



Al Salam Private School

🇬🇧 Curriculum: UK

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



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School information



General information

Location	Al Nahda
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1988
Website	www.alsalamschool.ae
Telephone	0097142679594
Address	Al Qusais Al Nahda 2P.O. BOX 5251
Principal	Susan Patricia Johnston
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	21 to 24 November 2016

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	83
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	43
Teacher-student ratio	1:15
Number of guidance counsellors	3
Teacher turnover	20%

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-18
Grades or year groups	FS1-Year 13
Number of students on roll	1214
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	151
Number of Emirati students	220
Number of students with SEND	54
Largest nationality group of students	Arab

Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	Cambridge I
External tests and examinations	IGCSE, AS,
Accreditation	IGCSE, Edexcel
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT – CAT4 – TIMSS - PISA



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.

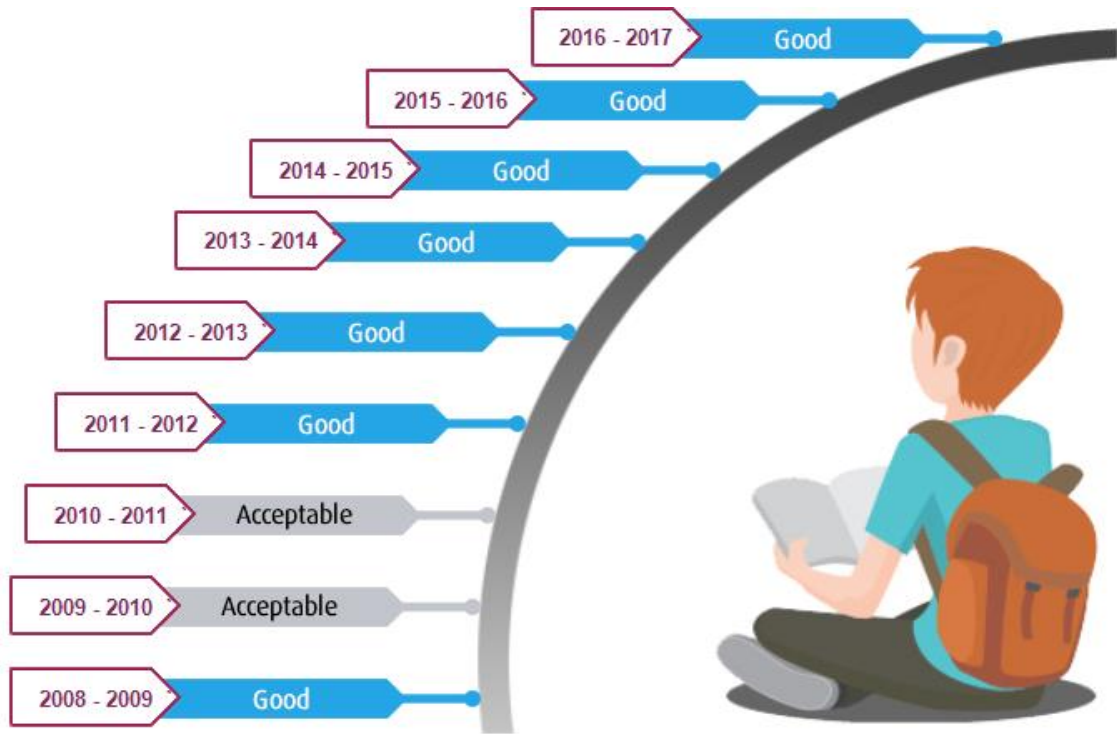
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students’ learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

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 Al Salam Private School



- The principal is the founding principal of the school. Teacher turnover has been low in recent years. This year, it is 20 percent. The school roll has been stable for the past three years and the numbers are capped to a level that is suitable for the sizes of the learning spaces. Nearly half of the students are Arabs and the majority of teachers are from India.
- All aspects of the school, including attainment and progress have been evaluated as good or better in the last two years. Strengths during that time include the high levels of attainment in mathematics and science at IGCSE and AS levels, many aspects of personal development, and health and safety arrangements for students.
- Previous recommendations have directed school leaders to develop students' learning skills in line with those needed for the 21st century. They have also required the school to match expectations and activities so that the needs of all students are met. The school's current priorities are raising the quality of teaching in primary and lower secondary from good to very good and improving the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation processes.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



Al Salam Private School was inspected by DSIB from 21 to 24 November 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' achievement is at least good in all of the core subjects in all phases of the school. Students perform at high levels in external examinations at the end of the secondary phase and at post-16.
- Students show high levels of self-discipline and very positive attitudes to learning. They demonstrate outstanding Islamic values and have an excellent understanding of Emirati culture. They have a very strong commitment to community service and are highly involved in environmental initiatives.
- The quality of teaching is good or better across all phases. The development of students' learning skills is very effective, especially in the secondary and post-16 phases. Assessment systems are consistent and thorough. Students' individual strengths and areas for improvement are accurately identified.
- The curriculum is well-designed and well-suited to the students in the school. Students increasingly use technology and have more opportunities to be innovative.
- The safeguarding and protection of students is of the highest priority. Care and support, both for the academic and personal development of all students, is very good. Identification, provision and support for students with SEND is very good, resulting in good progress being made by those students.
- Leadership is successful in maintaining and improving school performance. School leaders are seeking to enrich partnerships with parents in order to enhance student learning at home. The governing body has a wide range of expertise that is used to the students' benefit.

What the school does best

- Leaders have created a strong, inclusive community, which celebrates the different needs and cultures of its members.
- Students' achieve well in all core subjects and across all phases.
- The school is very successful regarding the personal development of all students, especially in respect of their appreciation and demonstration of Islamic values.
- The staff have the highest regard for the safety and well-being of the school community. They provide very good support for students, especially those with SEND.

Recommendations

- Improve teaching, particularly in English, mathematics and science in the Foundation Stage (FS), primary and lower secondary phases, through making better use of students' international benchmarked assessment results, in order to provide greater levels of challenge in all lessons.
- Improve school self-evaluation by:
 - placing greater importance on the evaluation of students' progress in lessons
 - making better use of external benchmark test results in order to provide a more accurate picture of attainment and progress in subjects.

National Agenda Parameter



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

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

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







- Attainment in mathematics and science, in the National Agenda Parameter benchmark tests, meets expectations but attainment in English is not secure.
- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- The school analyses data from benchmark tests well and uses it effectively to identify those students who require support. The data is not used so well to set targets for all individuals or groups and to track progress against international expectations. Results from internal assessments are not aligned to the expected international standards, particularly in the primary phase.
- Subject leaders use the outcomes of benchmark tests to identify areas of strength and weakness in the curriculum. As a result, appropriate modifications to the curriculum are being made, for example, to focus more on further developing students' skills in reading, mental arithmetic and investigation.
- A majority of teachers include more open-ended questions and incorporate elements of critical thinking, such as analysis and evaluation, into their lessons. In the primary and lower secondary phases, this is not consistent and students are not always given sufficient time for reflection or independent work.
- Most students have been assessed using cognitive ability tests and some, in selected years, have undergone international benchmark assessment. Those students know their results and have targets for improvement. In the majority of lessons, students use technology effectively to answer questions and conduct research, although occasionally the time allowed for such activities is too short.

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

Overall school performance

Good

1 Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Very good ↑	Good
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Not applicable
English 	Attainment	Good	Good	Very good	Not applicable
	Progress	Good	Good	Very good	Not applicable
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good	Good ↓	Very good	Outstanding
	Progress	Good	Good ↓	Very good	Outstanding
Science 	Attainment	Good	Good	Very good	Very good
	Progress	Good	Good	Very good ↑	Very good
		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills		Good	Good	Very good	Very good

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Very good	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Very good	Very good
Assessment	Good	Good ↓	Very good	Very good

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good
Curriculum adaptation	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good


6. Leadership and management

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


Main inspection report



1. Students' achievement

 Foundation Stage		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- The majority of children exceed curriculum standards in literacy measured against the early learning goals (ELGs). Younger children listen well to stories and can recall some characters and events. Most children can sound letters and write their names. By FS2, the large majority are increasingly able to use their knowledge of phonics to read common words. They can identify words with the same initial sound and are able to express meaning in sentences. They make good progress against expected outcomes and from their starting points.
- In mathematics, the majority of children make good progress from their starting points and exceed the curriculum standards. Children in FS1 can recite numbers accurately to ten. However, they are less confident in correctly matching numerals to quantities. The large majority of FS2 children are confident in counting well beyond ten and can carry out simple calculations such as adding and subtracting one. A minority of children can record their calculations accurately using two-digit numbers.
- Most children progress well against expected outcomes and from their starting points in science. They achieve at or above the curriculum standards in understanding of the world and using technology. Younger children can name a wide range of animals and accurately match the sounds they make. FS2 children know what plants require to thrive and can accurately label the parts. They enjoy practical activities such as planting cress seeds. However, children have few opportunities to investigate the natural world independently.


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

- The majority of students demonstrate levels in Islamic education that are above the expectations of Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum. In studies of the Holy Qur'an, students can read and memorise a large number of Surat. They can memorise and explain the relevance of hadeeth to life. Students have a good knowledge of the Pillars of Iman and Islam, prayers and Hajj. In their lessons, the majority of students make progress that exceeds the teaching objectives.
- In Arabic as a first language, attainment and progress for the majority of students are good. However, the trend, over the past three years, has been declining. The very high results in internal assessments are not reflected in their lessons and in their workbooks. Listening, speaking and reading skills in classical Arabic are strong. Year 6 students can write on topics such as social communication, but in general students' writing skills are underdeveloped.
- In Arabic as an additional language, attainment and progress for the majority of students are good. However, the trend over the past few years has been downwards. Internal assessments do not match what is seen in lessons and in workbooks. Reading, handwriting and dictation skills are strong in classical Arabic. However, listening, speaking and comprehension skills are less secure. Year 6 students are improving their guided writing well but not their independent writing.
- Internal data and evidence from lessons and students' work indicate that most students attain above curriculum standards in English. This attainment is not confirmed by external Cambridge Checkpoint examinations which show a weaker picture. Students, especially those with greater linguistic ability, are able to write fuller and more engaging descriptions when challenged. In lessons and over time, students make good progress in developing speaking skills and understanding grammatical construction. Students with SEND make good progress.
- The majority of students' work in mathematics, as measured against the school's internal curriculum levels, is good. They make good progress across the phase to reach above age-related curriculum standards. The youngest students are confidently using number bonds to ten and beyond, and Year 3 students accurately draw lines of symmetry in increasingly complex shapes. Older students have a good understanding of multiplication and use these skills to calculate areas and perimeters of shapes. Attainment at the end of the phase, as measured against the international benchmarks is good.
- In science a majority of students attain levels above the curriculum standards according to internal assessments. This has been the trend for the past three years, however, when measured against international benchmark tests, they attain standards that are in line with expectations. In lessons, most students are keen to demonstrate their knowledge and can confidently explain their work. Most are making good progress in acquiring knowledge and a majority develop a sound understanding of concepts. The development of practical and investigative skills is inconsistent.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students demonstrate levels that are above curriculum expectations. They memorise a number of Surat that are beyond curriculum requirements. In their studies of Seerah, the majority of students have wide knowledge about Al Hijrah and Islamic characters such as Al Kulafah. A large majority of students make very good progress and exceed the teaching objectives in lessons. For example, Year 9 students demonstrate a deep knowledge of Zakat and its effect on Islamic economy.
- The attainment and progress for the majority of students in Arabic as a first language are good. However, results over the last three years are variable. Very high results in internal assessment are not reflected in their learning during lessons or through their workbooks. Listening, speaking and reading skills in classical Arabic are well developed. Year 11 students can write short stories well. They have a limited knowledge and understanding of different genres in literature. Progress is more variable in the upper year groups.
- In Arabic as an additional language, attainment and progress for the majority of students are good, although students' performance over the last three years has been gradually declining. The high results in internal assessment are not reflected in their learning in lessons. Reading, handwriting and dictation skills in classical Arabic are well-developed. However, speaking skills are limited. Year 9 students are improving their guided writing well but not their independent writing. Reading is improving very well with the introduction of interesting Arabic comic stories.
- In English, by the end of Year 11, the attainment of almost all students is above curriculum standards. This is supported by Year 9 Cambridge Checkpoint exams where the majority of students attain above curriculum standards. Students' very good progress in lessons and in their written work matches internal assessment data. Progress is slower in the lower secondary phase and then accelerates towards the end of the phase. Students' knowledge, skills and understanding develop progressively as they explore various genres and refine their inferential comprehension skills. Progress for students with SEND is good.
- By the end of the secondary phase, most students' attainment in mathematics, as measured against internal and external international standards, is above age-related levels. There is a trend of outstanding IGCSE results. The present Year 11 students are making outstanding progress in lessons, for example when using their knowledge of trigonometry to find missing plane and angle measurements in 3D shapes. Students make very good progress across the phase but the recent externally-benchmarked test results indicate that Year 8 students are capable of further accelerated progress.

- Across the secondary phase, a large majority of students attain levels in science that are above curriculum standards. Their very good progress has led to outstanding results at IGCSE for three years. Older students demonstrate deep conceptual understanding and can apply their knowledge to evaluate and analyse material presented in an unfamiliar way. In the lower secondary classes, most students make good progress in developing their practical skills, but their ability to plan full investigations is underdeveloped.

 Post-16		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Not applicable	Not applicable
Mathematics	Outstanding	Outstanding
Science	Very good	Very good

- The majority of students demonstrate levels in Islamic education that are above curriculum expectations. During studies of the Holy Qur'an, students distinguish between Al Hadith, Al Nabwi and Al Hadith Al Qudsi. Students give examples about the types of Hadeeth and they can explain the importance of Seerah with regard to statements from the Holy Qur'an. Progress for the majority of students during lessons is better than expected.
- In Arabic as a first language, attainment and progress for the majority of students are good. The trend over the past few years is inconsistent. Students' very high results in internal assessment are not reflected in their performance in lessons and in their recent work. Listening, speaking and reading skills in classical Arabic are strong. Year 12 students extend their knowledge of grammar but their independent writing is insufficiently developed.
- In mathematics, most students' attainment, as measured by the results of AS level examinations, has been outstanding for two years. Students can successfully apply their knowledge of linear and quadratic equations. They make excellent progress throughout Year 12, building on secure prior knowledge and applying it to new learning.
- For the last three years, a large majority of students have achieved standards at AS level in science that are above curriculum and international standards. In lessons and in their work, they demonstrate better than expected progress in developing conceptual understanding and in their ability to apply critical thinking to scientific topics.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Good	Good	Very good	Very good

- Students enjoy learning and remain focused in lessons. They can work independently and productively, especially when using technology. Self-assessment is a feature of the best lessons, particularly for the older students. FS children listen well, but do not always have sufficient time to think about what they have learnt, or to develop their independence. Student-led learning is less evident in the primary phase and in Islamic education and Arabic.
- Students enjoy group work in all subjects. In science and mathematics lessons, where problem-solving is a feature, they collaborate effectively to find solutions. Students support their peers very well to achieve lesson objectives; in Year 8, for example, they take on the role of teachers helping others to understand the concept of pi.
- Older students consistently make links between subjects; writing poems and fictional stories based on mathematical learning, and using texts and ICT effectively for scientific research. Students' understanding is further augmented by tasks that require them to apply their new learning to real life situations; in Arabic and Islamic education lessons, for example, they develop their understanding of the concept of citizenship through living in the UAE.
- Students increasingly make good use of technology to research and present their findings to their peers. Older students' critical thinking skills are developing well, through, for example, lively discussions and debates. Primary students' thinking skills are underdeveloped.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Very good	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students across the school are increasingly self-reliant with positive and respectful attitudes. Older students are especially friendly and helpful as they interact with others throughout the school day. Students offer differing viewpoints during discussions, increasing their capacity to consider the critical feedback of others. A minority of children in the FS do not always listen well to others especially when they are keen to answer questions.
- Overall, students are especially well behaved in classrooms, at break time and around the school. A spark of energy and spirit is evident in their interactions with other students and with staff. On occasion, a few students are disruptive in the lower primary classes.
- A calm and friendly culture is maintained at all levels, with students voluntarily assisting and supporting others when needed. They are especially accepting of students with special educational needs and disabilities. Relationships between staff and students are particularly respectful and supportive.

- Students display very good understanding of how to stay healthy by taking care over their choices of food, regularly drinking water and taking exercise.
- The school's overall attendance is very good at 96 percent. They almost always arrive on time to school and to their lessons.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students' understanding and appreciation of Islamic values are excellent. Students listen with close attention to the Holy Qur'an during the morning assembly. They have a clear understanding of the impact of Islamic values, particularly with reference to equality among all people living in Dubai. Students have strong connections with the Red Crescent society and make donations for the looked-after children outside the UAE.
- Students greatly appreciate Emirati heritage and culture. In the FS, children know the national dress code and other heritage symbols such as the palm tree and the camel. In the other phases, students understand many aspects of UAE heritage and culture, such as traditional sports and historical Emirati celebrations. Students participate in a wide range of celebratory events such as flag and national days.
- Students fully appreciate and celebrate their own cultures. They speak enthusiastically about their traditions and lifestyles. Students have an excellent awareness of other world cultures. They enjoy discovering similarities and differences between themselves and those from other countries, during celebrations such as Global Day. They particularly enjoy the tasting of different foods.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students have highly responsible attitudes to school life and to the wider community. They are very eager to be involved and lead groups such as the Enrichment Club, which supports younger students with their studies. Younger students show a strong willingness to get involved in school and community projects through programmes such as Help Us Give Support (HUGS).
- Students have a highly positive work ethic. Older students in particular are confident leaders and highly resourceful. The Al Salam Corporate Minds group is run as a business and innovatively supports charities as well as the school environment, for example by funding solar panels. Students of all ages are very clear about the benefits of working hard.

- Students discuss environmental issues in an insightful and in-depth manner. They are very active in the school through the Green Buddies group, combining gardening with re-cycling to improve the school environment. The 'clean-up' group, initiated by students, ensures that the school is litter-free. These initiatives involve FS children and primary phase students very effectively so that they develop an age-appropriate awareness of the need for environmental sustainability.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Very good	Very good

- Teachers across all phases have thorough subject knowledge and this confidence helps them deliver meaningful and interesting lessons. There is a growing expertise in planning lessons to suit the needs of all students. For teachers of older students, the framework for external examinations encourages them to very carefully adapt their approaches to ensure that individual students make the necessary progress towards their predicted goals.
- Lesson plans consistently makes clear the purpose of the learning. In Arabic as an additional and as a first language, and in some primary lessons, challenge for all students' abilities and potential is not sufficiently taken into account. In the FS, the activities are, on occasion, over-complex and lose the focus on the learning objective. The best lessons offer exciting, cross-curricular components, real-life application and an emphasis on practicality and creativity.
- Very strong relationships between staff and students underpin the positive learning ethos and dialogue in most classrooms. Teachers' questioning often arouses the interest of students but is neither sufficiently probing nor consistently focused on assessing what has been learnt. In the best lessons, teachers routinely adjust the levels of challenge according to students' progress. Teachers in the FS do not always give children enough time to think and answer in sufficient depth.
- Teachers are well aware of the differing needs of most students, including those with SEND. Insufficient attention is given to the needs of more-able students. Teachers plan against the expected age-related curriculum standards, but do not always extend or apply these standards to different contexts in order to accelerate progress. This is more successful in mathematics and science, especially as students prepare for external examinations and have targets to aim for.
- Leaders continue to prioritise the importance of developing students' 21st century skills. Students relish self-directed learning through the many research projects, which are enhanced through the growing use of technology. Planned opportunities for self-assessment are increasingly empowering students. These strategies are underdeveloped in the FS and primary phase, where teachers do not always allow sufficient time for students to reflect, evaluate and improve their learning.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Good	Good ↓	Very good	Very good

- Assessment is aligned to the school's curriculum and provides consistent data, allowing student attainment to be reliably tracked. Children in FS are assessed on a daily basis using a structured system. External assessment takes place in Years 6, 9, 11 and 12. In Islamic education and Arabic as a first and as an additional language, assessments are aligned to the MoE standards.
- The school uses external benchmark tests, to measure performance and potential in line with National Agenda parameters. As a result, internal tests are being adapted to include a greater number of skill-based questions and problems. Results from the school's internal tests in the primary phase do not have a close alignment with those measured by external benchmarked tests.
- Data is analysed accurately and in appropriate detail to identify and support individual students, as well as to identify their strengths and areas for development. Analysis compares performance by gender and ethnicity but is not consistently used to set progress targets from comparisons between assessments measuring potential and performance. Secondary students use learning logs to monitor their own performance.
- The school uses assessment data to identify gaps in the content and skills of subject areas very well and takes effective steps to remedy any variances. Tracking and assessment is used increasingly effectively to plan for individual children's differing abilities in FS. In the other phases, teachers routinely use data to identify three broad ability groups within their classes.
- Almost all teachers know their students well and provide good levels of support and for most of them, additional opportunities to consolidate their learning. A majority of teachers give constructive feedback for further improvement in students' workbooks. Students also routinely peer-review and self-assess their learning but this process would benefit from a greater consistency across classes and subjects, especially in the FS and primary phase.

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good

- Children in FS follow the EYFS curriculum, whilst students in Years 1 - 9 develop their knowledge, skills and understanding by following the Cambridge curriculum. The MoE curriculum determines the standards for Arabic, Islamic Studies and Social Studies. All curricula have a clear rationale and meet requirements. In the FS there are insufficient opportunities for children to develop their technology, in independent and critical thinking skills.

- Learning builds progressively from year to year with well-organised transition arrangements between phases for all key subjects. Students are well prepared for the next phase of their education in the school, for further education, and for the world of work. Consequently, they can move to the next stage in their career path with confidence.
- Subject options in the upper secondary phase are wide and allow students to select courses that match their interests and future career plans. Design and technology is an additional subject for younger students in the primary phase. The programme for computing has been adapted to provide greater choice and problem-solving opportunities.
- There is an increasing emphasis on the development of skills. Cross-curricular links are well planned. They add richness, support students' skills development and augment learning with meaningful examples from the real world. For example, in a Year 11 lesson, students employed their knowledge of mathematics, science and geography to debate maturely
- Subject departments conduct very regular reviews of their curriculum in light of international developments, such as the revised UK National Curriculum, and following careful analysis of students' performance in external assessments. Attention is also given to the sensitive match of the curriculum to the cultural values and expectations of parents and students.
- UAE social studies is taught as a separate subject to Year 8 and then integrated into the curriculum through well-planned topic work for older students. Learning in class is enhanced through assemblies and out of school visits to such places as the Islamic Cultural Society. Teachers plan interesting tasks and students work with lively enthusiasm, discussing, debating and developing their research skills through studies such as the growth of Dubai since 1972. Rigorous assessment systems ensure the progress of students is carefully monitored.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good

- A wide range of internal assessment and examination data is carefully used to identify necessary amendments to subjects and revisions to lesson plans in order to improve students' performance. A recent refinement to the curriculum is the recognition of the different learning styles of students and how they might affect their potential academic attainment. The SEND department has been particularly effective in this regard.
- The curriculum has an increasing focus on innovative learning and offers a wide range of opportunities to motivate almost all students. Opportunities for in-depth research, critical thinking and debates are woven into the subject strands. Through the strong community ethos, students respond positively to charity initiatives. A range of extra-curricular activities provides further richness, in terms of innovation, developing environmental awareness and social responsibility.
- There is an appreciation of the richness and diversity of the UAE culture and society, particularly in the social studies programme, but also in almost all aspects of the curriculum. , Very good opportunities range from children in FS learning about the local food and costumes, to sophisticated reviews by students in the secondary phase, of the economic growth of Dubai, as a commercial and tourist centre.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The school's child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures are rigorous and are regularly updated to reflect the latest guidance and laws. All staff receive regular training in safeguarding. Workshops for parents have also been provided. The school has highly effective means to protect students from all forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Staff deal very sensitively with students' concerns and needs.
- Rigorous procedures exist and regular on site safety and security checks, take place. Potential risks are recorded and dealt with immediately. The school meets all its regulatory requirements, such as carrying out emergency fire drills. The system to ensure the safe transport of children by bus is very well-organised and effective. Students state that they feel very safe and secure in school.
- Comprehensive records are kept of routine emergency evacuation drills as well as the regular checks on electrical and water systems. Medical staff are very vigilant and keep detailed records of any accidents and incidents and resulting actions taken. There are very clear procedures for obtaining parents' consent to administer medicines to students. A high number of staff throughout the school are trained in first aid.
- The school premises, equipment and resources are very well suited to the educational needs of all students including those with SEND. There are very good arrangements in place to ensure the safety of students with mobility issues, for example with regard to emergency evacuations. Adults are very alert and vigilant to the particular needs of young children.
- The promotion of safe and healthy lifestyles very successfully permeates the school. The school provides very clear guidance to students and parents. Medical staff are very proactive in supporting and advising students. There are extensive outdoor shaded areas to provide protection from the sun and access to fresh drinking water.


	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Care and support	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good

- Positive relationships among staff and students create a calm and friendly atmosphere on site. As a result, students are very polite in their interactions with staff and with adults in general. Leaders in each phase of the school effectively manage the behaviour of their students, engaging counselling staff in the resolution of problems and difficulties.

- The school maintains a very good level of attendance overall. Daily attendance is closely managed by the school's Heads of Department. Parents are contacted promptly on the day their child is late or absent. This ensures safety but also develops habits of punctuality and attendance.
- Students with SEND are usually identified during their FS years. The process involves online referrals, in-class assessment by support teachers who guide teachers to the most effective strategies. Additional identification for SEND support takes place during the admission process. The cognitive testing programme is supporting the identification of students with higher and lower ability levels.
- The school has a very strong and experienced SEND team to manage the specialist teaching as well as to support students with SEND in their classes, through the provision of guidance and training. Nonetheless, the provision for students who have been identified as gifted and or talented is underdeveloped.
- Support for students with personal and emotional issues is effectively provided by the counselling staff at each phase. College and career counselling advises students of their local and international options and helps them identify priorities for their next stages in life.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Very good 

- The school's leaders have established an effective educational programme for students with SEND. They maintain a large and qualified staff of specialists to support students and guide teachers. A well-qualified member of the governing board provides regular support for the team.
- Teachers in FS are very successful in identifying children requiring early interventions, thereby preventing further delays in their development. In other phases, the specialist staff work very closely with teachers and parents to identify students who are experiencing difficulty in learning, and to provide the best possible support to meet their educational needs.
- Parents, whose children receive additional support are well informed about their progress through frequent contact with the school. They are encouraged to participate in writing their children's individual education plans. Workshops are provided for parents to increase their knowledge and understanding of how best to help their children at home.
- Planning for students with SEND is matched to their individual needs, with appropriate modifications made to the curriculum. Support is mainly provided for them within the whole-class setting, with some students being withdrawn on occasion for specialist support.
- A large majority of students with SEND make good progress and sometimes better progress in all academic areas. This is attributable to the strong provision and the support of knowledgeable staff. The school's commitment to personal, social, and emotional progress is also very strong and supportive of students with SEND.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Very good

- The school's slogan of 'where every child is special' fully describes its inclusive nature and its central role to every decision that is made. The whole school community unequivocally support the school's direction. The detail of the school's direction is in the mission and vision, which are reviewed regularly and amended in light of changes in context, such as the introduction of the National Agenda.
- The leadership team, led by the principal, hold the complementary range of skills necessary for the academic improvement and social development of all students. They are successfully creating a learning culture within the school. Collectively, they have the skills necessary to prepare their students for the demands of the 21st century.
- Leadership is effectively delegated. Communication channels between leaders are clear and, although teaching and learning are not always central to all meetings, the separate discussions contribute to a well-informed view. The roles and responsibilities of the existing middle leadership team have been clearly redefined with the emphasis on exerting greater influence on academic improvement. It is a very happy school and morale is very positive.
- The school has a proven track record of developing its teachers as effective leaders. Leaders continue to promote the school's aspiration for life-long learning. They acknowledge the importance of recent international benchmark assessments and are increasingly aware of how these can be used as a basis for further school improvement.
- Collectively, leaders continue the school's improvement journey, displaying great determination and some creativity. However, despite some improvements, there has also been a decline in some areas, for example in mathematics and assessment in the primary phase. Accountability for individual aspects of school improvement is clearly understood by leaders. They ensure that the school complies fully with statutory and regulatory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good ↓

- Information regarding the school's performance is gathered from a wide range of sources. The information is successfully collated and synthesised to form the school's strengths and weaknesses. Key priorities are identified. However, the accuracy of judgements that school leaders make regarding attainment and progress is compromised by the quality of assessment, particularly in the primary phase.
- The systems for monitoring the quality of teaching are comprehensive and involve all levels of leadership. A range of strategies, from learning walks through to more formal lesson observations aligned to detailed rubrics, give consistent evidence, which leaders use to determine levels of support and training. These systems effectively evaluate teachers' performance, but do not sufficiently focus on students' progress.

- The whole school development plan prioritises improvement actions and is coherently adapted by phases and subjects. The plans detail the objectives for the year, fully reflecting the recommendations of previous external reviews, and are set in a longer time frame of the school's own improvement journey. They contain appropriate strategies but do not consistently reference measurable outcomes related to students' performance.
- There has been considerable progress in addressing most of the previous inspection's recommendations: the increased use of technology by students in their learning; the increasingly accurate analysis of external benchmarked assessments to identify students' strengths and weaknesses; and the effective use of learning support teachers in classes. These successes are enabling the school to sustain its good performance.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- The school is successful in engaging parents, especially mothers, as partners in their children's learning and in school life, particularly in the FS. Parents have confidence that the principal and teachers listen well to their opinions and take very good care of their children.
- The school uses a wide range of effective methods, including technology, to communicate with parents. Parents feel that the two-way communication with the school helps them stay informed about their children's overall progress and the school's activities. Parents of students with SEND are effectively engaged with the school as partners in the education of their children.
- Termly progress reports to parents are informative and useful in most respects, although they do not include information about students' next steps in learning. Nor do they invite comments from parents and students.
- The school has effective partnerships with the local and national communities. These include links with other schools, which are intended as a means of sharing good practice about teaching and learning. As yet, there are limited partnerships across international boundaries.

Governance

Good

- The composition of the governing body is wide in terms of its membership and rich in expertise. It includes the owner, a member of the senior leadership team, parents with business and finance skills and community members who have educational and youth development experiences. Student and parent surveys complement the in-depth knowledge that school leaders gain about how well the school is doing.
- The governing body systematically monitors school performance through termly meetings and reports from the principal. Members of the governing body also make scheduled and needs-determined visits to the school. For example, one governor meets weekly with the SEND department and another is involved in building plans. However, governors do not hold the school sufficiently to account for the accuracy of its student performance data.
- Members of the governing body are partnered with appropriate school departments and, as such, are able to exert a very strong influence on school performance and direction. Funding is readily provided to support initiatives such as providing additional staffing to promote the school's vision of an inclusive community. In this way, the governing body has a very positive impact on school performance.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Good

- The day-to-day management of the school is very effective. Use of limited space is maximised and timetabling ensures that appropriate resources are efficiently used and little learning time is lost. The experience and expertise of the Human Resources department supports the smooth running of the school.
- The school is well staffed to support its vision. Teachers hold appropriate qualifications and a comprehensive performance management system ensures staff skills are effectively developed, over time. Classroom assistants provide valuable support to teachers in most classes. Training is of high quality. There is an appropriate balance of sharing existing expertise with targeted external input. Enhancements have been made to the leadership team.
- Although the premises are constrained, leaders make good use of the limited space. This year, enhancements have been made to the accommodation. Most class sizes are appropriate for the available learning spaces. Specialist areas are also sufficient to support students' learning. Innovative use is made of the limited space by the creation of a vertical garden, which has been made from recycled materials.
- Resources are sufficient for the planned curriculum. A significant number of tablet devices support learning in the lower primary phase and complement the 'Bring Your Own Device' programme that is being developed from Year 5 onwards. New interactive whiteboards promote effective teaching and learning in the FS. A new school website provides enhanced communication with the community.

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	177
	2015-2016	173
 Teachers	62	
 Students	58	

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

- A smaller number of teachers and parents responded to the survey this year compared with last year.
- All teachers, most parents and at least a majority of students are very positive about all aspects of provision.
- There is a strong endorsement from parents and teachers for the personal, social and academic development of students, in line with the school's vision to provide a holistic and inclusive learning environment.
- The majority of students agree that there are opportunities to develop their leadership skills and to help in the decision-making process.
- A few parents are unsure as to whether the school helps students to keep safe on the internet or whether students with SEND are welcomed.
- A few parents comment on the difficulty faced by students attending the many after-school activities because of an absence of school transport.

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