

Inspection Report



Al Mizhar American Academy School

2014-2015



إكسبو 2020 دبي
دبي، الإمارات العربية المتحدة
DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

www.khda.gov.ae



CONTENTS

School Information	2
Parents' Report	3
School Inspection Report	9
Overall school judgement	10
Key strengths	10
Changes since the last inspection.....	10
Recommendations	10
How good are the students' attainment, progress and learning skills?.....	11
How good is the students' personal and social development?	14
How good are teaching and assessment?.....	15
How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?.....	16
How well does the school protect and support students?	17
How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?.....	18
How good are the leadership and management of the school?	18
What are the views of the Principal, parents, teachers and students?.....	21
What happens next?	22
How to contact us	22

School information



General information

Location	Al Mizhar
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2005
Website	www.americanacademy.ae
Telephone	04-2887250
Address	Mizhar 1 Dubai
Principal	Bridget Justen
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	23 rd to 26 th March 2015



Students

Gender of students	Girls
Age range	3-18
Grades or year groups	Pre-K - Grade 12
Number of students on roll	678
Number of children in Pre-K	19 (Boys and Girls)
Number of Emirati students	416
Number of students with SEN	32
Largest nationality group of students	Emirati



Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	64
Largest nationality group of teachers	American
Number of teacher assistants	22
Teacher-student ratio	1:10
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	18%



Curriculum

Educational Permit	US
Main Curriculum / Other	US
Standardized tests / board exams	MAP, SAT1
Accreditation	NEASC, CIS



Parents' Report

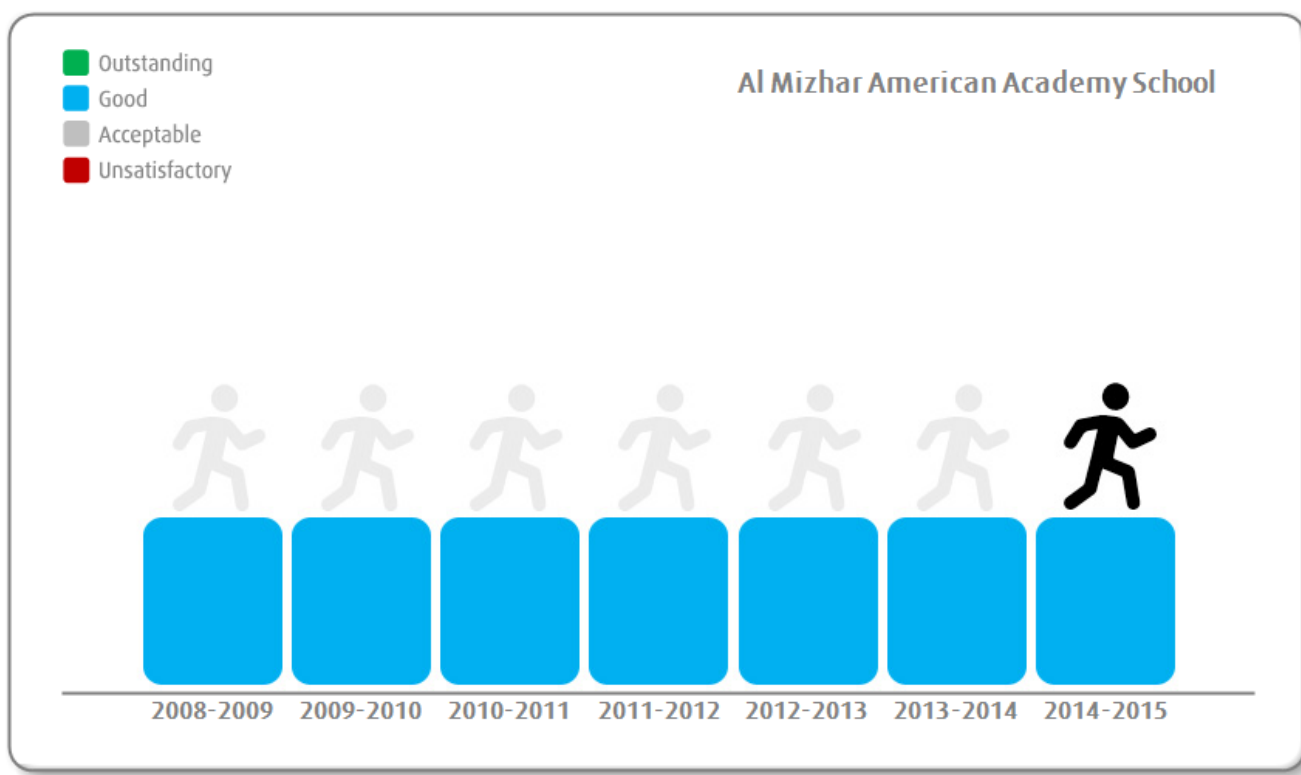




Dear Parents,

Al Mizhar American Academy School was inspected by DSIB from 23rd to 26th March 2015, and the overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **Good**

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



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

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

Strengths

- The teaching, learning skills, assessment and the curriculum in the elementary, middle and high school phases were good.
- Students maintained good attainment and progress in Islamic Education and English, and good progress in science.
- The recently-appointed Principal was committed to implementing a new vision for students to enable them to realize their true potential. The effectiveness of leadership and the management of the schools staffing, facilities and resources were of good quality.
- The health and safety of students was a continued strength of the school.
- The school gave good support to students with special sensory needs.

Areas for improvement

- Improve the learning of Kindergarten children by using better teaching and keeping track of each student's gains in knowledge, skills and social development.
- Improve the teaching of Arabic in the High School.
- Ensure the Board of Governors supports the new leadership of the school to bring about improvements and provide a place for parents, students and teachers to voice their ideas.
- Improve systems to self-evaluate the school and its progress.

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

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

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

Yours sincerely,

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau
Knowledge and Human Development Authority

A closer look at Al Mizhar American Academy School



How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, Al Mizhar American Academy School provided a **'good'** quality of education for its students.





- Students' attainment and progress were mostly good across all subjects and phases. Exceptions were the Kindergarten phase, attainment and progress in Arabic in the high school phase, and in Mathematics in middle phase which were acceptable. Students in the upper three phases were interested learners. They took on challenges and showed responsibility for their own learning.
- Students demonstrated good personal relationships, and a clear understanding of Islamic values. They were aware of their own culture, and had a developing understanding of diverse world cultures.
- Teachers used a variety of activities and approaches to engage students. They knew students well, and used assessment information to adjust their approaches for different learners.
- Teachers were familiar with the US Curriculum taught in key subjects, and utilized curricular approaches well to engage students. Adaptations were made for students with special educational needs. There was room for further development in personalizing curricular modifications and incorporating enrichment.
- The school provided a good, caring environment, where students' health and safety were key priorities.
- Partnerships with parents, and the quality of staffing, resources and facilities were good. There had been changes to leadership. However, the effectiveness of leadership remained good overall.



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

- Students with special educational needs made acceptable progress overall. The school was committed to making the necessary improvements in all key subjects.
- Good arrangements were in place to identify students' needs in elementary and middle phases. However, the Kindergarten phase lacked appropriate policies and procedures. The process of early identification of children with special educational needs was not secure.
- Curriculum modification and support was effective in some lessons, especially when teachers referred to individual education plans and were familiar with students' specific needs.

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

		KG	Elementary	Middle	High
 Islamic Education	Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Good
 Arabic as a First Language	Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Acceptable ↓
	Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Acceptable ↓
 Arabic as an Additional Language	Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓
	Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Acceptable ↓
 English	Attainment	Acceptable ↓	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
 Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable ↓	Good	Acceptable ↓	Good
	Progress	Acceptable ↓	Good	Acceptable ↓	Good
 Science	Attainment	Acceptable ↓	Good	Good	Acceptable ↓
	Progress	Acceptable ↓	Good	Good	Good
		KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills		Acceptable ↓	Good	Good	Good

↑ Improved from last inspection

↓ Declined from last inspection

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal responsibility	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓
Community and environmental responsibility	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓

3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable ↓	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Acceptable ↓	Good	Good	Good

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum quality	Acceptable ↓	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety	Good	Good	Good	Good
Quality of support	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓

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

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

The background of the entire page is a dense, repeating pattern of white line-art icons on a blue background. The icons represent various educational fields: science (flasks, atoms, globes), mathematics (rulers, plus and minus signs), music (musical notes), art (sketchbooks, pencils), and general school supplies (backpacks, notebooks, envelopes).

School Inspection Report

Overall school judgement

Good

Key strengths


- The school had maintained the quality of teaching, development of learning skills, assessment strategies and curriculum in the elementary, middle and high phases, from the previous school year.
- Students maintained good attainment and progress in Islamic Education and English, and good progress in science.
- The recently-appointed Principal was committed to implementing a new vision for students to enable them to realize their true potential. The effectiveness of leadership and the management of the school's staffing, facilities and resources were good.
- The school continued its consistently good approach to the health and safety of students.
- Students with sensory impairments were well supported.
- Parents were committed to their current and potential involvement in the school's improvement journey.

Changes since the last inspection

- The school community was adversely affected by the lack of focused and sustained leadership at the beginning of the academic year.
- There were significant differences in the quality of provision and the outcomes for children in the Kindergarten compared with the previous years.
- Provision in a number of areas had declined. Students' personal and social development, and the quality of support had dropped from outstanding to good overall, while the design of the curriculum to meet the individual needs of students had declined to acceptable.

Recommendations

- Revitalize the Kindergarten phase with better leadership, teaching, and more detailed assessment of the skills, knowledge, content and developmental milestones achieved by each child.
- Governors must ensure that the significant changes that were made, and were still required, serve the needs of every student by:
 - creating a school climate and culture that enables every student, teacher and parent to have a voice regarding the changes in the school
 - enabling leaders to create and manage school improvements
 - enabling the professionalism and care that is being shown by the school's talented teachers to be developed, supported and retained across the school.
- Thoroughly re-examine self-evaluation processes linked to accurate staff appraisal and training, to provide an informed overview of current strengths and future needs and effectively plan for school improvement.
- Improve the teaching of Arabic in the high school phase, particularly in reading comprehension and writing skills by linking assessment to curriculum expectations.

 Improved from last inspection

 Declined from last inspection

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

KG

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



- In English, most children had adequate speaking skills; they spoke in complete sentences. They engaged in group reading activities; they identified the main topic and were able to retell some details of the story. Most used letters and phonetically spelled words with reasonable accuracy; they could effectively write about people, objects or events by the end of this phase.
- During mathematics lessons, most children represented addition and subtraction in various ways; they used objects, fingers, drawings or equations. However, too few concrete materials were available; children's chances of confidently identifying patterns of common objects and describing geometric features in their environment was restricted.
- In science, most children were developing some understanding of the world around them. They understood weather changes. They had some understanding of the different types of plants and animals that inhabited the earth. They accurately described the physical properties of materials, color, weight, texture and the nature of liquids and solids; they were starting to develop skills of observation and investigation.

Elementary

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

- In Islamic Education, the majority of students had a strong knowledge of the key concepts in Islam. Their level of understanding of the Pillars of Islam and the Pillar of Faith were better than expected; they had detailed knowledge of praying and fasting. They were secure in their knowledge of Seerah; they had developed a stronger understanding of the Prophet's (PBUH) companions and followers.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students were able to understand the extended and complex meaning of what they heard, and answer independently in a meaningful manner. Students' writing skills were acceptable; in their free writing they wrote with improving quality on a range of topics. Most students improved their reading comprehension skills by the end of this phase.

- In Arabic as an additional language, students' listening, speaking, and reading skills were strong; they showed improvement over time. Most students spoke with confidence; they were able to engage in genuine conversations about familiar contexts with their peers. Most students were able to write a few sentences about familiar situations.
- In English, creative assignments developed writing skills; projects such as the Grade 3 narrative story assignment, was written from the perspective of an inventor. Most students in the upper elementary grades demonstrated good progress in their writing; they developed topic sentences, transitions, evidence and examples, and their choice of words.
- In Mathematics, the majority of students had a strong understanding of number concepts and applications; they determined solutions using a variety of methods. They were developing their abilities to solve real life problems. Progress was strongest at the beginning and at the end of the elementary phase.
- Students continued to build their own science skills and vocabulary throughout the phase. They conducted age-appropriate experiments and recorded the results. By Grade 4, students were able to determine magnetic properties by testing a range of objects for magnetism. They could predict, observe, record and analyze data. Grade 5 students constructed a roller coaster based on their knowledge of forces and motion. Most could use their expanding scientific vocabulary to explain their findings.

Middle		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Good	Good
Arabic as a First Language	Good	Good
Arabic as an Additional Language	Acceptable	Good
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Acceptable 	Acceptable 
Science	Good	Good

- In Islamic Education, most students had a secure knowledge of the Prophet's (PBUH) life; they could describe events before and after the Revelation. They knew the Prophet (PBUH) as a model of mercy, and as a teacher for all of humanity. They had good knowledge about Isra and Al Maraj trips; they could recite the Prophet's (PBUH) sayings, Hadeeth, with understanding of the general meaning.
- In Arabic as a first language, students' listening skills were good. The majority of students exhibited good speaking skills that were above the expected standards. A majority of students answered oral questions with confidence. Most students' writing across the school was emerging and improving.
- In Arabic as additional language, listening skills were good. However, students' skills of responding were less strong; they struggled with questions on unfamiliar contexts. Students' progress was good in developing basic language outcomes, particularly in speaking and writing.
- In English, students knew how to determine the central ideas and themes of a text and summarize the key supporting details and ideas. In Grade 8, students could identify key plot points, explain how the plot points built suspense, and write about the function of characters in building suspense. Both narrative and persuasive writing were incorporated in most lessons.
- In Mathematics, most students were progressing in line with the expectations of the curriculum. Students manipulated numbers well and applied formula. Their essential skills of problem solving, particularly in a real life context, and recognizing patterns and relationships, were developing at a slower rate.

- Students were developing their scientific thinking and investigation skills well. They hypothesized, made predictions, and drew accurate conclusions. Their science vocabulary increased; they developed increasingly complex ideas and concepts. Grade six students had a strong grasp of environmental science. By Grade 8 the majority of students correctly explained the structure of DNA.

High		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Good	Good
Arabic as a First Language	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
Arabic as an Additional Language	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Acceptable ↓	Good

- In Islamic Education, students' knowledge and understanding of the key Islamic aspects were good. They understood Islamic values from the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet's sayings. However, only a minority of students were able to apply them meaningfully to their own lives.
- In Arabic as a first language, the students' listening skills were good and their speaking skills were in line with expectations. Reading with understanding in extended text was limited; students' writing skills were not strong. However, both were improving. In free writing, frequent spelling and grammar errors were inhibiting student progress.
- In Arabic as an additional language, students' listening skills were good. Speaking skills were in line with expectations; particularly with familiar topics. Progress in acquiring writing skills had improved over time.
- In English, the majority of students identified, analyzed, and applied their knowledge of literary works. They delivered focused, coherent, and polished presentations that conveyed clear perspectives and demonstrated excellent reasoning skills. Students' attainment and progress were enhanced by peer evaluation, and opportunities for high level critical thinking.
- The majority of students' knowledge and understanding of mathematics was above curriculum expectations. They understood the relationship between exponential and logarithmic functions. Their ability to apply their knowledge to a different contexts and recognize practical applications was less developed.
- Students in grade nine chemistry researched, wrote and presented papers on the periodic table of the elements. In biology, older students formulated questions, developed hypotheses, designed experiments, collected and recorded data and drew conclusions. In physics, students recognized and explained the difference between the scientific and the common definitions of work; they defined work by relating it to force and displacement. By the end of this phase students were well prepared for college-level work.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Acceptable ↓	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships between students and teachers were respectful and cordial. Students were supported to express themselves verbally, challenge each other, and take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers in the elementary to high phases created cooperative learning environments; students' engagement in whole class and small group discussions were promoted. The school engendered an ethos of mutual respect, a sense of community and of individual responsibility. However, in Kindergarten, the current practice of excessive teacher supervision, restricted the promotion and development of children's personal and social skills. Application of learning to the real world was strong in English and science. However it was a weakness in the Kindergarten phase and in mathematics across all phases. Critical thinking skills were inconsistently integrated; there were strengths in most English lessons. However there were missed opportunities in too many mathematics and problem-solving lessons. Students' use of learning technologies was inconsistent throughout the school. 				

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


	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal responsibility	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' attitudes were generally positive; they had good interactions with their peers and teachers. Students were willing to give and take critical feedback in the two upper phases. Almost all students were engaged in lesson activities in all phases. However, they did not always appear to be enthusiastic and some reflected a passive attitude. Behavior was positive throughout the school. Student-staff relationships were respectful, leading to productive learning environments, especially in the Kindergarten, elementary and middle school phases. However, interactions with adults in the high school phase were reserved, reflecting the current school community ethos. Students were well aware of health and fitness as important lifestyle choices. Student attendance in the Kindergarten and High School was unsatisfactory; it did not meet KHDA requirements. There was acceptable attendance in all other grades. However, punctuality overall was poor 				

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students understood the influence of Islamic values and the importance of Islam in modern society in Dubai. They respected and appreciated Islamic traditions. They had a good general understanding of the traditions and culture of Dubai. Students described some of the main sporting activities and traditional clothing. Most students had a broad and deep understanding of the UAE culture and heritage. Students confidently knew that Dubai was a multicultural society, with people from different places. Students from outside the UAE appreciated and celebrated their own culture, and gave examples of traditions to their peers. However, for most students, there was only a limited awareness and knowledge of diverse cultures from around the world. 				


	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Community and environmental responsibility	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students contributed to the life of the local and the wider community through a few planned volunteer activities such as the Trahamoo project and the Week without Walls. Students' opinions had limited influence on the school's development. The active elected students' council helped organize a few events. Students showed respect and consideration for the needs of others including those with disabilities. Students were aware of the personal work requirements needed to achieve their academic and career goals. Some made helpful contributions to projects and other activities. However, they were often passive participants. Students participated in a few opportunities provided by the school to sustain the environment, such as a recycling campaign. A few students showed initiative to support this. However, there was only limited participation in student-generated schemes to support conservation. 				

3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable ↓	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers' subject knowledge was generally secure; it was strongest in the high school phase. Most teachers had a good understanding of how their students learned best. However, understanding of methods to teach mathematical thinking to young children in the Kindergarten phase, was less strong. Planning of lessons was generally effective and consistent across phases, except in science. Planned lessons were often imaginative and included clear learning objectives, well aligned to the school curricula. Classrooms were bright and supported learning. The use of time and resources was effective in most subjects; this led to better student engagement and successful learning. Most teachers ensured that students were actively engaged in their learning. They used open questioning; particularly in Islamic Education and English. This often led to high levels of challenge and opportunities for higher order thinking. Activities were regularly planned to meet the needs of different groups of students. They were usually in the form of layered objectives; they were occasionally accompanied by targeted support. However, sometimes all students completed the same activity. High levels of challenge was not a strong feature of lessons for children in the Kindergarten phase or for the more able students in mathematics, science and Arabic languages in the high school phase. Opportunities for critical thinking were promoted in many subjects. However, this was not consistent across all subjects, grades or phases. Enquiry learning was a strong feature of elementary science and high school phase English. Teaching in Arabic as a first language was strongest in the high school phase. Lessons were planned with a range of activities; there was structure to ensure that a balance of the four language skills was provided in all lessons. However, the development of enquiry and critical thinking skills was inconsistent across the phases. 				

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Acceptable 	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's assessments were aligned with the school's curriculum. However, tests in elementary science and mathematics did not provide an accurate measure of student progress. In the Kindergarten, baseline assessment was neither accurate nor sufficiently comprehensive enough when measuring the development of all aspects of each child's development. In line with last year's recommendation, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments were used across most of the school. These provided the school with a realistic picture of student performance. The number of students in the high school phase taking the SAT1 test increased this year. The assessment of writing in Arabic as an additional language benefited from the tests prepared as part of a writing project. Student performance data was analyzed for individual students, class and grade level trends. The second set of MAP testing mid-year allowed teachers to monitor progress. Teachers discussed results with students and, in some subjects, students set themselves targets and evaluated how to improve. Teachers used the results of the data analysis to plan to meet the needs of most groups of students, and to modify the curriculum. For example, data analysis led to the adoption of a writing scheme in elementary and middle school English, increased writing in Arabic, and the emphasis on physical sciences in the Middle School. Teachers in the upper three phases knew their students well. Written feedback to students was limited; good examples were seen in English in the high school phase, supported by electronic systems. Peer and self-assessment strategies were strong features of science and Arabic as an additional language lessons. 				

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum quality	Acceptable 	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The curriculum was broad, balanced and standards-based; it had a clear rationale. It focused on both knowledge and skills and was age-appropriate. Planning and progression were effectively managed; students were well prepared for the next stage of their education. They easily transitioned from grade to grade and to higher education without difficulty. The curriculum was enriched in many ways including travel opportunities, guest speakers, field trips, science fairs and dress in costume days. Some cross-curricular links were in place particularly in the elementary phase but were not well developed in higher phases. The curriculum was formally reviewed on a regular cycle and modifications and adjustments were made as needed. The curriculum in Arabic as a first Language was based on the Ministry of Education requirements. It had a clear rationale and values. It was generally broad and balanced but was largely textbook-driven with some enrichment. As a result of regular review more emphasis was placed on the development of writing skills. 				

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provision of American Sign Language was good; it was shared with several classes and developed as an inclusive model to integrate children with a profound hearing loss fully into school life. Provision for all groups of students within the school was limited. There were insufficient curricular choices, particularly for older students; there was too little opportunity to study subjects that fulfilled their talents, interests and aspirations. The range, option and availability of extra-curricular activities declined since the last inspection. The views of the Students' Council were an untapped resource to inform the school how best to enrich this aspect of the curriculum. The school offered five 40-minute Arabic sessions per week for all of the 102 Arab children and 15 non-Arab children in Early Years; classes for Arabs and the school's program targeted basic vocabulary, common phrases at native level, and basic letter writing. 				

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety	Good	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school had a well-written policy on child protection and cyber-bullying. Staff were trained on the procedures and appropriate responses. Safety and welfare of students was a priority. Safety checks were conducted on a daily basis. Teachers were assigned to supervision posts during breaks, lunch and passing times. They supervised buildings and grounds appropriately. The school was secure; gates were adequately managed. All health and safety records were well maintained, organized and accessible. All buildings and the grounds were maintained to a very high standard. The school had an elevator and ramps at entrances to provide access for all students, parents and visitors with mobility issues. The promotion of healthy living was a feature of the school. Students received instruction in healthy food choices; most brought healthy snacks and lunches from home or selected from a range of appropriate foods in the cafeteria. They participated in physical education and extra-curricular sports activities. 				

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Quality of support	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and students enjoyed positive relationships. Focused assemblies enabled the school to foster higher levels of mutual trust, model appropriate behavior and promote greater confidence and character-building opportunities. The wider parent body was not utilized to embed a culture of good attendance, or develop a stronger work ethic and as a consequence, improve punctuality across the school. The school admitted students with a diverse range of special educational needs and promoted high levels of awareness of sensory impairments. 				

- Support for students with special educational needs was more effective in the elementary and high school phases. The school was committed to manage the provision for special educational needs students more effectively.
- The school had good systems in place to support career guidance and lifelong learning options. However, the recent changes to counselling and guidance personnel presented challenges for students and parents.

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

	Overall
The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders demonstrated a commitment for admitting and supporting students with a special educational needs, and in particular, children with a sensory impairment. • Good arrangements were in place to identify children in the elementary and middle phases, however, in the Kindergarten there was no such policy developed or implemented. • Modification and support was effective in some lessons especially when teachers referred to the individual education plan and were familiar with the students' specific needs. • Parents were generally positive about the support and welcome offered by the school. They expressed concerns about the lack of stability among the teaching cohort. • Students made acceptable progress in the key subjects, and the school was committed to improvements in all key subjects. 	

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

	Overall
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The newly appointed Principal held a defined and purposeful vision for developing the school to ensure all students' needs were addressed and their potential realized. She was beginning to establish positive and productive relationships with teachers, parents and students. However she recognized the importance and urgency of these bonds in promoting a shared vision for school growth. • The changes of leadership during this school year impacted on the role of senior leaders, resulting in a school still in a state of transition. Some senior and middle management leaders were effective. They had a strong commitment to the school and to improved outcomes for the students under their care and responsibility. • Overall, communication needed refinement. Directives from leadership needed greater consistency and transparency to ensure all partners in the school community were aware of their roles and responsibilities. • Most middle and senior leaders demonstrated capacity to make needed improvements within their authority. Each department demonstrated good examples of innovations or initiatives which improved aspects of student performance since the previous inspection. 	

- The professionalism of some members of the teaching staff sustained the work of the school during the time of leadership transition; they ensured good outcomes by students in key subjects in most phases.

	Overall
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes for self-evaluation had been modified to include a wider representation across the school. However, the however leaders did not have a realistic enough view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. • Performance management reviews of teachers had increased. However, the effectiveness of the evaluation of teacher quality was inconsistent. Not all evaluations and consequent professional development planning took into account the demands of the curriculum expectations. • The school improvement and action plans lacked a stated mission and vision. They required greater refinement to ensure goals and targets were measurable and matched to identified needs. • There was moderate progress in addressing all of the recommendations of the previous inspection report. 	




	Overall
Parents and the community	Good ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents highly valued the school, and its role in the education of their children. They held it to high expectation; they were committed to the school and its unique character. They saw it as a model for the development of well-educated young women. Parents were willing to do more to help improve their children's learning; they were uncertain of the necessary strategies to follow. • Although communication systems were in place, most parents saw a need for more enhanced two-way communication that was consistently and universally applied. • Systems were in place to report achievements and learning targets to students and families. However, not all parents were clear as to how their children were progressing and the next steps in their learning. • Links to the wider community occasionally took place. However, not to the extent that existed at the time of the previous inspection. 	

	Overall
Governance	Acceptable ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board of Governors included representatives of parents and two members of the secondary student council. There were opportunities for their views to be part of the board's decision making process. Systems to seek opinions of more parents were not yet in place. • The Board of Governors acted to increase its informed knowledge of the school. It had taken a series of actions regarding leadership. However the timing and execution of these actions had created significant repercussions within the school community; they continued to impact on the school. • The Board of Governors provided expertise to assist in school improvements, with varied results. 	

	Overall
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The day-to-day management of the school was good; there were effective procedures in most aspects of the school. • Teachers, supplemented by resource specialists, ensured students were well supported with high quality teaching. Most teachers held a teaching certificate as well as academic qualifications; they were familiar with the US Curriculum and its expected styles of teaching and learning. • The facilities offered dedicated space for laboratories and libraries, good-sized classrooms, opportunities for swimming, shaded playgrounds and an elevator allowing access to the upper floors. • Learning Technology and resources were widely used by teachers and students to improve and enhance learning. 	

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

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

Responses to the surveys			
Responses received	Number		Percentage
 Parents*	This year	24	4%
	Last year	119	19%
 Teachers	33		52%
 Students	149		44%

- Only a few parents, a majority of teachers and a minority of students completed their surveys this year. (A technical difficulty reduced the number of parents who responded to this year's survey.)
- Overall, parents agreed that they were satisfied with the quality of education in the school and the progress of their children in the key subjects.
- They agreed that they would like a greater range of extracurricular activities offered to enrich the curriculum.
- Teachers felt greater communication and long-range planning would help ensure that all students received the best possible education.
- Students were confident in the quality of their learning. They were aware of changes to the leadership and hoped for a greater opportunity to voice their ideas when changes took place.

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

What happens next?

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

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

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

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

How to contact us

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