




## The City School International Private

 Curriculum: UK

Overall Rating:

**Acceptable**



“We are keen to prepare the new generation that is ready to be creative and innovative to help us achieve our ambitions for even greater prosperity”

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



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## School information



General information	
Location	Nad Al Hamar
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2006
Website	<a href="http://thecityschool.sch.ae/">http://thecityschool.sch.ae/</a>
Telephone	00971-4-2899722
Address	DUBAI-NAD AL HAMAR- P.O.BOX:5760
Principal	Kaneez-e-Ali
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	7 to 9 November 2016

Teachers / Support staff	
Number of teachers	56
Largest nationality group of teachers	Pakistan
Number of teaching assistants	13
Teacher-student ratio	1:10
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	15%

Students	
Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-16
Grades or year groups	FS2-Grade 11
Number of students on roll	612
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	11
Number of students with SEND	6

Largest nationality group of students: Pakistani

Curriculum	
Educational permit / Licence	UK
This might be deleted	UK / IGCSE
Main curriculum	
External tests and examinations	IGCSE
Accreditation	none
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT



## 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.

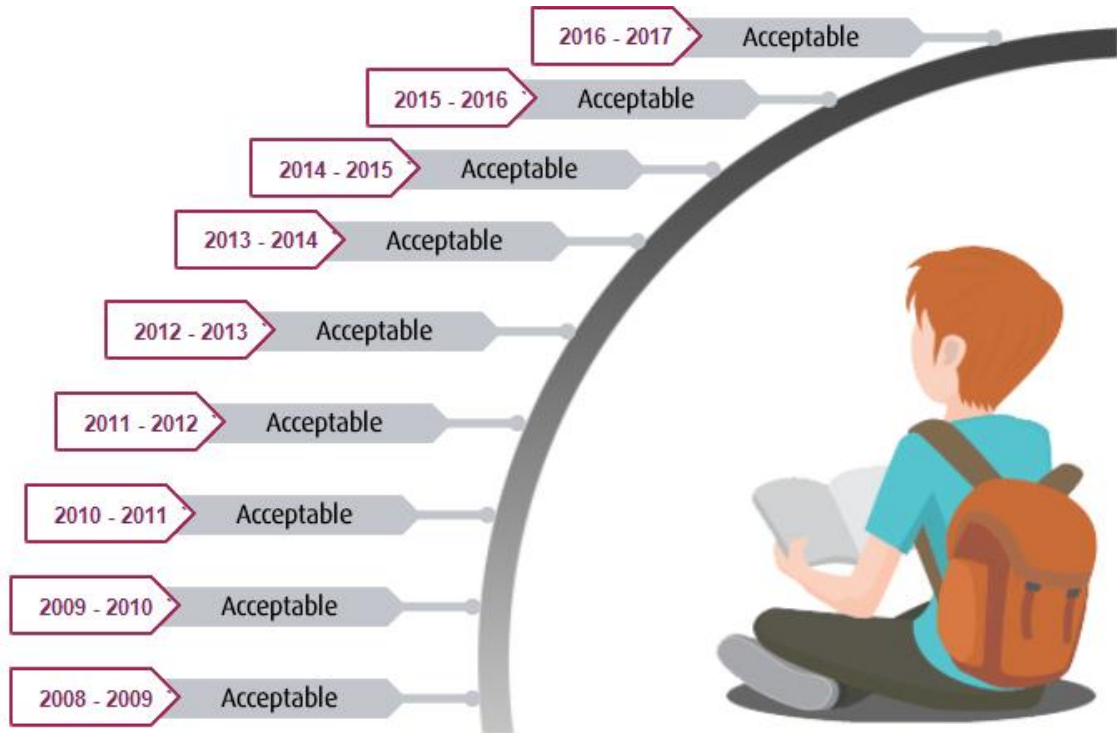
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students’ learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

### 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.

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

## Inspection journey for The City School International Private



- The school opened in 2006 and provides education for students from age four to 16. The number of students has fallen slightly in the last two years following a steady rise in previous years. The principal joined the school in January 2013. Teacher turnover in past years has been approximately 23 percent but in the current year has fallen to 15 percent.
- The school has remained acceptable in its overall effectiveness since the first inspection in 2009. However, notable improvements have been made in recent years. Improvement has been particularly evident in the attainment of older students in mathematics and science.
- Recommendations from recent inspections have repeatedly focused on improving student attainment and progress in Arabic, how well the school carries out assessment of students' attainment and the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation. At the last inspection, recommendations continued to focus on these recurring areas of weakness as well as the overall quality of provision for students in the primary phase and the effectiveness of the school's one year provision for children in the Foundation Stage (FS).

## Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



The City School International Private School was inspected by DSIB from 7 to 9 November 2016 . The overall quality of education provided by the school is **acceptable** . The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Students' attainment and progress are at least good and often very good in Islamic education, English, mathematics and science, in the primary and secondary phases. Attainment and progress in Arabic as a first and second language remains mainly acceptable but improvement is evident. In the FS, attainment and progress are acceptable in the core subjects. Students have positive attitudes to their learning. The ability to innovate and be enterprising is developing well, particularly in the secondary phase.
- Students in the secondary phase are self-reliant, demonstrate self-discipline in a range of situations and have an outstanding understanding of Islamic values. In other phases, these features of personal development are not as strong.
- Teaching is good in most phases and subjects. The exception to this is in the FS where teachers are less able to manage the class and use learning time effectively, which slows children's progress. Throughout the school, systems of assessment, including how well information is used to plan next steps in learning, are variable in their effectiveness.
- The school curriculum is broad and provides students with a good range of subjects and extra activities. In the FS, not enough attention has been given to how the curriculum should be modified to reflect the lack of prior school experience of most children. Throughout the school, modifications of the curriculum, to meet the needs of students of different ability, are not well enough embedded into lessons.
- Systems for the protection, care and guidance of students are good. The personal needs of students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are attended to well within this inclusive school. The quality of risk assessment, record keeping and the maintenance of school buildings and grounds requires development.
- Leaders and the governing board have set a clear direction and made appropriate plans for the school, which have resulted in a number of improvements. Leaders are committed to the UAE priorities and to the innovation agenda. They have not successfully tackled the barriers to improvement created by only one year of provision in the FS or improved the processes of self-evaluation. Leaders do not compare the school's effectiveness with that of other schools in Dubai or internationally.

### What the school does best

- Students make very good progress in mathematics, science and Islamic education, in secondary.
- The personal development of students in secondary is at least very good: they have an outstanding understanding and appreciation of Islamic values and this has a positive impact on their attainment in Islamic education.
- Students in secondary are provided with a rich and varied curriculum, which provides very good opportunities to extend their learning beyond the school and enables them to link learning across different subjects.
- Students' ICT skills are very well developed. As a result, students are able to develop good research skills and make innovative use of technologies to extend their learning in a range of subjects.

### Recommendations

- Improve attainment and the rate of progress in FS by:
  - ascertaining an accurate baseline of children's attainment on entry to the school and using this information to plan appropriate activities that result in good progress for all children
  - improving staff expertise and understanding of the early years curriculum linked to the school's curriculum licence
  - improving class management and the efficient use of time for learning.
- Improve the use of external national and international benchmarks to enable the school to accurately evaluate performance against other schools in Dubai and internationally.
- Improve the processes of assessment to obtain the information needed to moderate the curriculum so that it is a close match to the revised expectations of the school's curriculum and provides the correct level of support and challenge for students in lessons.
- Clarify the school's vision and commitment to the inclusion of students with SEND by carrying out a review of current policies related to admission, curriculum modification, resources and progression.

## 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 based on the National Agenda Parameter benchmarks is inconclusive, as the data is not statistically reliable.
- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter (N.A.P).
- As the data from the benchmark tests is not secure, the information necessary to inform future planning is unreliable. Heads of Department use the data available to them to make alignments to the curriculum. As any changes made are based on the available data, it means that they are limited in their ability to accurately align the curriculum to TIMSS and PISA.
- The school have made adjustments to teaching strategies based on the N.A.P tests but this is limited in impact due to the unreliable nature of the test results. The school has begun to adapt teaching strategies with some success to meet the needs of the students based on the results of tests carried out to identify students' individual learning styles.
- Students are informed of their results on the National Agenda Parameter. However, as results are deemed to be statistically unreliable they may not reflect accurate attainment levels. There is an increasing focus on the use of resources to develop research skills. ICT is playing an increasingly important role and in some lessons the learning is supported through the use of tablet computers and mobile phones.







Overall, the school's progress towards meeting the National Agenda target is not secure.



Overall school performance

Acceptable

1 Students' achievement

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

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

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

## 3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable ↓	Good ↑	Good
Assessment	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓

## 4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good ↓	Good	Very good
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓
Care and support	Good	Good ↑	Good

## 6. Leadership and management

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

# Main inspection report



## 1. Students' achievement

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	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓
Science	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- In lessons, most children demonstrate levels of knowledge and understanding in English language development that are in line with age related expectations. This is also confirmed by the school's own data. There are regular opportunities for children to improve their vocabulary through speaking and listening. This supports those who speak English as an additional language to acquire communication skills and proficiency steadily. However, children's phonic skills are not well developed and this has a negative impact on their early reading and writing ability. Most children are making expected progress in all aspects of their early literacy in lessons and over time.
- Evidence in lessons and from the school's internal data indicates that most children's understanding of mathematical concepts is in line with age related curriculum expectations. Children are gradually acquiring the key skills of counting, reading and writing numbers, and identifying a range of basic shapes. Only a few children are able to attempt the development of early calculation skills using practical equipment. During their short time in school most children have made steady progress in all aspects of numeracy.
- Most children's understanding of scientific concepts is in line with age related curriculum expectations. This is evident both in lessons and in the school's own records of assessment. They demonstrate a natural curiosity about things in their environment, but do not yet have the skills needed to independently make comparisons or explain why some things may occur. Evidence collected from children's workbooks and during observations indicates that most children make the expected progress in their scientific knowledge and understanding in relation to their starting points and as measured against lesson learning objectives.

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

- The school's data shows that, in Islamic education, most students are attaining above curriculum standards. However, in lessons and in their class work, only a majority of students do so. The majority of students make good progress in lessons and over time. They show strong levels of understanding of the Prophet's (PBUH) life and the values of Islam. They understand simple Hadeeth (the Prophet's sayings) and recite short verses from the Holy Qur'an.
- The school's internal assessment data for Arabic as a first language shows that most students attain levels that are above Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum standards. However, in lessons and samples of students' work, the attainment of most is in line with expectations. Overall, students' progress in lessons and in work samples is good, compared to their starting points, although the girls generally do better than the boys. Students understand spoken language and respond using short sentences and familiar words. They can read short texts for main ideas and details. Their writing skill is developing at an adequate rate.
- In lessons, most students attain standards in Arabic as an additional language that are in line with the curriculum expectations. The high results of internal examinations are not reflected in the standard of students' work over time. Students show adequate skills in reading. Writing skills are improving but remain at an acceptable level. Progress against students' starting points is acceptable and better when learning is supported by the use of more effective strategies such as deploying games. Students with SEND are making slower progress..
- In English, the majority of students make better than expected progress, when measured against their starting points. Although there is variation in some year groups, attainment for the majority of students is above curriculum standards. This is consistent with the school's internal assessments and inspection evidence, although below the attainment indicated by external tests. While reading, speaking and listening skills develop particularly well, weaknesses in comprehension, spelling and grammar have an adverse impact on extended writing.
- In mathematics, a majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards and a large majority make better than expected progress. In the external Cambridge Checkpoint examinations at the end of Year 6, almost all students attain above curriculum standards. In lessons, and in their written work, attainment is good and progress very good. Progress is best in those lessons where teachers understand the ability levels of the students and set work, which is both challenging and meets their needs. Levels of attainment, over time, are consistently good.

- In science, external data measured by Cambridge Checkpoint tests, indicates that most students attain levels above curriculum standards. This does not match the evidence from internal data, lessons or students work where a smaller majority of students attain above curriculum standards. Although students make good progress in lessons and over time, attainment is not better because students are not consistently challenged. Students with SEND make at least acceptable progress when they receive well targeted support.

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

- A majority of students in Islamic education demonstrate levels of attainment above MoE curriculum expectations in lessons and work samples. Internal assessment data shows significantly higher proportions of students doing so. The students have a good understanding of the Prophet's (PBUH) life. They show strong understanding of the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth. They can refer to them for evidence of Islamic values and rulings. However, they still have difficulty in reciting prescribed verses applying the rules of recitations. In lessons and the quality of work produced, those students for whom Arabic is a second language, make very good progress, which is slightly higher than those for whom it is a first language.
- The school's internal data shows almost all students' attainment in Arabic as a first language is above curriculum standards. However, in lessons and work samples, attainment is not as high and most students attain in line with curriculum expectations. Students can understand different types of texts and recognise the attitudes and opinions of the writer. They can respond appropriately in written and spoken forms using correct sentences and unfamiliar words. However, their free writing is often incoherent, and their spelling and grammar are weak. Students make acceptable progress in lessons and over time in work samples.
- In Arabic as an additional language, during lesson observations, review of assessment data and in their work, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. Their language skills are acceptable, although writing is less secure and limited to writing simple repeated sentences. Progress is better when students are more engaged and when topics are age appropriate and interesting. The school's tracking of data confirms progress to be acceptable. Girls make slightly better progress than boys.

- In English, internal assessments and inspection evidence show that the majority of students attain at levels which are above curriculum standards and they continue to make good progress. Because progress accelerates in the upper years of secondary, most students achieve IGCSE results above curriculum expectations. Trends over recent years show that this is a consistent pattern. In Year 11, reading, speaking and listening skills are particularly well developed. Extended writing skills, although below the other skills, are improving. These differences in relative attainment in the four skills are more pronounced in lower secondary.
- In mathematics, a large majority of students attain above curriculum expectations and make very good progress. In Year 11, all students attain above expectations, as exemplified by the IGCSE results. In class, most students are able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding both in their written work and verbally. Progress in lessons is very good particularly when the students are challenged by higher order thinking tasks and lesson objectives are clearly stated. Over time, attainment is consistent with international standards and there are no significant differences in performance between different groups of students.
- The attainment of almost all students in science subjects is above curriculum standards in the IGCSE examinations at the end of Year 11 and in Cambridge Checkpoint results in Year 9. The school's internal data and inspection evidence from lessons and students work indicate that progress is very good. As a result, a large majority attain above curriculum standards. Students' knowledge, skills and understanding require further development to help them explore concepts in depth and interrogate investigation data effectively, especially in physics.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills	Acceptable ↓	Good ↑	Good

- Students show real enthusiasm for learning and want to do well. They take responsibility for their learning by evaluating their work so that they know their strengths and also what they need to do to improve. Individual targets are valued and provide an additional personal focus and stimulus to students' learning.
- Communication skills are well developed in secondary but only at an early stage of development for FS children and lower primary students who often need time to formulate and explain their ideas to their classmates. Students enjoy working in groups, especially in practical activities such as scientific investigations and research; in Arabic, cooperative group work is not consistently seen.
- Using real world examples to make learning more relevant is a strong focus in the school. A Year 4 science lesson looked for examples of practical soundproofing in the home, including using egg cartons. Students' ability to make links between subject areas such as English, mathematics and social studies are good, but other subject links are not as clearly defined.
- Students make effective use of ICT in the classroom to carry out a wide variety of research projects in English and science, developing their problem solving and critical thinking skills effectively. Students show initiative and lively enterprise in class and outside of lessons including projects such as the space project and the FS city garden.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal development	Good ↓	Good ↓	Very good

- Students have positive attitudes to learning. They seek and respond well to critical feedback. They enjoy school and most willingly take responsibility for their own learning, particularly in the secondary phase. In other phases, when teaching does not capture their interest, students do not have the self-discipline to continue to make good progress.
- Most students are well behaved. For the most part this results in a harmonious learning community. In the FS and primary phases children and students do not always demonstrate the ability to manage their own behaviour and this slows their progress.
- Almost all students across the school are courteous and treat teachers and peers with respect. Relationships are strong. Students enjoy taking leadership roles to support the school and their peers in building a culture of innovation and enterprise. They clearly explain the high aspirations they have for their future and that of their school.
- The adoption of healthy lifestyles is good. Students fully understand the importance of eating healthy food and taking regular exercise and they put this knowledge into practice in their daily lives.
- Attendance and punctuality to lessons are good. Students understand the value of education and consequently most attend regularly.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Very good	Outstanding

- Students, across the school, have an excellent understanding of the values of Islam and their relevance to life in the UAE. They talk about values such as modesty, equality and tolerance. The younger students talk about the values they learn as they fast in the month of Ramadan, such as patience and empathy with less fortunate members of the community.
- Most students show a very well developed understanding of Emirati heritage and culture. They explain how life in Dubai has changed rapidly to become one of the most important cities in the world. Children in FS can talk cogently about some of famous places in Dubai.
- Across the phases, students show great appreciation of cultural diversity in Dubai. They are proud of their own culture and are well aware of cultural differences. Senior students demonstrate a deeper knowledge of international cultures, such as those in Japan and Europe, than younger students.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Very good

- Students contribute actively to the school and wider community especially in secondary. They participate in projects through the 'social club', such as the box appeal. Older students are willing volunteers in their support for orphans in their work with Dubai Care. Students across the school take on leadership responsibilities such as those associated with the innovation team.
- Most students have a positive work ethic. Secondary students initiate many projects, such as the bake sale. Younger students are happy to participate but are not yet as adept at initiating their own projects. Students, especially those in higher year groups, are well versed in making economic decisions and understand the implications of enterprise and entrepreneurship.
- Students are highly interested in environmental projects such as recycling and cleaning the school. Many of them contribute to planting in the garden and the reusing of the plastic bottles. They are keen and know a lot about global warming and the danger of this for different countries. However, younger students' awareness is limited to simple projects and contributions.

### 3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable ↓	Good ↑	Good

- Most teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well to plan lessons that engage and stimulate students. In a few lessons, weaknesses in understanding how students learn best result in activities that are not stimulating and this reduces the progress students make. In FS, a limited understanding of how to teach phonics inhibits the development of the spoken and written language of children.
- There is a common format for lesson planning across all phases with clear learning objectives linked to curriculum requirements. Most lessons proceed at a lively pace that helps keep students focused on their learning. Some learning activities are too long in the FS and children's attention is lost as a result. Resources for investigations and research using ICT are acceptable and used effectively.
- Good relationships between staff and students underpin the very positive learning ethos in classrooms throughout the school. Teachers' skills in promoting lively discussions are developing but not consistent across all phases and subjects. Where questions are used well, discussions develop quickly and extend critical thinking skills.
- Teachers' strategies to promote effective learning for all students is inconsistent. Challenging tasks are not always planned for the most able to accelerate their progress and support for those who find learning difficult is also variable. Research projects and extension activities are used well to extend learning in primary and secondary. In FS, only limited opportunities are provided for children to explore and investigate.

- Problem solving, through investigations for primary students and experiments for older students is well planned and linked interestingly to real world examples. Many opportunities are provided for students to develop innovative ideas and develop their leadership skills.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Assessment	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓

- Internal assessment procedures are, in the main, aligned to the school's curriculum standards. The school operates baseline assessments, which are then compared effectively to subsequent assessments throughout the school year, in order to measure students' progress. Insufficient attention has been given to modifying assessment criteria to reflect the recent increased expectations of the school's curriculum.
- The school uses International Benchmark Tests (IBT) and other external tests to measure outcomes against national and international expectations. However, they are not maximising the potential of the tests. It is difficult, therefore, for the school to have an understanding of how attainment in the school compares with that of students in other schools in Dubai operating either the same or different curricula.
- Heads of department track all students, in some detail, in order to monitor both progress and attainment. The school's tracking system is used well in most, but not all, subjects to highlight any potential anomalies in student performance. However, it is based mainly on performance in internal assessments and does not allow sufficiently for comparisons with the performance of students in other schools.
- The school analyses assessment data thoroughly to inform adaptations to the curriculum, but these modifications are based solely on the evidence from the results of internal assessments. Data from the benchmark tests do not provide all the necessary information required to influence teaching and meet the needs of all students.
- All teachers have a reasonable knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their students with the exception of FS, where teachers are not as well informed. Teachers are starting to plan their lessons according to the needs, and the preferred learning styles of the students but this is not consistent. Feedback is variable and not used regularly to provide appropriate challenge and support across all subjects and phases.

#### 4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good ↓	Good	Very good

- The curriculum is relevant to the needs of most students. It meets both school and national requirements. In FS, the curriculum provides a reasonable balance between the development of knowledge and skills. Opportunities to connect learning with real life experiences are more consistently seen in secondary, as are opportunities for students to direct their own learning through inquiry and research.

- The curriculum is sequenced well to build on students' previous experiences and prepare them for the next stage of their education. Older students are well prepared to continue their studies beyond school. The curriculum ensures continuity in learning with increasing levels of complexity as students move through the school. Effective curriculum planning supports the transition and continuity of students' learning between phases.
- Curricular options offer older students a suitable range of choices to pursue their interests and aspirations. The choices available to children in FS during free-flow activities are not always challenging enough to promote good learning. Opportunities for students to develop their talents and interests are extended by a variety of clubs and extra-curricular activities, including a range of sporting activities.
- Cross-curricular links enable students to develop their knowledge and skills in different contexts. Good quality displays in corridors and classrooms demonstrate the meaningful links made across many subjects, particularly in the secondary phase. These include, for example, the application of literacy, numeracy, technology and presentational skills in social studies for researching the history, geography, economy and culture of the UAE.
- The curriculum is reviewed at regular intervals. It is monitored for its effectiveness in relation to students' achievement. The impact of these reviews is more apparent in secondary where there is a more consistent approach to the development of higher order critical thinking skills. Assessment rubrics provide the benchmarks against which the success of the curriculum in meeting students' needs is measured.
- The curriculum of UAE social studies is drawn from the MoE curriculum. It is carefully planned to provide students with meaningful learning experiences. It is based on the development of knowledge and understanding with a thoughtful balance of concepts and skills. The curriculum provides continuity and progression, with increasing depth in the coverage of concepts. Students are aware of the assessment criteria and are given guidance on how to improve. UAE social studies is assessed through project work and presentations, to ensure that students make progress.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Adequate adaptations are made to the curriculum to meet the needs of students. However, there is inconsistency in the extent to which teachers modify work to match students' learning needs. There is also inconsistency in the extent to which subject planning takes account of the demands of the recently amended National Curriculum for England. The curriculum in FS has not been amended sufficiently to take account of children's lack of prior educational experience.
- The school has implemented some new initiatives to extend the curriculum. These include the provision of a variety of additional clubs and enrichment activities. However, those relating to sport and music are restricted by the limitations of the school site. Students' personal and academic development is enhanced through assemblies, visiting speakers, residential visits and field trips. Innovation, leadership and enterprise are promoted through, for example, the 'Model United Nations'.

- The development of students' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the heritage and culture of the UAE are fully integrated into both school and classroom activities. Students' learning is enhanced through, for example, the celebration of National Day, guest speakers from the Sheikh Mohammed Centre for Cultural Understanding, and visits to the Dubai Heritage Village, mosques and local businesses.
- Arabic is taught in FS for one hour per week. Teaching focuses on letter recognition, high frequency words and numbers. Topic work is linked to the topics being taught in English.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓

- The school has effective procedures for safeguarding students. A child protection policy is in place and is known to staff and students. A few parents raised concerns about how incidents of bullying are dealt with. Inspection evidence confirms that systems to address issues of bullying either in school or through social media are in place and understood.
- A positive ethos in which students feel safe and secure predominates throughout the school. School transport arrangements meet requirements. Bus drivers are trained by the local civil defence and expectations for behaviour are clear and adhered to by most students. Fire evacuation procedures are practiced regularly. However, equipment both in school and on buses is not routinely kept up to date through regular systematic checks.
- The quality of maintenance and record keeping is acceptable overall. Students' medical files are computerised, detailed and regularly updated. The quality of risk assessment and record keeping relating to the maintenance of school buildings and grounds are not thorough or rigorous. As a result, a number of maintenance issues were addressed when brought to the attention of the school during the inspection.
- The premises are, in the main, fit for purpose including for those with mobility difficulties. Ramps are present in the playground. Site security is managed well. Systems for the storage of medicines are good and safe practices are followed in the science laboratories.
- The provision for, and promotion of, safe and healthy living is good. The school canteen provides healthy meals and several displays, present in the hallways, raise awareness of different diets and diseases. The school nurse further promotes awareness through sessions relating to various health related topics. The curriculum includes opportunities for regular exercise but this is restricted by limited facilities.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Care and support	Good	Good ↑	Good

- An atmosphere of mutual respect between students and staff permeates the school. Staff know their students well and are aware of individual needs. There are effective systems and clear policies for managing and monitoring behaviour, although occasionally these are not effectively applied in FS classes. Students are well aware of the school's expectations and this is reflected in the mainly calm and purposeful life of the school.
- Accurate records are kept of student attendance and punctuality. Systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality are effective. Parents are quickly notified of any concerns about individual students.
- The school is developing further its systems for the identification of students with SEND. Policies, assessments and processes are in place for their admission, inclusion, and learning support requirements. Relatively few students who are gifted and talented have been identified. The school is aware of the need to include more students in this category and to provide them with greater support and challenge.
- The school plans well for the support for students with SEND. Specialised well-qualified staff and a few lead teachers are now in place to help achieve this. Although modifications to meet individual needs are beginning to have an impact they are not consistently applied in some lessons.
- The school has strong systems for monitoring the well-being and personal development of students. The good relationships within the school give students the confidence to ask for support when necessary. The school and outside institutions provide excellent advice and guidance regarding career choices for older students who greatly appreciate and value the advice given.

## Inclusion

### Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Acceptable

- Overall, the provision for students with SEND is acceptable. The experienced new leader, together with a small group of team leaders from several of the core subjects, are starting to initiate changes which are developing a more positive approach to inclusion. This has not yet impacted in meeting the learning needs of all students in mainstream classrooms.
- Policies and additional assessments are now in place to support more rigorous identification of SEND students, with outside agencies contributing to the process as required. A system is also in place for identifying students with gifts and talents although the school recognises that this is in its early stages of development with the impact more evident in the outcomes for secondary students than primary.

- The recent changes in the leadership of the department are enhancing further the school's effective partnerships with parents of children with SEND. Explaining the school's SEND policy, sending regular emails, and developing accessible personal learning goals, has led to parents reporting that these new plans are valuable forms of guidance. Parents say that this guidance assists them in supporting their children at home.
- Effective support is available in the withdrawal lessons during the school day. The individual education plans (IEPs) and personal learning plans (PLPs) target most aspects of learning and personal development of students. However, the majority of teachers have not developed expertise in successfully applying them in their classes. Consequently, curriculum modifications in most lessons do not meet the various individual learning needs of identified students.
- Overall, students with SEND make acceptable progress in the majority of core subjects and in some other subjects. The tracking of progress is being further developed to accommodate the targets set in each student's learning plans.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- Most senior and middle leaders use their knowledge and expertise well to set a clear direction for improvement. The school's vision and mission statement demonstrate leaders' strong commitment to the UAE priorities. Leaders are committed to inclusion. They fulfil their aim to provide students with SEND the opportunity to fully participate in educational programs.
- Leaders' enthusiasm for learning and commitment to innovative practice has a positive impact on students' learning and personal development. In their teaching, subject leaders act as good role models and use their comprehensive knowledge of their subjects to raise standards of attainment. Leaders understand the importance of accurate assessment but have not been successful in establishing consistency in how assessment information is used throughout the school.
- Regular meetings and clear records of decisions contribute to effective channels of communication. Job descriptions make delegated responsibilities clear. Leaders at all levels have shared responsibility to bring about improvement. They hold each other to account through questions and challenge linked to the analysis of students' attainment. Moral is high among staff in the school.
- The barrier to improvement, resulting from the one-year programme in FS, has not been successfully addressed. As a result, provision and outcomes in this phase have declined. Nevertheless, leaders demonstrate their capacity to drive improvement across the school, through actions which have resulted in improved attainment in Arabic as an additional language and in the quality of teaching in the primary phase.
- Leaders' commitment to innovation has successfully maintained, and further built upon, the good and very good attainment and progress of students in a number of subjects, and in the development of students' technology skills. Leaders have ensured that the school is compliant with statutory requirements but have not overcome the barriers posed to learning by the limitations within the school building and facilities.

**School self-evaluation and improvement planning**

Acceptable

- The school uses a range of internal and external data within the self-evaluation process. No external comparisons are used to moderate internal data for Islamic education or Arabic. In other subjects, whilst national and international data is gathered, this is not fully supporting an accurate evaluation of how the school is doing in comparison with other schools in Dubai and internationally.
- Teaching is regularly monitored. Increasingly, the quality of teaching is evaluated based on its impact on student learning and strengths and weaknesses are identified. However, this does not transfer clearly into the targets which teachers are given for improvement. Judgements from the self-evaluation process do not fully reflect the weaknesses identified. Consequently, the school continues to have an over generous evaluation of the effectiveness of some staff.
- School improvement plans are, in the main, based upon the findings of previous inspections. Whilst in some subjects, such as English, there are clear plans for improvement, other sections of the plan are generic and not sufficiently time limited. Despite this weakness, good attention is given to UAE priorities and some actions have resulted in a positive impact on student achievement.
- The actions taken by the school to address the recommendations of the previous inspection have met with some success. For example, improving attainment in Arabic as an additional language and improvements in the quality of teaching in primary. Other actions including those relating to assessment and the FS have not led to improvement.

**Partnerships with parents and the community**

Good

- School leaders and staff enjoy a positive partnership with parents, recognising them as partners in their children's learning. The views of parents are sought on proposed changes and their suggestions are taken into account when school improvement decisions are made. Parental involvement positively contributes to raising standards in the school.
- Communication with parents is regular and effective. Parents appreciate receiving details relating to events, test dates, homework schedules and topics that will be studied in class a month in advance. Teachers and senior leaders are easily accessible to parents. Communication with the parents of children who have SEND is particularly effective and parents feel well supported.
- Progress reports regularly inform parents about their children's achievement. In the primary and secondary phases, they explain and celebrate students' academic strengths, and also identify areas that they need to improve. Comments related to students' personal and social development are not consistently included in written reports. Reports to parents of children in FS do not clearly explain what children know and understand or what they need to learn next.
- The school enjoys strong partnerships with various stakeholders and the local community. These partnerships have been very productive in enhancing and improving learning experiences for most students.

**Governance**

Good

- The governing board is representative of most stakeholders. The board supplements their expertise through the use of consultants when appropriate. Stakeholders' views, including those of parents, are sought and carefully considered. This provides the board with a comprehensive, but not always fully accurate view of the school's effectiveness.
- The governing board regularly monitors the work of the school through reports from the principal, the general manager and through the reporting of school data. The information provided ensures that the board have an awareness of strengths and weaknesses within the school. However, processes of self-evaluation are not rigorous enough to enable the board to fully hold the school to account.
- The governing board has supported school leaders in the drive for improvement. They have provided the resources needed to follow the innovation agenda and improve students' higher order skills. This is having a positive impact on student achievement. The board have taken action to address the issues relating to the one year provision in FS but this has not been in place long enough to have had a positive impact.

**Management, staffing, facilities and resources**




Acceptable

- Most aspects of school operations run efficiently and smoothly. Day-to-day management of the school is well-organised and timetabling is effective to ensure students' learning experiences are positive. Management systems related to site maintenance are not rigorous enough.
- Most members of the teaching staff are suitably qualified, although experience and expertise of staff in FS are not linked closely to the early years aspect of the school's licenced curriculum. The majority of teachers, including specialists supporting students with SEND, have relevant subject expertise appropriate to their deployment. Teachers benefit from regular professional development aligned to the school's priorities.
- The premises are adequate but restricted by the size of the site. Two temporary classrooms provide much needed space but are not conducive to effective learning. A few classrooms, including the music room are cramped and the indoor physical education provision is limiting. Access into, and within, the school premises has recently been improved. The environment adequately supports teaching and learning.
- The school is suitably equipped with resources to meet the requirements of most areas of the curriculum. Resources to support students with SEND and to fully deliver curriculum expectations in music and physical education are inadequate.

## 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	
<b>Parents*</b> 	2016-2017	113
	2015-2016	296
<b>Teachers</b> 	42	
<b>Students</b> 	39	

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

- Almost all parents, who responded to the survey, are satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school; they say that their children enjoy school and that they learn well most of the time.
- A few parents express concern about the care provided for their children and do not agree that the school deals well with issues of bullying.
- Almost all parents agree that the school promotes a love of literacy and reading in English but a few parents do not agree that this is also true when reading in Arabic.
- A large majority of students, who responded to the survey, and almost all parents agree that the school helps students to develop a good awareness of Islamic values.
- Almost all teachers responding to the survey expressed positive views regarding all aspects of the school.

### 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](mailto:inspection@khda.gov.ae)