

Inspection Report



Dubai International Private School

2014-2015



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

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School information



General information

Location	Al Garhoud
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1985
Website	www.dis.sch.ae
Telephone	04-2823513
Address	Al Garhoud- Dubai P.O. Box 15495
Principal	Mr. Nafez Hayek
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	23 rd - 26 th February 2015



Students

Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age range	4 -17
Grades or year groups	KG 1- Grade 12
Number of students on roll	2474
Number of children in Pre-K	0
Number of Emirati students	1085
Number of students with SEN	24
Largest nationality group of students	Arab



Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	140
Largest nationality group of teachers	Arab
Number of teacher assistants	22
Teacher-student ratio	1 : 18
Number of guidance counsellors	6
Teacher turnover	11%



Curriculum

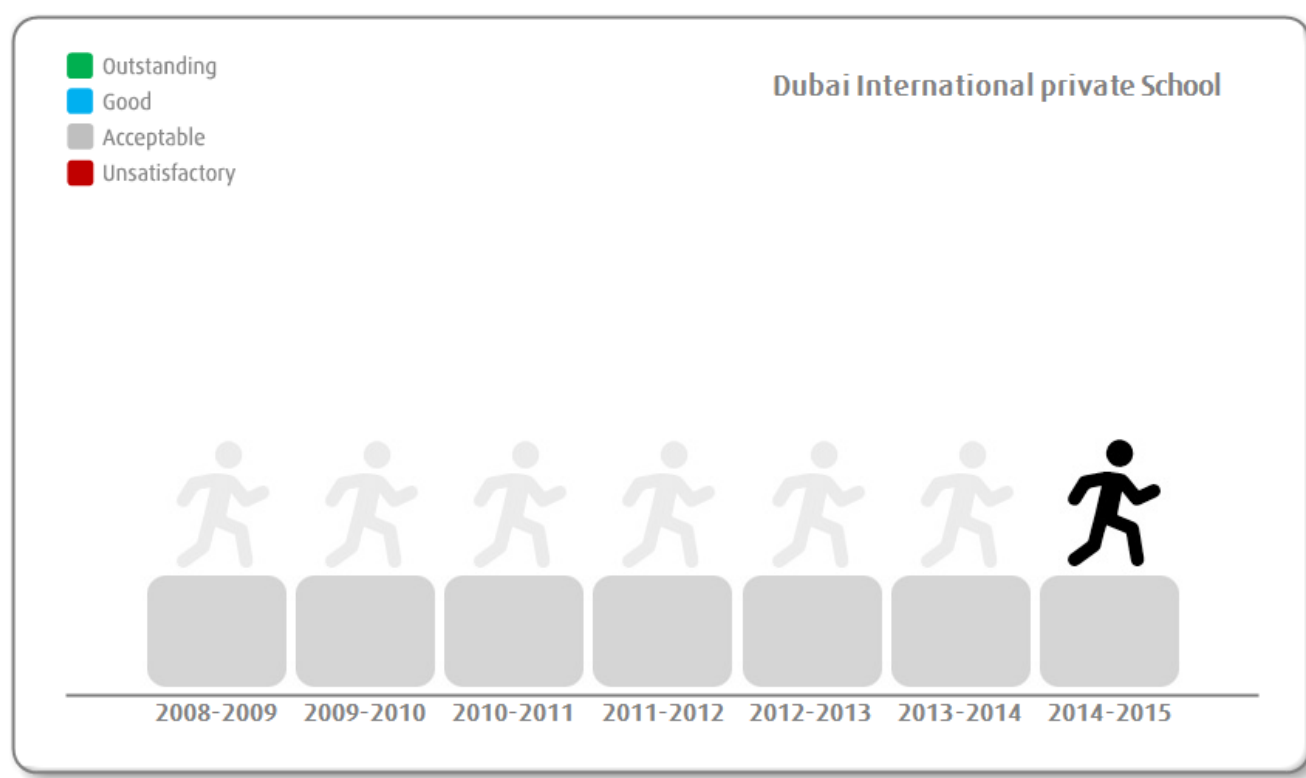
Educational Permit	US
Main Curriculum / Other	US
Standardised tests / board exams	ACER, TOEFL, SAT, IELTS
Accreditation	AdvancED



Dear parents,

Dubai International Private School was inspected by DSIB from 23rd - 26th February 2015, and the overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **Acceptable**

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 judgments 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 quality of leadership, curriculum and teaching in the Kindergarten ensured that children made good progress in learning and in developing high quality personal and social skills.
- Students showed well-developed personal responsibility towards others and their learning and demonstrated deep understanding of Islamic values and the significance of them for life in Dubai.
- All staff members worked together well to ensure that students were safe in the school and when travelling on buses.
- The importance of health lifestyles was promoted successfully.

Areas for improvement

- To improve the academic progress of students, ensure that teachers consistently measure students' knowledge, understanding and skills against appropriate standards, and use the information to provide challenging learning experiences for all groups of students.
- Provide regular opportunities for all students to work together in groups on solving problems, conducting investigations and using a range of learning technologies to support their learning.
- Review the curriculum and bring it into line with the appropriate US standards, and modify the curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of different groups of students.
- Improve the progress of students with special educational needs by identifying them more effectively, drawing individual educational plans for all and support and monitor their learning and personal development.
- Governors should ensure that senior leaders carry out more accurate school self-evaluation processes which take account of the results of external assessments, and that leaders support all staff members to improve the school.

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 Dubai International private School



How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, Dubai International Private School provided an **'Acceptable'** quality of education for its students.






- Children in the Kindergarten made rapid progress and had good attainment in learning English, mathematics and science. In the elementary phase, students showed good attainment and progress levels in all key subjects except science. External test results showed that attainment in science was acceptable in the elementary and middle phases, and good in the High School. In all phases, students' knowledge was better developed than their critical thinking skills. As students progressed through the school, the gap in their English skills compared to those of native speakers narrowed. Students were capable of engaging in lessons and interacting well with their peers and teachers. They were less able to take responsibility for their own learning and be independent learners.
- Students showed good personal responsibility towards others and their learning. Almost all children in the Kindergarten and students in other phases had good understanding of Islamic values and appreciation of the heritage and culture of the UAE. Students' understanding of other cultures around the world was developing. Most students worked hard. Many took pride in their efforts to keep the school clean, to help in the wider community, and to protect the environment.
- All aspects of teaching were consistently good in the Kindergarten. In the other phases, the teaching was of acceptable quality overall. Despite observing quite a few instances of good teaching, the quality was too uneven. While some lessons provided students with well-planned and challenging activities which extended their learning, in some others unrealistic demands were made of students, which slowed their progress. Teachers in the Kindergarten observed the children carefully and made good judgments about their attainment and progress. In the other phases, the majority of teachers had accurate knowledge of how well their students were doing. Teachers used external tests in some subjects, but not in all grades.
- Staff members were working, with some success, to match the curriculum more closely to the US standards. Enrichment activities and opportunities for students to make links between different areas of learning were inconsistent. The school met the requirements for the curriculum in Islamic Education and Arabic. In the Kindergarten, teachers modified the curriculum well to meet the learning needs of children. In other phases this aspect of the curriculum was less effective.
- The school's arrangements for keeping students safe and secure and promoting healthy lifestyles were effective. Staff members supported children to an adequate degree overall. The school welcomed students with special educational needs. The processes for identifying their needs and helping teachers to support them were not systematic and the results were inconsistent.
- Senior leaders managed the daily running of the school effectively. Strategic leadership to improve provision for students with special educational needs was limited. Governors and senior leaders involved the staff and undertook a range of processes to evaluate the school's performance, but their quality judgments were not fully accurate. Partnerships with parents and the community were well developed. Governors had improved the school's resources in some aspects, but class sizes were still too large for some of the smaller classrooms.

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



- The progress made by the small number of students identified as having special educational needs varied considerably, and was acceptable overall.
- Curriculum modification was most effective when clear individual educational plans had been developed for students with special educational needs. Often, this was not the case, and so teachers had difficulty in adapting their lessons to meet the needs of those students.
- The school embraced the inclusion of students with special educational needs and supported their social development well. Support was most effective when the formal assessments conducted by external agencies included helpful recommendations and advice to teachers on how best to support these students.




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

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


↑ Improved from last inspection

↓ Declined from last inspection



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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal responsibility	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding 	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	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable 
Assessment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable



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

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

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

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

Overall school judgement

Acceptable

Key strengths


- The quality of leadership, curriculum and teaching in the Kindergarten ensured that children made good progress in learning and in developing high quality personal and social skills.
- Students showed well-developed personal responsibility towards others and their learning, and demonstrated deep understanding of Islamic values and the significance of them for life in Dubai.
- All staff members worked together well to ensure that students were safe in the school and when travelling on buses.
- The importance of healthy lifestyles was promoted successfully.


Changes since the last inspection

- In the elementary phase, students' progress in learning Arabic as a first language and their attainment and progress in mathematics had improved.
- The students' attainment and progress in Arabic as an additional language in the High School, their attainment in English in the Middle School, and their attainment in mathematics in the High School had all declined.
- The quality of teaching in the High School and the quality of students' learning skills in the Middle and High Schools had declined.
- In the elementary and middle phases, students' responsibility towards the community and the environment had improved to good.
- Kindergarten children's understanding of Islamic values had improved and was now of outstanding quality.
- The quality of curriculum design to meet students' needs had improved in the Kindergarten. The quality of the curriculum in the High School had decreased.
- The quality of the leadership and governance of the school had declined to acceptable.

Recommendations

- With the aim of accelerating students' progress and improving their knowledge, understanding and learning skills, particularly in the Middle and High Schools, ensure that teachers consistently:
 - assess accurately the strengths and development needs of individual students in knowledge, understanding and skills against appropriate standards
 - use assessment information to plan and implement differentiated tasks and activities for different groups of students in lessons
 - provide regular opportunities for students to collaborate on meaningful tasks and investigations, apply their learning to real world problems, carry out research and use technology to enhance their learning.
- Build upon the progress already made to align the curriculum more closely with the appropriate US standards, use collated assessment data to influence curriculum reviews, and modify the curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of different groups of students.
- With the aim of improving the progress of students with special educational needs, identify them more accurately, draw up individual educational plans which match their learning targets and support strategies, and provide guidance to teachers as they support students and monitor their learning and personal development.
- Ensure that governors hold senior leaders to account for:
 - setting and implementing school self-evaluation processes that would lead to accurate judgments of the school's strengths and the areas in need of development
 - Supporting staff members as they take the necessary actions to secure improvements.

 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	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good


- Children made good progress in learning English as their second language. Older children were able to recognise and read short three and four-letter words, and the majority were able to read sentences. They listened attentively and followed instructions, and were able to talk about features of stories. Children's writing skills were well developed.
- In mathematics, most children demonstrated good understanding of mathematical concepts and skills. They made good progress in relation to their assessed starting points. Most children added numbers in play and used the language of 'more or less than.' Many were able to continue simple patterns and identify shapes and colors.
- In science, most children made good progress in their understanding of the world. For example, they understood earth and life science objectives. The older children had planted a garden and could explain what elements plants needed to grow. Their enquiry and investigative skills were developing well.

Elementary

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

- In Islamic Education, the majority of students knew and understood well the five pillars of Islam in addition to the five prayers and their respective times. They knew the expected good behaviour of a Muslim and understood the meaning of prescribed Suras such as Surat-Al-Ensheq. The majority of students were progressing beyond expectations in learning the word meanings of the Holy Qur'an.
- Most students of Arabic as a first language had good skills in reading and understanding. The students' strongest skills were in listening and responding, and they had no difficulty in understanding the high level of standard Arabic spoken by their teachers. Their writing skills were at basic levels.

- The majority of students were making good progress in English as an additional language. Most students used English routinely in lessons. By Grade 5, the majority were able to use new vocabulary well in discussions and express their ideas clearly. Students made slightly slower progress in reading and writing than in speaking and listening.
- Most students were able to use more than one strategy in performing mathematical calculations. They drew models to represent quantities and worked well with solid materials to help their understanding. Students discussed mathematics using the appropriate vocabulary. Their problem-solving skills were developing.
- Students made steady progress against the school's science curriculum standards as they learned basic concepts. For example, they learned about measuring volume, atomic structure, the earth's rotation around the sun, and the use of natural resources to make things. External test results showed that their attainment was of acceptable quality overall.

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

- In Islamic Education, most students knew and understood at an expected level the meaning of Surat-Al-Hojorat and how a Muslim should apply the concepts conveyed in it to real life. They knew and understood the Prophet's Hadith about the right source of money in a Muslim's life. Most of them could explain Surat-Al-Hasher. They were making acceptable progress in the application of Islamic concepts in their lives.
- Most students of Arabic as a first language showed attainment levels that were in line with the curriculum expectations in reading comprehension. They were able to understand prescribed topics, but were making slower progress in developing their writing skills.
- In Arabic as an additional language, students' listening, reading and comprehension skills were well developed. Students were progressing in their speaking skills at a brisk pace, and were able to articulate their thoughts using standard Arabic in new contexts and situations. They were able to write simple paragraphs and apply their knowledge of grammar adequately.
- Students showed good progress in English; however, the attainment levels of most students were still in line with the US curriculum expectations. They talked and wrote confidently, for example, about the difference between facts and opinions. In some classes they evaluated the quality of the arguments provided in video clips and articles. Their reading skills were improving, but were developing more slowly than the other skills.
- In mathematics, most students were able to sequence and compare integers accurately. They were able to use the formula for a straight line in practical situations. Most students were at the initial stage of independently analysing word problems.
- Students made steady progress in science against the school's curriculum standards as they learned more advanced concepts and skills. For example, they learned how to compare the strength of molecular bonds and how to model erosion and deposition by water. External tests showed that their attainment was of acceptable quality overall.

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

- In Islamic Education, most students knew, understood and could apply the concept of Zakat. They were able to explain the characteristics of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) as a leader of the Muslims. They could explain the vocabulary and the meanings of Surat-Al-Noor. Students' skills in applying the Tajweed rules when they recited the Holy Qur'an were varied.
- Most students in Arabic as a first language understood poetry appropriately. Their language knowledge and skills were mostly in line with curriculum expectations. They were confident in their analysis of literary texts, poetry and prose. A few showed good skills in extended writing. Progress was better in the girls' classes than in the boys' ones.
- In Arabic as an additional language, students were able to listen and comprehend standard Arabic. They often responded with brief phrases in colloquial Arabic. Their oral reading and comprehension skills were adequate. Their loud reading was often slow and with frequent errors. They expressed themselves in writing, but made a considerable number of mistakes in spelling, word choice and structure.
- Students demonstrated good appreciation of English literature, although the quality of argument varied from incisive to superficial. Older students presented projects well; for example, about links between poetry, films and the Romantic Movement. Their writing skills were developing well. Students' literature reading skills were more developed than their reading-for-information skills.
- In mathematics, the majority of students had good calculation skills. They enjoyed opportunities to apply their skills to practical situations. Most students, as expected, could use logarithmic functions in real life questions, and applied their understanding of the cosine rule. For most students, the abilities to explain and reason were appropriately developed.
- Students made good progress against the school's curriculum standards for science, as they learned more advanced concepts and skills, including the functions of plant and animal cells, potential and kinetic energy, and the functions of different parts of the brain. The external and internal tests showed that their attainment was of good quality overall, as the majority of students exceeded expectations.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓


- Students generally had positive attitudes and were engaged in their learning even when the teaching was not fully stimulating. Their engagement in learning was strongest in the Kindergarten. In mathematics, most students in the elementary phase were able to take responsibility for their learning. Overall, students were not given enough opportunities to work independently.
- In English lessons, students interacted and collaborated well, but these aspects were weaker in other subjects, wherein the opportunities to interact with each other were too infrequent and too brief.

- Students were able to apply their learning to the real world in Islamic Education and mathematics lessons. Opportunities to do this in the other subjects were less frequent.
- Students' skills in enquiry, research and critical thinking were still emerging across the school. Their skills in using information technology in their learning were too limited, as students did not have enough opportunities to develop their proficiency.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal responsibility	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good

- In the Kindergarten, the personal responsibility and attitudes of the children were outstanding. They could work independently and listen to comments from their teachers about their learning. They behaved very well. Students generally demonstrated good personal responsibility and positive attitudes in the other phases.
- Student's behaviour was good on the whole. Some incidents, particularly among boys, reflected a few students' lack of self-discipline at times and their inability to adopt a mature approach when resolving differences of opinion.
- Relationships in the Kindergarten were marked by high degrees of politeness and respect. Relationships were good at the other phases, and almost all students showed themselves to be agreeable and pleasant. The Class President system revealed students' willingness to help and support their fellow students.
- Children in the Kindergarten and students generally demonstrated excellent understanding of healthy living. In the Kindergarten, this understanding was visible in practice, particularly in relation to the healthy lunches taken by the children. Older students did not always put their understanding into action in this way. Students participated in physical education activities enthusiastically.
- The level of attendance was good. However, a few students arrived late at the start of the school day.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding 	Good	Good	Good

- Children in the Kindergarten had excellent, age-appropriate understanding of how Islam influenced modern life in Dubai. They could talk well about mosques and about the noted Islamic practices during Ramadan and Islamic festivities.
- Most students across the other phases had clear understanding of Islamic values and Emirati culture. That was manifested through their effective participation in local celebrations and through the visits and activities organised by the school.
- Students from different countries had good knowledge and appreciation of their own cultures. Their understanding of global cultures was less well-developed


	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across the phases, students were active and responsible members of the school community. The Students' Council provided a forum wherein students' views and ideas could influence the development of the school. Students initiated and undertook meaningful activities such as planning a camp for elementary students and an Appreciation Day for the janitorial and support staff. They participated in a range of charitable works in the wider community. • Most students displayed a strong work ethic and dedication to worthwhile projects. • Students demonstrated well-developed understanding of environmental sustainability. They initiated activities to conserve water and reduce electricity use at the school. Some organised a 'Clean-up Day' at the beach, and older students made a greenhouse using recycled water bottles. 				

3. How good are teaching and assessment?


	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers had good subject knowledge, and most had a developing understanding of how students learn. In the Kindergarten, teachers used their expertise to plan lessons in which children were actively involved in discussion and collaboration. In a minority of lessons across the school, for example in some Arabic lessons, teachers did not know how to use methods that excited students' interest. • Lesson planning was systematic but rarely imaginative. Teachers established warm relationships with their students which helped them develop confidence in learning. Despite the teachers' best efforts, cramped classrooms in the Elementary School did not permit stimulating and active learning environments. • In the majority of classes, teachers interacted productively with students, providing clear explanations and asking probing questions which extended learning. However, in a significant minority of lessons, teachers spoke excessively, which limited students' contributions and dynamic learning. • In most lessons teachers used an appropriate range of strategies to provide students with activities of realistic and achievable levels of challenge. In a minority of lessons the work was not set at the right levels of difficulty for all which slowed students' progress. • The majority of teachers promoted critical thinking, reflection and independent learning appropriately, particularly in English; however this practice was unevenly observed across the school, especially in lessons for the older students. • Most teachers of Arabic as a first language had strong subject knowledge. They planned lessons appropriately. They had a developing understanding of how students learn best. They provided students with adequate opportunities to make presentations, perform role-plays and assume role teacher responsibilities. The use of technology in teaching and the planned opportunities for student collaboration were limited. These hampered the promotion and development of higher-order thinking. 				

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers linked internal assessments to curriculum standards in some, but not all subjects. They conducted assessments regularly during and at the end of semesters. The expected levels of attainment were inconsistent, and teachers and leaders did not have fully accurate knowledge of how well students were learning. The school conducted external benchmarking by using a range of tests from different countries, including the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER) in certain grades, United States tests of mathematics, and assessments of English as an additional or foreign language. Leaders had used knowledge gained from the Program of International Student Assessment (PISA) test to make modifications to teachers' lesson planning and strategies for questioning students. Teachers analysed assessment data in different ways across the various subjects and phases of the school. In the Kindergarten, teachers analysed assessment data to help them identify students' learning needs. In the other phases, the quality of analysis of data ranged from unsatisfactory to good. As a result, teachers' understanding of how well their students were progressing was too varied. The use of assessment information by teachers to make important modifications in their planning and lesson delivery was inconsistent between subjects. Across the school, some teachers were able to assess learning during lessons and make modifications as needed, but these teachers were a minority. The majority of teachers knew how well their students were progressing through the different curricula. Almost all teachers were supportive of students' learning and the school's interim progress reports were an effective means of helping struggling students and their parents know how these students might improve their work. 				

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum quality	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior leaders based the rationale for the curriculum on the goal of building lifelong learners. The school was taking adequate steps to align its programs to the content, skills and learning expectations of the US Curriculum, specifically with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English and mathematics, and the Next Generation Science Standards. In the Kindergarten, children acquired knowledge and skills in a balanced way across a range of subjects through themed studies. In the other phases, the curriculum was not sufficiently broad or balanced. High school students did not fully experience the main elements of a US curriculum. Staff members planned the curriculum systematically to help students make steady progress across the phases. They organised transitions between the phases well, for example, by letting kindergarten children visit classes in the elementary phase prior to moving there. Instances of planned enrichment of the curriculum were interesting and imaginative as observed in some classes. Students' learning was enhanced when these enrichment activities included a diverse range of experiences. Such enrichment was not widespread. Cross-curricular links were occasionally developed, for example between economics and Islamic Education, or in joint work in economics and mathematics on marginal costs. 				

- Subject departments reviewed their curricula yearly. Some instances of good revision took place in which students' attainment results were used to identify and address areas of weakness in the curriculum.
- The curriculum included Arabic as a first language from the first year of the Kindergarten, and at all phases met or exceeded the Ministry of Education requirements. Students received free additional support in reading. Teachers provided additional enrichment activities from time to time, but, overall, this aspect was limited.

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

- Staff members undertook some modification of the curriculum trying to meet the needs of different groups of students. These modifications were most evident in the Kindergarten, where they had positive effects. Senior leaders had provided a civics course which non-Muslim students took while their peers were studying Islamic Education. Overall, within most classes, teachers informally modified the curriculum based on how well students were learning.
- Curricular choice was strongest in the Kindergarten. In the other phases, students were given few choices within the curriculum, although in individual projects students could choose topics that interested them. Students in the High School did not have the electives that form an integral part of the US Curriculum.
- Staff members organised an adequate range of extra-curricular activities for students. These activities covered a variety of topics from thematic events to sports.
- The kindergarten curriculum included time for all students to learn Arabic as a first language. Children benefited from interesting activities to support their learning and provide them with a strong foundation in basic words and phrases.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety	Good	Good	Good	Good


- All staff members cared for and promoted the welfare of students. The staff and students were aware of child protection arrangements. The related activities were age-appropriate, and kindergarten children benefited from suitable advice about how to keep safe. Students were aware of the recommended procedures in the case of cyber-bullying. The school's policy of banning mobile phones in school was not fully appropriate, nor enforced effectively.
- Staff members maintained a safe and secure environment for students and others, and promoted the importance of healthy lifestyles regularly. A health and safety committee ensured that arrangements were suitable and any potential dangers were dealt with.
- The medical staff kept good records of incidents and students' overall health.
- The premises and facilities provided a suitable environment for learning. Some minor repairs and maintenance to the building were required.
- Staff members at all phases promoted the importance of healthy eating, and the school provided good opportunities for physical exercise.


	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Quality of support	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff-student relationships were based upon principles of respect, courtesy and a duty of care. These principles were implemented to best effect in the Kindergarten. Relationships were of good quality overall. • The school's processes and procedures for managing absences ensured that students' attendance was good. • Students with special educational needs were admitted into the school. Staff members had only identified the needs of a small number of such students. Kindergarten teachers were better at the identification of children's special needs than the staff in the other phases. • In good noted practice, teachers provided effective support for students with special educational needs by providing modified tasks, resources and specific help. These practices were relatively rare. • Social advisors and a careers guidance counsellor provided advice to students, particularly about their academic progress and future careers. 				

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"> • A new special educational needs coordinator had been effective in raising awareness among teachers and students about special educational needs. Overall, senior leaders needed to implement a more systematic approach to monitoring and improving the school's provision for students with special educational needs. • The school was not effective at identifying students with special educational needs. The policy was too biased towards formal, external assessments. The kindergarten staff members were good at using observations of children to identify the difficulties they were facing. There was no use of screening tests in the school. • Staff members had drawn up some individual educational plans for students whose needs had been identified. The plans were not fully customized to each student's needs. As a result, teachers had difficulty in modifying their lessons to take account of students' needs. Most gave appropriate emphasis to the personal and social requirements of students with special educational needs. • Partnerships with parents were of acceptable quality. Parents were happy with the progress of their children. They appreciated having the new coordinator as a clear point of contact for issues related to the needs of their children. There was some variation in the extent and quality of parents' involvement in developing individual educational plans. As a result, some parents were not fully aware of how they could support their children at home. • The progress made by students with special educational needs was inconsistent; it varied from unsatisfactory to good. Teachers did not track progress reliably. In cases where there was targeted provision supported by recommendations from external agencies and clear action plans for teachers to follow, students' progress was better. 	

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




	Overall
The effectiveness of leadership	Acceptable 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All senior leaders were committed to improving the school and implementing their vision of a good international school with a curriculum aligned to the US curriculum standards. Various staff members at other levels had leadership roles and responsibilities. There was variance in the effectiveness of how well they performed those roles. Senior staff members, in particular, did not sufficiently and effectively support the special educational needs coordinator and the teachers to improve provision and outcomes. Relationships among staff members were positive. Communication was sufficiently good to ensure that most teachers and students knew what was expected of them. Senior leaders demonstrated adequate capacity to move the school forward. Senior leaders had overseen improvements in several aspects of the school's performance. However, their impact was inconsistent and uneven as the school had witnessed decline in a significant number of areas as well. 	
	Overall
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff members used different ways of gathering data and information on the school's performance. The use of surveys was a positive feature of self-evaluation. Those with leadership responsibilities undertook formal observations of each teacher's lessons, and conducted learning walks to gather information on the quality of teaching and students' learning skills. There was significant variance in the effectiveness of these approaches; consequently, the accuracy of the senior leaders' views of the school's performance was limited. The senior staff drew up improvement plans for the whole school and subject departments. The plans did not set out measurable success criteria clearly. Leaders had made some progress in addressing the recommendations of the previous inspection report. There had not been significant improvement in the aspects of teaching, assessment, or meeting students' learning needs. Students' attainment and progress levels had improved in some key subjects, while it had declined in others. 	
	Overall
Parents and the community	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school had productive links with parents. The mothers' council was influential, and parents were involved well in the Kindergarten. Parents benefited from two-way communication with the school, done in a range of ways. The online portal and other web-based pages were very helpful and interesting. Teachers' reports to parents on their children's progress were overly based on marks in tests. They did not explain students' progress and attainment fully or the student's next steps in learning clearly. Students benefited from a range of links with outside bodies, for example business people and former students who visited the school to talk about careers and healthy living. 	

	Overall
Governance	Acceptable 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The governing board did not have any parent representatives, but it did listen to the views of parents through the mothers' council and by surveying the opinions of the wider parent body. • The board members met regularly and discussed reports from the Principal on the school's performance. The extent to which the board held senior leaders to account for the accuracy of their self-evaluation judgements and the quality of the school's provision and outcomes was limited. • The governing board ensured that some aspects of the school's resources had been improved. Progress in improving the school's information technology infrastructure had been slow, and class sizes were still large overall. 	

	Overall
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leaders managed the daily operation of the school effectively. • Senior leaders had not acted on a recommendation in the previous inspection report about acquiring expertise in leading school improvements. There were few teachers with educational qualifications or direct experience of education in the United States of America. The quality of the teachers' continuous professional development was improving. Senior staff members did not match development work with the key priorities of the school such as meeting students' learning needs, or the assessment of learning. • The premises were adequate overall. Many rooms were too small for the numbers of students using them, restricting the range of teaching approaches and causing potential safety hazards, for example, in science laboratories. • Staff members had made some improvements to the available resources, for example by providing online novels to students learning English. 	

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 judgments. 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	158	12%
	Last year	220	18%
 Teachers	123		88%
 Students	183		26%

- Most teachers, around one-quarter of students, and a few parents completed their surveys.
- Most parents who responded were satisfied with the quality of education at the school. They thought that their children enjoyed school, were acquiring good learning skills and making good progress in the key subjects.
- Almost all parents who responded thought that their children were safe in the school. A significant minority of parents did not agree that the school offered a wide range of subjects or extra-curricular activities.
- Senior students' views were less positive than those of their parents. While most of those who responded felt safe and well looked-after, only around two-thirds were satisfied with the overall quality of education provided to them.
- Around half of the students who responded did not have positive views about the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, or preparation for the next stages in their lives after leaving the school.
- Only a minority of students agreed that the leaders listened to their views.
- Most teachers thought that the school was well led and that the leaders listened to their views. They indicated that they were included in reviewing the curriculum and in conducting some of the school self-evaluation activities.
- Almost all teachers agreed that they received regular feedback from their line managers.

*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