocated students to one of three levels for intervention. There was a further category (record of concern) that allowed a student to be placed on a watching brief to see if further action was required.
- Parents spoke positively about the difference the school had made to their children's lives. The school had made them feel welcomed from the start and had demonstrated a positive view of their children's needs. Parents valued that they were listened to and they appreciated the regular scheduled meetings about their children. The school saw them as an important source of information about the students.
- The school was developing an ethos where every teacher was a teacher of students with SEND. Training was provided for staff on a regular basis. However, this was voluntary and it was therefore difficult to reach all teachers consistently, particularly those who needed extra support. IEPs were very detailed working documents, which were used well by teachers to enhance outcomes for students with SEND.
- The school effectively tracked the progress made by students with SEND using data analysis from external testing, internal teacher assessment and a case study approach. This information showed that over time students became better prepared for the next stage of their lives. The school particularly focused on these students' readiness to learn and participate in lessons.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- Senior leaders had created an inclusive ethos and students with a wide range of special educational needs and disabilities were welcomed into the school
- The senior leadership team was committed to improving the school and to developing a shared understanding of curriculum and best practices in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leadership was appropriately delegated. However, there were gaps, inconsistencies and lack of coherence in curriculum, assessment and teaching. The senior leaders had not held one another (or middle leaders) sufficiently accountable for making the necessary improvements in line with the school's stated goals of challenge, accountability and rigour.
- Senior leaders understood the areas in need of improvement and demonstrated the capacity to take action to move the school forward in a systematic and consistent manner. However, some middle leaders lacked the necessary understanding and needed substantial support to develop their capacities to support teachers, especially in the area of assessment and teaching and learning in mathematics.
- School leaders had improved some key aspects of the school, most notably the provision for students with SEND, attainment and progress in English, and in Arabic as an additional language.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable ↓

- The school had undertaken self-evaluation internally and externally through NEASC, CIS and IB. The SEF for the inspection was very clearly laid out and easy to access. However, the content was often descriptive, not evaluative, with evidence mainly about improved provision, not impact.
- This descriptive approach was also apparent in evaluations of teaching and learning, where evaluators tended to focus on teaching (input), rather than on students' attainment, progress and learning skills (output). Written evaluations previously carried out by the school often differed substantially from judgements made by the inspection team.
- There was an overall action plan for key areas of development, together with specific plans for each grade level, aligned to the identified goals of challenge, accountability and rigour. However, a lack of clarity about aspects such as the use of assessment data, especially to measure progress, masked some areas in need of improvement and hindered the process of improvement planning.
- There had been progress in addressing some of the recommendations from the previous report. For example, there was more inquiry in the KG, reading skills had improved in the early grades of the PYP and, in Arabic as an additional language, attainment had improved in the PYP and progress in the MYP.

Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents were active partners in their children’s learning and were engaged in creating links with local businesses, developing environment programmes and through surveys and questionnaires, for instance on languages and uniform. • Established and reliable means were in place to communicate with parents. Parents highly appreciated the weekly communication with PYP home room teachers and the parent-teacher conferences. Nevertheless, parents were unaware of the National Agenda and its importance in the future of education in the UAE. • Reporting on students’ progress was regular and detailed. Parents valued the information on their children’s attainment and progress. Reports gave them an indication of achievement against curriculum and international standards although next steps were not always explicitly shared. • The school had established a range of local and global community links, including with other Taaleem schools, local business organisations and the Tanzania project. These supported a good sense of community amongst parents, staff and students. 	

Governance	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Taaleem Executive Board included personnel representing communication, finance and education. Most had been board members for several years, some since the inception of the school, providing stability and continuity. They knew the school well, including the key areas in need of development. They regularly consulted with the advisory board, which included representatives from the parents, staff and students. • The Executive Board held the principal accountable through monthly meetings and reports, focusing on progress in relation to strategic goals, in addition to more frequent operational discussions on finance and other matters. • The board had failed to ensure that senior leaders addressed all recommendations from the previous inspection report, including raising the level of challenge for all students and raising students’ attainment in mathematics. 	

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The day-to-day management of the school was well-organised, effective and efficient. The school’s routines and procedures were efficient and effective. Any queries or concerns were dealt with quickly. • The school was appropriately staffed, with an extensive system of senior and middle leaders. However, the quality of teaching was highly variable and, where teaching was weaker, student achievement was also weaker. Teachers had access to regular professional development opportunities within the school, through the Taaleem network, and externally, for example the IB workshops. • The school campus was well maintained with spacious classrooms and outdoor spaces, greenery and birds, providing an attractive environment that was conducive to learning and accessible to students. • The school was generally well-resourced across subjects and phases. They were matched to the requirements of the teachers and students’ needs. They were generally deployed well to support effective teaching and learning. 	

The views of the parents, teachers and 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* 	2015-2016	208
	2014-2015	284
Teachers 	46	
Students 	89	

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

- Most parents were happy with progress in Arabic as a first language. However, in Arabic as an additional language about a third of students felt they were not making good progress and several parents expressed concern about the quality of teaching and lack of progress.
- Most parents and students felt they made good progress in English. A few, however, felt their children had not had sufficient support.
- In mathematics and science, most parents and students considered that progress was good, although several expressed concern about the quality of teaching especially in the MYP.
- Almost all parents and teachers believed that students enjoyed school. Teachers believed that students behaved well, although some parents expressed concern about some older students being poor role models for younger students.
- Most parents felt students gained understanding of Islamic values and world cultures.
- Most parents believed that students were safe in school, although there were concerns from a few parents and students about safety on the buses.
- Parents felt that leadership had improved. Many commented positively about the multicultural diversity and the IB curriculum.

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