



Ambassador School L.L.C

 Curriculum: CISCE

Overall Rating:

Good



"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



Contents

School information.....	3
The DSIB inspection process.....	4
Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017	6
Main inspection report	12
1. Students' achievement.....	12
2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills.....	15
3. Teaching and assessment	17
4. Curriculum	18
5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students.....	19
Inclusion	21
6. Leadership and management	21
The views of parents, teachers and senior students	25



School information



General information

Location	Al Mankhool
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2013
Website	www.ambassadorschool.com
Telephone	00971-4-3983535
Address	41a Street, Mankhool
Principal	Sheela Menon
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	24 to 26 October 2016

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	73
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	12
Teacher-student ratio	1:10
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	13%

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	6-16
Grades or year groups	Grade 1-Grade 12
Number of students on roll	748
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	0
Number of students with SEND	36

Largest nationality group of students Indian

Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	Indian
Main curriculum	ICSE
External tests and examinations	ICSE, IBT, ASSET and CAT4
Accreditation	ICSE and ISC
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT, ASSET and CAT4



The DSIB inspection process



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

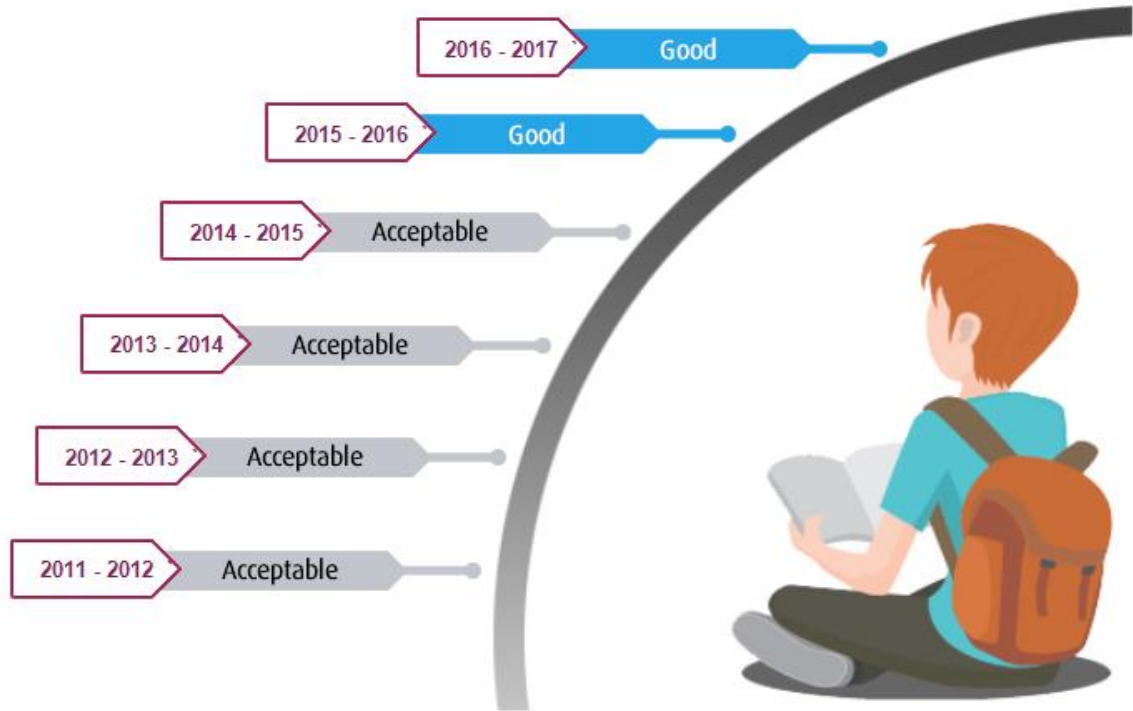
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

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

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

Inspection journey for Ambassador School



- The school has 748 students compared with 701 at the previous inspection. Students, aged from five to 16 years old are taught in mixed gender classes from Grade 1 to Grade 12. The principal joined the school in 2015. Teacher turnover was 13 per cent, compared to 15 per cent the previous year.
- Previous inspections have acknowledged that the school provided well for students of all abilities. The health and safety arrangements are outstanding.
- Recommendations in previous reports focused on the need for improvement in Islamic education and Arabic as well as the need to develop teaching and learning, and ensure that all students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are appropriately and effectively supported.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



Ambassador School was inspected by DSIB from 24 to 26 October 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Students' attainment and progress are mostly good although weaker in Arabic and stronger in mathematics and science where attainment and progress are very good. Students' learning skills are good in the primary and middle phases and very good in the secondary phase where students' enquiry, research, problem solving and critical thinking skills are developed effectively.
- Students' personal and social development are good in the primary phase and very good elsewhere. Relationships are supportive and respectful. Attendance, including attendance during the week of the inspection, is good. Students demonstrate a good understanding of Islamic values. Their knowledge of the history and culture of the UAE is strong. Their awareness of environmental and conservation matters is good.
- The quality of teaching is good in the primary and middle phases and very good in the secondary phase. Assessment procedures are well developed and the school makes good use of a range of internal and external data to guide teaching and the curriculum.
- The school follows the Indian curriculum which is enhanced through an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. Modifications to the curriculum for students with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those who are gifted and talented, are increasingly evident.
- The school provides a safe, secure and supportive environment for students. The school takes its responsibilities for health and safety very seriously and procedures and practices are outstanding. The care and support offered by the school is good. Guidance and support for older students is a strength.
- The principal has a strong vision and commitment for the school which is shared by all staff, students and parents. The strengths and weaknesses of the school are known well. Relationships with parents and the community are particularly strong. Governors are knowledgeable and engaged. Management, staffing, facilities and resources are good.

What the school does best

- The very good attainment and progress of students in the secondary phase in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching and learning in the secondary phase, which is very good.
- Good personal development of students in the primary and very good personal development in the middle and secondary phases.
- The school's excellent arrangements for promoting healthy lifestyles and keeping children safe.
- The clear strategic direction, set by the principal and supported by governors, which ensures that there is a continuing focus on improvement in a happy and positive learning environment.

Recommendations

Improve the quality of teaching, learning and behaviour management in the early primary phase to ensure:

- there is greater consistency in the quality of teaching,
- learning objectives focus on what students will learn rather than what they will do,
- work is closely matched to students' individual needs and appropriately challenging for students of all abilities,
- sharing of good practice from across the school.

Improve the quality of teaching and raise attainment and progress in Arabic, especially the middle and secondary phases, by:

- increasing opportunities for reading and extended independent writing,
- ensuring that teaching strategies are matched to the needs of students learning Arabic as an additional language.

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 their targets:

- The school meets the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter for the academic year 2016-2017.
- The IBT external examination results suggest that attainment in English is very good in the primary phase and good in middle and secondary phases. In mathematics, attainment is very good in the primary and middle phases, and good in the secondary phase. In science, attainment is good in the primary and middle phases, and acceptable in the secondary phase.
- The school has analysed the results of last year's IBT examinations in depth. The school meets expectations in its analysis of the data generated by the IBT external examination. Leaders analyse attainment data according to DSIB standards but further work is needed to understand and analyse year to year progress data.
- The school modifies the curriculum in English, mathematics and science to align it with international benchmarks including the IBT examinations. Topics that appear on the international benchmark tests that are not found on the ICSE curriculum are identified and included. For example, probability has been added to the curriculum in mathematics.
- Heads of departments work with teachers to promote critical thinking and research skills. For example, the 'I wonder why' programme in science actively promotes critical thinking outside of the classroom and is regularly updated. In English, students produce their own videos to illustrate creative interpretation of a piece of literature. In mathematics, students produce their own mathematical magazines and activity booklets.
- Students are generally aware of their performance on National Agenda Parameter tests and teachers provide students with individual reports. Students are actively involved in open-ended research tasks especially outside the classroom. In the middle and secondary phases, students bring their own devices to undertake research in lessons.

Overall, the school's improvement towards achieving its National Agenda targets meets expectations.

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:

- Students increasingly make use of enquiry, reflection and critical thinking skills across a range of subjects to promote innovative thinking. Activities are encouraged through teacher training and the 'Genius Hour' involving integrated projects and supported research. All teachers have received training on developing a culture of innovation and this is particularly evident in problem solving in mathematics and critical thinking in English. Leaders actively support and promote innovation. All subjects are required to contribute to the innovation agenda. The 'Academic Research & Innovation Committee' is now working to promote innovation.

Overall school performance

Good

1 Students' achievement

		Primary	Middle	Secondary
Islamic education 	Attainment	Good	Good ↑	Good ↑
	Progress	Good	Good ↑	Good ↑
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	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable
English 	Attainment	Good	Good	Very good ↑
	Progress	Good	Good	Very good
Mathematics 	Attainment	Very good	Very good	Very good
	Progress	Very good	Very good	Very good
Science 	Attainment	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good
	Progress	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good
		Primary	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills		Good	Good	Very good

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

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal development	Good .	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good .	Good .	Good .
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good .	Good .	Good .

3. Teaching and assessment

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good .	Good .	Very good .
Assessment	Good .	Good .	Good .

4. Curriculum

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good .	Good .	Very good ↑
Curriculum adaptation	Good .	Good .	Good .

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

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding .	Outstanding .	Outstanding .
Care and support	Good .	Good .	Good .


6. Leadership and management

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

Main inspection report



1. Students' achievement

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

- In Islamic education, students develop their recitation skills well and, as a result, most can recite short Surahs with only a small number of Tajweed mistakes. In this phase, students are developing their understanding of Islamic concepts and etiquette to a level that is better than expected, such as how to appreciate Allah's gifts. They demonstrate this by applying what they are learning to their own lives. Most students can explain core concepts of faith at a good standard.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students in the lower primary show confidence and ability when using new vocabulary and making their own sentences. This is illustrated when they ask and answer questions about familiar texts. As a result, students develop their reading, speaking and writing skills well, with their listening skills being the strongest. By the end of the phase most are able to communicate ideas effectively using well-structured sentences but with some spelling and grammatical mistakes. Students' independent reading and comprehension are not as developed.
- In English, the majority of students across all grades make better than expected progress from their starting points. This is illustrated when younger students use their phonics well to read words and determine meaning when reading basic texts. Almost all older students are reasonably fluent independent readers and able to extract information from source material. Writing shows increasing accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Speaking and listening skills develop particularly well and older students show increasing self-confidence when expressing their ideas.
- The large majority of students in mathematics demonstrate attainment, particularly in number work, which is above curriculum standards. Attainment against international benchmarking is very good and confirms that students are achieving above expectations across all mathematics strands. The large majority makes very good progress in lessons. As a result, students have made progress above expectations this year, as seen in work samples. They have maintained levels of attainment above international and curriculum standards over recent years.
- Students demonstrate very good understanding of scientific concepts that range from electric circuits to physical and chemical changes. They consistently use hands-on activities to meet their learning objectives. External and internal data confirm similar levels of very good attainment over recent years. Students' progress in lessons and over time is also very good. Students effectively use the opportunities to develop new understanding that builds very well upon prior learning.

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

- In Islamic education, most students develop their recitation skills with increased confidence when applying Tajweed rules. In this phase students are learning about the wider applications of congregational prayer and the benefits of Qur'an recitation. Students ask questions about how they apply some of their learning to their own lives. Most students are able to use appropriate Hadith to support their answers and points of view during discussions and debates.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students are working within expected levels. Across this phase, students are consolidating their abilities to write a range of topic related sentences. However, a minority are inconsistent in their modification of verbs to match the pronouns used and continue to spell some words phonetically. A majority of students can answer topic related questions but they are less confident when using unfamiliar texts. Students' speaking skills remain acceptable, as they remain mostly limited to answering direct questions rather than engaging in a dialogue.
- In English, the attainment of the majority of students is above curriculum standards. They make good progress in all aspects of the subject. This is shown when students read and summarise the main points of a range of texts, both verbally and in writing. In addition, they develop logical arguments and many can draw on their reading to support a point of view. Students increasingly write with grammatical accuracy. Their oral skills are particularly well developed and, in discussion, they articulate their thoughts clearly and with confidence.
- Internal data and work samples in mathematics indicate that the large majority of students are attaining levels of achievement above expectations. International benchmarking confirms this. Students are doing particularly well in work on space and number. Attainment over recent years, for the majority of students, has been above curriculum standards. Progress in lessons and work samples is very good. Most students, including those with SEND, make progress well above their starting points, and sustain such progress over time.
- Students' attainment is very good in the sciences. They frequently use very good scientific methods to come up with conclusions. For example, students in Grade 7 test various food types for the presence of starch and simple sugars then link that information to their daily lives. Similarly, external and internal assessment data reveal very good levels of attainment. In addition, their progress in lessons and over time is very good. Students consistently make better than expected progress towards their lesson learning objectives as they develop their understanding of new scientific concepts.

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

- In Islamic education, most students develop their recitation skills with increased confidence when applying Tajweed rules. Students continue to develop their good understanding of Islamic etiquette and concepts, such as the broader meaning and applications of Hayaa. Older students have a solid understanding of the Islamic concepts and can confidently hold debates and in-depth discussions about the Day of Judgement and the impact of dangerous lifestyles.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students are working within expected levels. During reading and comprehension activities most students can extract factual information from a familiar text appropriately. Generally, students' writing is limited to text related tasks with few opportunities for them to plan, draft, re-draft and finalise writing for a range of purposes using a writing rubric for reference. As with the middle phase, students' speaking skills remain acceptable, as they are mostly limited to responding to teachers' questions with short and sometimes incomplete answers.
- In English, the large majority of students make very good progress and attainment is above curriculum standards. As a result, they are able to read and understand a range of quite demanding texts. In discussion, students make mature connections with current political and social events. This is seen, for example, in a Grade 12 lesson, where the critical analysis of a poem leads to a thoughtful discussion about the portrayal of women in the media. Students' writing shows their increasing ability to write well-structured and convincing arguments.
- In mathematics, internal assessment data and external examination data for Grade 10 show attainment above expectations. International benchmarking shows a more mixed picture, although work samples and lesson observations confirm that the large majority of students are attaining levels above curriculum standards. The large majority of students are making progress above expectations both in class and as seen through their workbooks. Particularly impressive progress is shown in class in the latter years, and in advanced topics such as calculus.
- Students demonstrate very good knowledge and understanding of concepts across the three sciences. They work at an advanced level where they design their own investigations to find solutions to problems. For example, in a Grade 12 chemistry lesson, students design and undertake an investigation in which they measure the impact of different factors, such as temperature, on the voltage of an electrochemical cell. The progress which students make in lessons towards challenging learning objectives is very good. Internal data also points to high levels of progress over time.

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills	Good	Good	Very good

- Most students are well motivated and eager to learn. They can work for extended periods without close teacher supervision. However, learning behaviour of this quality was not seen in a few classes in the lower primary phase. Older students can build a picture of their strengths and weaknesses and so identify what their next steps in learning should be.
- Students work purposefully together for long periods of time in most classes. They enjoy sharing their ideas and learning from each other. They listen carefully and show respect for the views of others. This is particularly evident when students participate in high quality debates in English about poetry in the higher grades.
- Meaningful connections are made to the real world in most lessons. In Grade 5 mathematics, for example, students apply their knowledge of area and perimeter in designing a 'dream house'. Students enjoy solving problems that reflect real-life situations and are able to draw on their learning in other curriculum subjects.
- Critical thinking and enquiry skills are strong features in almost all subjects. Most students enjoy the challenge of researching and finding things out for themselves. Increased use is being made of modern technologies and most students demonstrate that they are competent in the use of technology to support their learning and investigations.

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

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal development	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- A positive attitude prevails throughout the school with students willingly and enthusiastically taking responsibility for themselves and in supporting others. Students are independent and self-motivated learners. Constructive feedback, whether positive or negative, when received is acted upon.
- All students in the middle and secondary phases demonstrate good self-discipline and are well behaved. This is also true of the majority of primary students, although there are some students in the lower grades who can behave inappropriately if not well supervised. Bullying is extremely rare, with students helping and caring for each other being the norm. Older students set a very good example.
- Students show respect for their teachers and are sensitive to the needs of their peers, both academically and socially. Collaboration and cooperation in lessons is well established and conversations and interactions of all kinds are always constructive and beneficial in the middle and secondary phases, and usually so in the primary phase.
- Students are clearly aware of the need for sufficient water, a balanced diet and eating in moderation. The large majority demonstrates such good habits but a small minority does not. Students are aware of risks they may face in and out of school and take measures to protect themselves. There are many examples of students participating in activities promoting healthy living.

- Students are generally punctual to lessons and arrive at school on time. The school has an attendance rate that is above 96 per cent.

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good

- Across the school students confidently talk about the ways in which Islamic values shape the fabric of life in the UAE. This is evident in students' descriptions of expected behaviours when tourists visit the UAE and Islamic locations, such as mosques and during Ramadan. They enjoy the Islamic quizzes, where all students are encouraged to participate in learning about aspects of life in a Muslim country.
- Students in all phases are aware of a range of traditions in the UAE and can talk about the ways in which the UAE is preserving these traditions through heritage organisations and traditional craft fairs. They also talk about how the modern aspects of Dubai, such as the architecture of some buildings, are influenced by UAE heritage.
- Students continue to learn about other cultures and can talk about what they believe the UAE has successfully done to maintain cultural diversity in a Muslim Arab country. They have a secure understanding of features of their own culture and discuss this confidently with others.

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good

- The school provides many opportunities for students to take part in projects that have a positive impact on the local community. Students participate in charity drives and community wellness programmes. They help provide construction workers in the neighbourhood with a 'happy kit' that contains groceries and toiletries. Many students undertake internships with various organisations that successfully support children and adults with physical and psychological disabilities.
- Students demonstrate a positive work ethic and a sense of integrity. The school has an 'Academic Research Innovation Committee', comprising of teachers, students and parents who meet regularly to generate ideas for innovation. The 'Genius Hour' is used well to encourage research and project work. Students' entrepreneurial skills are supported through planning, budgeting and advertising bake sales which generate funds.
- Students care for their school and the local environment. The school is a member of 'Emirates Environment Group' which promotes recycling and effective waste disposal. Students benefit from participation in competitions and workshops that support environmental awareness. For example, the school is a winner of the 'Green Hope Award'. Almost all parents agree that their children participate in meaningful activities related to environmental awareness

3. Teaching and assessment

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Very good

- Teachers generally have a secure knowledge of their subjects and understand how students learn best. In most subjects, teachers make good use of their knowledge to provide students with stimulating and challenging work. However, in Arabic, there is inconsistency in teachers' understanding of how Arabic as an additional language should be taught.
- Most lessons are well-planned and successfully taught. Lesson objectives are usually made clear, so students know exactly what they are going to learn. However, a few lessons in lower primary lack focus because the objectives specify what students are going to do, rather than what they are going to learn. Attractive displays and well used resources contribute to a purposeful learning environment.
- Very good relationships between adults and students ensure that most teaching takes place in a supportive learning environment. Skilled questioning is used well to challenge students' thinking and probe understanding. This is a particularly strong feature of many upper secondary lessons. In English, for example, students engage in thoughtful class discussions and offer constructive assessments of each other's contributions.
- Teachers use a variety of strategies to meet the needs of different groups of students. Most are aware of students' diverse abilities and adjust the work well to meet their individual needs. Teachers' expectations are generally very high and learning activities are carefully planned to challenge students to do their very best. In a few primary lessons, however, insufficiently challenging work leads to some inattentive behaviour.
- The development of critical thinking is at the heart of teaching and learning across the school. In most subjects, teachers are very successful in developing these skills. This was particularly evident in Islamic education, English, mathematics and science, but less so in Arabic. From an early age, learning is linked to the real world so that learning is placed in a socially relevant context.

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Assessment	Good	Good	Good

- The school aligns its internal assessments and processes well with the CISCE curriculum from Grades 1 to 12. An increase in the number of quality assessment opportunities enables the school to close the time gap in the summer between lessons and end-of-term exams. Internal assessments provide valid measures of students' academic and personal outcomes.
- The school benchmarks its students' achievement scores well at the international level through international benchmark tests that include ASSET, IBT and CAT4. The school effectively compares its students' IBT scores in English, mathematics and science to internal assessment scores to identify alignments and discrepancies.

- The school uses skill-based tracking systems instead of data-based systems to monitor students' progress over time. This information is used well to identify students' strengths and weaknesses as well as identify students needing additional subject support.
- Internal and external assessment data are analysed at the departmental level and with the assessment coordinator. Adjustments to the curriculum are made based on the assessment information available. For example, the school uses the gaps identified by the IBT examination data to modify the curriculum in English, mathematics and science. Tracking sheets used in lessons are effective in monitoring students' short-term progress.
- Teachers know their students' strengths and weakness well. They check students' books, correct their mistakes and encourage them to use self-evaluation rubrics. The quality of the written feedback they give to students varies across the subjects and it is often too general in nature to provide specific information on what each student should do next.

4. Curriculum

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Very good ↑

- The curriculum is carefully aligned to that of the CISCE examination board. It is planned well to include appropriate content for the UAE National Agenda context and meets the necessary statutory requirements for compliance. There is a good balance between knowledge, understanding and skills in every subject and in terms of time allocation between curricular and extra-curricular subjects.
- The curriculum is well structured to ensure that students learn smoothly and progressively through carefully sequenced activities. Curriculum planning between the grades in each phase prepares students well. However, planning at transition points is not consistently revised, especially in the lower primary phase. The curriculum is enriched with many learning experiences for older students to prepare for university education, including community learning programmes.
- The school offers a wide range of subjects in and out of classrooms. It provides facilities for aptitude testing in Grade 8 to enable students to select the stream of their interest. Grade 11 students can choose further from a wide range of flexible options.
- Cross-curricular links are planned and used in most lessons to develop an understanding of skills across a range of subjects. Links are commonly seen in English, science and social studies but less in mathematics. The curriculum provides plenty of opportunities for peer learning, ICT usage, research, problem solving and critical thinking skills.
- The curriculum is reviewed regularly. Analysis of admission tests, school assessments, board examinations and IBT examinations are considered well for curriculum reviews. The school also considers the views of students, teachers and parents to understand the impact of the curriculum on students' personal and academic development. This provides scope for curriculum modification so that the needs and interests of all students are met.

- The UAE social studies curriculum is followed in the primary phase, whereas in other phases it is integrated with the ICSE curriculum. It is enriched with many purposeful and meaningful projects. For example, Grade 2 and 3 students undertake happiness surveys and Grade 5 students prepare a brochure on UAE tourism. Teachers plan engaging lessons combined with a wide range of questions to promote critical thinking and purposeful learning. Students communicate clearly their learning about UAE society, values and ethics through diverse learning activities.

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good

- Across the key subjects, teachers adapt learning to meet the needs of most students well, particularly in the middle and secondary phases, as well as in Arabic in the primary phase. Most students with SEND also benefit from inclusive and well-planned support in class lessons. However, in a minority of lessons, teachers do not match learning sufficiently closely to the needs and abilities of all students.
- Curricular programmes and extra-curricular activities provide well-planned opportunities in all phases for students' enhanced learning and personal development. These include science and technology activities, an innovative parent-student discussion group, and online learning for gifted and talented students. The school successfully incorporates a range of competitive activities, including debating, into the curriculum.
- Curricular programmes variously help students understand UAE values, culture and society. For example, students learn about plant systems in science and link these to UAE practice in hydroponics. Assemblies celebrate National Day and other important customs. The recently introduced 'Iftar parties' as well as visits to mosques add to students' understanding gained in their UAE social studies and ethics lessons.

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

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The school has a clear and comprehensive child protection policy that is available online and is known to parents, students and staff. There are highly effective procedures in place for safeguarding students against all kinds of abuse including bullying and online social media.
- The school ensures that its environment is fully hygienic and safe. Students are supervised at all times within school and on school transport. A fleet of school buses transports students to and from school safely. The carefully organised arrivals and departures are exemplary. Students' safety is the highest priority for all school staff.

- The school keeps all equipment, including air conditioning units, security systems and fire extinguishers, in excellent functioning condition. Very detailed and secure records are kept of regular maintenance including records of incidents and subsequent actions. The clinic provides students with excellent health services and keeps up-to-date health-related records on every student.
- The school premises, resources and equipment are suitable for the learning needs of all students including those with SEND. Ramps are in place to facilitate smooth access for wheelchairs around school and to meet the learning needs of all students. There are no lifts to enable students with physical disabilities to access the upper floor.
- Healthy living and healthy life styles are key priorities for the school and are integrated into almost all aspects of students' school lives. The canteen offers a wide variety of healthy snacks such as fruit salads. The nurse takes an essential role in promoting healthy living by providing well-planned lectures and seminars for students and parents.

	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Care and support	Good	Good	Good

- Teachers know their students well and are aware of their individual needs. Mutual respect, trust and confidence are at the centre of interactions between staff and students during class and at break times. Behaviour management is defined clearly, understood by students and staff, and implemented in a caring and considerate manner.
- The school keeps accurate records of attendance and punctuality. Systems for managing attendance and punctuality are very efficient and effective. Parents are notified promptly of any concerns about individual students or if they fail to arrive in school when expected.
- The school accurately identifies students with special educational needs and particular gifts and talents. SEND staff respond promptly to any cause for concern. They use a suitable range of tests and checklists, combined with teacher observations, to identify barriers to learning. The school helpfully directs parents to external sources of further diagnosis as required.
- SEND staff support students well with suitably adapted learning approaches in class lessons and individual support sessions. In lessons, most teachers closely match activities to SEND students' learning needs, and provide challenge for gifted and talented students. In a few lessons teachers' inaccurate expectations lead to tasks and activities less-well-matched to students' learning needs.
- The school has reliable systems for monitoring the well-being and personal development of all students. Students feel well supported and have confidence in the help that is provided by the school. Older students are provided with appropriate information and guidance about career choices and higher education.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good

- The knowledgeable SEND co-ordinator, well-supported by the principal, provides clear direction to the SEND team. Revised policy and procedures provide clear advice on how, when and by whom support is provided to students with SEND. The school is inclusive of students with a wide range of learning needs and disabilities.
- Staff use an appropriate range of methods to identify accurately students with SEND. These methods include direct observation of students in lessons, selected diagnostic tests and checklists. The school supports parents to seek further specialist diagnosis and advice where this is appropriate.
- The school very successfully involves parents as active partners in their children's education. The SEND team takes good account of parents' views in compiling individual education plans (IEPs) for students who require them. Communications are prompt and effective. The innovative parent support group provides a useful forum to share experience, advice and guidance on supporting students with particular needs.
- SEND staff modify learning well for students with SEND, both in class lessons and in support sessions with individual students. In lessons, most teachers closely match tasks and activities to students' learning needs, including instances of critical thinking. In a few lessons, however, teachers' expectations of the capabilities of students with SEND are too low.
- Students with SEND make good progress overall, in lessons and in their personal development. Almost all are increasingly confident, well-motivated learners. Older students in the middle and secondary phases learn independently. Good assessment arrangements support accurate tracking and monitoring of students' progress, overall. However monitoring is not as strong in the early primary phase.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The recently appointed principal has a strong vision and passionate commitment for the school which is shared by all staff, students and parents. Leaders are committed to the UAE vision and this is securely articulated through school documentation. The school has an inclusive ethos and leaders demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of students with a variety of differing needs.
- Leaders, at all levels, demonstrate a secure knowledge of the Indian curriculum as well as the UAE requirements in terms of Islamic education and Arabic. Leaders are actively focussed on the quality of teaching and have a strong understanding of what constitutes good and better teaching. Priorities for development are known and lesson observations are used well to identify priorities for ongoing professional development.

- Relationships and communications between staff across the school are courteous and professional. Communication with parents is supportive and effective in engaging them with the work of the school. Leaders are equally focussed on the academic and the pastoral needs of students. Morale throughout the school is high and teachers know exactly what is expected of them.
- Leaders at all levels demonstrate a secure understanding of their responsibilities. Strengths and weaknesses of the school are known well and all staff understand their roles in securing improvement. The capacity for further improvement is evident. Governors, parents, leaders and staff are knowledgeable about the school and what is needed to make further improvements.
- Leaders have been successful in improving the school from an acceptable to good quality, as well as consolidating practice further. The school's calm, purposeful leadership is having a positive effect on school improvement through improvements to teaching, learning and outcomes overall. The school is compliant with all statutory and regulatory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- Self-evaluation is systematic and embedded. The school makes good use of internal and external data as well as lesson observations and stakeholder surveys to evaluate what it does well and what it needs to do to improve. The grades offered in the school's own self-evaluation are accurate and justified. Key priorities are identified and acted upon.
- Lesson observations are undertaken regularly and frequently. They are used well to identify improvements and offer valuable feedback. Lesson observations evaluate a range of aspects which are subsequently used to plan an assortment of professional development opportunities including assessment, data, differentiation and learning, as well as the National Agenda. Professional development is augmented with peer observations and departmental training.
- A school improvement plan and an action plan are available, although too much emphasis is given to the recommendations of the last report rather than wider school improvement. Individual plans for English, mathematics and science are helpful but additional planning is generic and not sufficiently focussed on moving the school to the next level.
- There has been progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection report. The school has addressed weaknesses in attainment and progress in Islamic education. Students are now more engaged with technology. The school is aware that attainment and progress in Arabic as an additional language requires further improvement.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Very good ↑

- The school enjoys positive and productive links with parents who feel supported and engaged as partners in their children's learning. Parents' views are regularly sought and speedily acted upon. Parents say that any concerns raised are quickly dealt with. Parental involvement makes a positive contribution to raising standards and the success of the school.
- The school has very effective procedures for communicating with parents, including parent representatives for each class who maintain regular contact with other parents through social media. Parents feel well informed and kept up to date about projects and initiatives. Communication is particularly effective in the case of parents of children with SEND, who feel very well informed and supported by the school.
- Parents are kept well informed about the progress of their children. Progress reports are comprehensive and sent home at regular intervals. Formal parent-teacher meetings are valued along with more informal gatherings such as coffee mornings. Parents of older students particularly value the feedback which they receive regarding career guidance and other opportunities after their children complete school.
- The school enjoys strong partnerships with the local community, including extensive charitable work locally and beyond. Links with schools in India and Africa offer an international perspective and these partnerships have been very productive in enhancing and improving students' learning experiences, especially in terms of other cultures. The school is working with a neighbouring school which offers support for Arabic teaching.

Governance

Good

- Governance of the school includes representation by parents who sit on the parent support group and who have a well-informed view of the school through regular visits including lesson observations to inform their knowledge. Concerns raised by teachers and/or parents are responded to in a timely, appropriate and supportive manner.
- The governing body regularly monitors the school and is more proactive in holding the school to account for its actions and the quality of its performance. Issues raised are acted upon, including the introduction of additional extra-curricular activities and more regular assessment opportunities.
- The governing body exerts a positive influence on the school and is knowledgeable about strengths and weaknesses. Recommendations from the last inspection report have mostly been addressed, although weaknesses remain in terms of attainment and progress in Arabic. The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Good

- The day-to-day management of the school is very well-organised. Structured routines for daily tasks are a well-established part of the school culture with students, teachers, support staff and parents working collaboratively. Students are respectful of the school routines, with minimal time being lost between lessons.
- All staff are suitably well qualified for the positions they hold and benefit from regular professional development that is matched to the school's priorities and leads to improvements in teaching. There are specialist staff, including those who support students with SEND, who are deployed effectively.
- The premises provide an attractive and stimulating environment for learning. Classrooms are fitted with interactive whiteboards and projectors. However, some of the laboratories are not big enough to safely teach larger numbers of students. The outside area of the school provides an attractive space for sport and play with a soft-tiled play area and appropriate shade.
- All materials and equipment are in good condition. Teachers have a range of resources to support their teaching and this includes three mobile units of laptops for use in the classroom to support learning across the curriculum. The library is well stocked and has been increased with extra books to support Arabic and Islamic education.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
 Parents*	2016-2017	587
	2015-2016	393
 Teachers	66	
 Students	59	

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

- Almost all parents are satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school. Written responses express support for the school and its leadership but suggest that further work is needed to develop Islamic education and Arabic.
- Almost all parents say that their children enjoy school and feel safe in the school and on school buses. A minority of parents expresses concern about bullying. Older students say that there is a teacher or other adult in the school who cares about them, listens to them and tells them when they are doing a good job.
- The findings of the inspection team support the view that bullying is rare and any occurrences are dealt with swiftly and well.
- Almost all parents feel that the school is led well and that leaders and staff listen to them and act on their views. Almost all parents agree that their children are developing a good awareness of the UAE and other cultures.
- Teacher comments are universally positive and almost all of them comment favourably on the quality of education and the support for students' well-being. Staff comment positively on the leadership team and this is echoed by students in their responses.

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