DUBAI
Knowledge المعرفة

2019-2020

INSPECTION REPORT

UK CURRICULUM

ST. MARY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL DUBAI - AL MUHAISNAH

Contents

School Information

General Information		
	Location	Al Muhaisnah
	Opening year of School	2015
	Website	www.stmarysmuhaisnah.com
	Telephone	971042614014
	Principal	Karen White
	Principal - Date appointed	8/28/2018
	Language of Instruction	English
	Inspection Dates	20 to 23 January 2020

Students		
	Gender of students	Boys and girls
	Age range	3-14
	Grades or year groups	FS1-Year 9
	Number of students on roll	1157
	Number of Emirati students	3
	Number of students of determination	37
	Largest nationality group of students	Indian

Teachers		
	Number of teachers	78
	Largest nationality group of teachers	Filipino
	Number of teaching assistants	14
	Teacher-student ratio	1:15
	Number of guidance counsellors	1
	Teacher turnover	27%

Curriculum		
	Educational Permit/ License	UK
	Main Curriculum	UK
	External Tests and Examinations	None
	Accreditation	None
	National Agenda Benchmark Tests	GL

School Journey for ST. MARY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL DUBAI - AL MUHAISNAH

Outstanding | Very Good | Good | Acceptable | Weak | Very Weak

2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
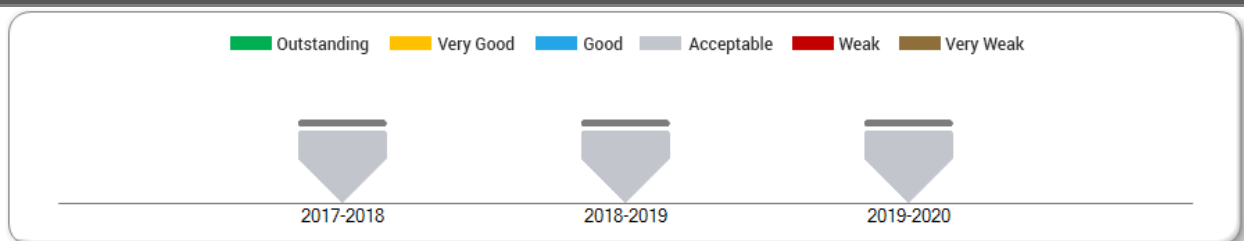
Summary of Inspection Findings 2019-2020

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **acceptable**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for students' outcomes, provision and leadership.

Students Outcomes	• There are improvements in English, mathematics, science, and learning skills in the secondary phase. The greatest impact is in the primary phase, which comprises 57 per cent of the school's enrolment. The strong, sustained focus on reading across the curriculum, along with the enlisting of parent volunteers to support and encourage reading, particularly with the younger students, is impacting positively. • Students' personal and social development is improving in the primary phase, so that, across the school, students have responsible attitudes and display respectful behaviour. They have positive relationships with their teachers and with one another. Leaders have a clear understanding of the benefits of innovation. However, planning effectively for innovation is not a strong feature of the school.
Provision for learners	• A key challenge for the school is the high rate of teacher turnover, with 21 new teachers this year and 25 new teachers the previous year. Teachers' understanding and delivery of high-quality teaching and assessment have improved, with support from more experienced colleagues. This effect is not well embedded in all subjects or phases. • The curriculum in the Foundation Stage (FS) is stronger than in the other phases. It is planned carefully by the whole team, to ensure continuity and progression. Across other phases, there is clear continuity and progression in English, mathematics and science. Provision is less secure in Islamic education and Arabic, due to the level of repeated work and a typically low level of challenge. • The school places a strong emphasis on the care, guidance and support of students. In the primary phase, this has improved and is now good, as in other phases. The school provides a welcoming and nurturing environment for students of determination. Provision for students with gifts and talents is not sufficiently well developed.
Leadership and management	• The principal establishes an accountable learning community within the school, with a strong emphasis on professional development for teachers. The drive for improvement is bringing early successes in areas of the curriculum, notably in English, but also in mathematics and science. Parents contribute positively to the life and work of the school. There have been recent significant improvements in accommodation.

The Best Features of The School:

- Students' progress in science in the primary phase, in mathematics in the primary and secondary phases, and in English across all phases.

- Students' behaviour and their appreciation of Islamic values and Emirati culture.

- Effective arrangements for health and safety, and for care and support in all phases.

- Positive and purposeful relationships with parents.

Key Recommendations:

- Improve students' attainment in all key subjects and phases to at least good, particularly the attainment of those learning Arabic as an additional language.

- Build consistently good teaching across the school and eliminate all weak teaching.

- Ensure that students in all phases acquire good learning skills.

- Ensure that leaders at all levels have a secure knowledge of the curriculum and demonstrate best practices in teaching, learning and assessment.

Overall School Performance

Acceptable.

1. Students' Achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Islamic Education	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable.	Acceptable.
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable.	Acceptable.
Arabic as a First Language	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable.	Acceptable.
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable.	Acceptable
Arabic as an Additional Language	Attainment	Not applicable	Weak	Weak
	Progress	Not applicable	Weak	Weak
English	Attainment	Acceptable.	Good ⬆	Good ⬆
	Progress	Good ⬆	Good ⬆	Good ⬆
Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable.	Acceptable.	Acceptable.
	Progress	Acceptable.	Good ⬆	Good ⬆
Science	Attainment	Acceptable.	Good ⬆	Acceptable.
	Progress	Acceptable.	Good ⬆	Acceptable.
UAE Social Studies	Attainment		Good	

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills	Acceptable.	Acceptable	Good ⬆

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal development	Good	Good ⬆	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Acceptable	Good

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
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	Acceptable
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Parents and the community	Good
Governance	Acceptable
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good ⬆

For further information regarding the inspection process, please look at **UAE School Inspection Framework**

National Priorities

National Agenda Parameter

In 2014, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, launched the UAE National Agenda 2021. In 2015, KHDA launched the National Agenda Parameter (NAP), which is a method for measuring and monitoring schools' progress towards achieving the UAE National Agenda targets.

The following section focuses on the success of the school in meeting the National Agenda Parameter targets.

The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter (NAP).

School's progression in international assessments	meets expectations.

- The school performed well in 2016 in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) tests in English. It is currently awaiting results from the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). In the last two consecutive cycles of NAP testing, the school consistently met expectations in English and mathematics. In those cycles, students' performance in science was much stronger. The school gathers information about students' potential and compares this to their results. In almost all year groups, students' performance in relation to their potential is better than expected.

Impact of leadership	meets expectations.

- Leaders ensure compliance with the National Agenda requirements, and results are carefully analysed. Although the school is compliant, year 3 results are excluded, and this constitutes a gap in the otherwise comprehensive assessments. School leaders provide training to improve teachers' knowledge and understanding of how to use assessment information effectively.

Impact on learning	meets expectations

- Most students can relate their learning to real-life situations. Critical thinking is promoted well in science but not so well in other subjects. The use of learning technologies relies heavily on the availability of students' own mobile devices. This strategy is not inclusive and hinders the development of skills for research and investigation.

Overall, the school's progression to achieve the UAE National Agenda targets meets expectations.

For development:

- Submit the NAP results for all year groups, and share information with all those who need them.

- Adopt a fully inclusive approach for the use of learning technologies to enable all students to develop their skills of research and investigation.

Moral Education

- The moral education curriculum covers four key areas, two of which are closely linked to curriculum provision for UAE social studies. It provides continuity and progression in learning across the phases. Underpinning curricular provision are thinking, learning and communication skills.

- Moral education is taught to each of years 1 to 9 for one period each week. All lessons are carefully planned to promote shared thinking and discussions. Students are enabled to make connections of their personal experiences to both local and global, current affairs.

- Students' work and achievements are assessed each term, through on-going and final assessments. Several cross-curricular links are used within assessment, particularly in English. School reports to parents include specific details of achievements in moral education.

The school's implementation of moral education is meeting expectations.

For development:

- Extend the range of teachers' questioning to develop students' critical thinking regarding issues of moral education.

- Develop processes to assess and record students' progress from their starting points more effectively.

Reading Across the Curriculum

- The school tracks students' reading skills in all year groups using standardised and internal assessments. There is clear evidence of improvement over the year.

- Teachers receive robust professional development to build their understanding and skill in literacy instruction, aligned with the whole-school approach stated in the reading policy.

- Reading skills and key vocabulary are taught specifically in all subjects to deepen the understanding of texts and to assist students in research and problem-solving.

- School leaders and the reading team are fully committed to embedding a culture of reading throughout the school.

The school's provision, leading to raised outcomes in reading across the curriculum, is developing.

For development:

- Increase the collaboration between teachers of Arabic and English to ensure that all good practices are shared and that students' reading skills improve to meet expectations in both languages.

Innovation

- Students' research, critical thinking and problem-solving skills are not promoted consistently enough. Students do not have enough opportunities to use learning technology in innovative ways.

- In the secondary phase, students demonstrate some skills in enterprise and give active support to charity events. This is not consistently the case in other phases.

- Across the school, teachers have made some improvement to students' problem-solving skills. Planning for innovation is not a key feature of provision.

- The curriculum in each phase is not adapted to facilitate specific activities related to the promotion of innovation.

- School leaders have a clear understanding of the benefits of innovation. They have begun to devise a strategic plan to promote a culture of innovation.

The school's promotion of a culture of innovation is emerging.

For development:

- Strengthen the use of technology in all phases, and provide more opportunities for students to engage in meaningful research, critical thinking and report writing.

Main Inspection Report

1. Students' Achievement

Islamic Education

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Across both phases, most students possess knowledge and understanding in line with curriculum expectations, with notably strengths in the upper primary phase. In a few instances, students in the secondary phase demonstrate levels that are below expectations.

- Students in the primary phase have adequate knowledge of the Five Pillars of Islam, but insufficiently detailed understanding of each one. In the secondary phase, they have a basic understanding of general Islamic teaching, but their knowledge of specific Islamic strands is limited.

- Since the last inspection, the Islamic department endeavours to relate lessons to real life situations but it is too early for this to have had a significant impact on students' learning, as it is not yet fully embedded.

For development:

- Raise expectations of teachers and students regarding what can be achieved in lessons.

- Provide greater challenge to students in order to improve their learning.

Arabic as a First Language

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Most students in the primary and secondary phases demonstrate linguistic skills that broadly meet the expectations of the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum standards. Some more able students demonstrate reading and comprehension skills that exceed expected levels.

- In the primary phase, students read short stories. In the secondary phase, they understand the meaning of spoken and written discourse. Students in both phases have difficulties in speaking classical Arabic and in producing coherent ideas in extended writing.

- The school has recently introduced the iRead online program in an attempt to encourage students' engagement with Arabic, and develop their reading skills. It is too early for the full impact of this work to be seen.

For development:

- Ensure that provision enables students to make gains consistently in all four language skills.

- Provide opportunities and effective guidance to improve students' writing skills for a variety of purposes.

- Consistently challenge students to speak in extended responses, using classical Arabic.

Arabic as an Additional Language

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Attainment	Not applicable	Weak	Weak
Progress	Not applicable	Weak	Weak

- Students have limited proficiency in the four language skills. Only a few can listen, understand and use simple Arabic sentences and respond to questions about familiar topics. Their knowledge of grammar, and its application in speaking and writing, is insecure.

- Most students' progress in acquiring Arabic vocabulary is adequate. Students can read simple, familiar texts. However, their understanding of what they read is variable. Independent writing lacks richness and precision in vocabulary and structure.

- New initiatives, in both phases, enable teachers to set students in groups. Students are placed according to their ability and their everyday use of Arabic. However, they are not consistently provided with enough opportunities to become resilient and independent learners.

For development:

- Deliver engaging lessons that provide students with consistent opportunities to develop their language skills, especially speaking and writing.

English

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Attainment	Acceptable	Good ⬆	Good ⬆
Progress	Good ⬆	Good ⬆	Good ⬆

- Children in the FS arrive possessing widely varying levels of English skills. Overall, they make good progress from these different starting points and attain good levels in the primary years. Students in the secondary years maintain high outcomes in English.

- Students' listening, speaking and reading skills are the strengths of their attainment in English. There are no significant weaknesses. Across all phases, students, do not enough extended personal writing, during lessons or outside school hours.

- Students' collective reading skills have improved since the last inspection, partly due to the new emphasis on reading by English teachers and senior leaders. Each class has a weekly library period. Parents serve as reading helpers.

For development:

- Provide opportunities for students should write more frequently during lessons and outside classes.

Mathematics

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Good ⬆	Good ⬆

- Children in the FS achieve at age-expected levels and attainment is improving. The results of students in the primary and secondary phases show improvement over three years of external tests. Students' attainment is in line with curriculum expectations and, for a majority, progress is strong.

- Students more frequently relate their learning to real-life situations and to learning in other curricular areas. These links are well promoted in most mathematics lessons. Mental mathematics is reinforced daily. The development of all students' problem-solving skills is on-going, but challenging.

- The use of information technology to enhance learning in mathematics is underdeveloped. The school's current arrangements, whereby students bring their own devices, are not inclusive. As a result, some students do not have sufficient opportunities to develop skills in this area.

For development:

- Ensure that students know their immediate next steps in learning as well as their longer-term targets.

- Develop the use of information technology to enhance mathematics learning for all students.

- Improve the progress of children in the FS to at least good.

Science

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Attainment	Acceptable	Good ⬆	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Good ⬆	Acceptable

- In all phases, students are increasing their skills in critical thinking and problem-solving. Most children in the FS2 can confidently describe and label the main parts of a plant and, with some support, talk about the function of these parts.

- In all phases, most students are taking more responsibility for their own learning. As a result, students are developing their skills of inquiry and research well. This increased responsibility also contributes to higher achievement in the primary phase.

- Revised approaches to scientific investigations have resulted in improved learning experiences for all students. Most students in the secondary phase plan investigations independently and work collaboratively to conduct experiments, for example, Year 9 students investigating what metal prevents iron from rusting.

For development:

- Challenge students to increase their critical thinking skills.

- Provide additional opportunities for all students in all year groups to take responsibility for their learning.

UAE Social Studies

	All phases
Attainment	Good

- A majority of students attain above expected levels in UAE social studies. The subject is currently in transition from integrated provision within a general programme, to being taught as a separate subject.

- The UAE social studies provision is closely aligned to the MoE textbook. However, teachers are linking work well to work in English, through extended writing, and to history, geography, moral education and art.

- Older students produce high-quality video blogs, for example, relating to the First World War and the theme of tolerance. Students have insufficient opportunities to carry out research and present their findings, either face-to-face or by using technology.

For development:

- Integrate research and presentation skills more fully into the teaching and learning programme for UAE social studies.

Learning Skills

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ⬆

- Across the school, most students participate successfully in lessons and are active learners. In most subjects, they take increasing responsibility for their own learning, and for assessment. Students' learning skills are typically more developed in the secondary classes.
- Most students are motivated and work well individually and in groups. When invited to communicate their learning, they do so confidently. However, collaborative working is not consistently developed across all subjects.
- Students are becoming more independent in their learning, particularly in secondary classes. In the most effective lessons, students develop their critical thinking, problem-solving, research and presentation skills well. However, this is not a consistent feature across the school.

For development:

- Improve students' learning skills in all subjects and phases to at least good.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal development	Good	Good ⬆	Good

- Students' enthusiasm for school is reflected in their good attendance and punctuality when arriving to lessons. Behaviour in the primary phase has improved significantly. This is a direct result of the school's strong focus on the development of positive attitudes.

- Across all phases, students are polite and courteous to adults and to each another. They show care, compassion and support for their peers. Secondary school students take on the role of 'Homework Buddies' to support students of determination.

- Students benefit from extra-curricular activities that promote physical exercise, being part of a team, and competing in internal and external competitions. Healthy eating is encouraged, as is evident in the content of lunch boxes and students' choice of food.

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

- Students have secure knowledge and understanding about the Islamic values that influence life in the UAE. They appreciate Emirati culture, the extent to which the country attracts citizens with different backgrounds, and how it has built a tolerant and welcoming society.

- Across the school, students are knowledgeable regarding the traditions and culture of the UAE. The school promotes UAE culture through different activities and events throughout the year. During National Day, students enjoy a range of activities provided for them.

- Students present features of their own culture enthusiastically, proudly and knowledgeably. The diversity of cultures in the school allows students to learn more about one another. However, the understanding of other world cultures and heritage is not well developed.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Acceptable	Good

- Students in the secondary phase contribute well to the school community by taking on key roles, leading by example, and helping others. The school does not provide enough opportunities for students in the primary phase to take on responsibilities.

- Most students are committed to trying to help those less fortunate than themselves. They enjoy contributing to charity fund-raising, for example, by participating in the Ramadan fridges initiative. They are developing entrepreneurial skills by selling Sock Worm toys.

- Across the school, students are aware of environmental issues and are committed to keeping the school and surroundings clean. Students in the secondary phase promote a litter-free school during break times. They also participate in cleaning up beaches.

For development:

- Increase opportunities for students in the primary phases to take on additional roles of responsibility.
- Promote students' understanding of local and global environmental issues, and encourage greater participation in sustainability and conservation schemes.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The quality of teaching is variable. Almost all teachers have a secure knowledge of their subject and convey it well to their students. Most plan well-structured lessons and share their learning objectives with the students.

- Most teachers use questioning well to prompt thinking, to check students' understanding and recall of facts, and to consolidate learning. A few teachers, across subjects and phases, use skilful questioning on a consistent basis, to challenge students and to promote discussion.

- In most lessons, teachers provide relevant tasks to achieve appropriate learning objectives. A few lessons are still too dominated by teachers and do not engage students enough. In other lessons, teachers are increasingly developing students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- In the FS, arrangements for retaining evidence from assessments are not sufficiently robust. In other phases, the school benchmarks students' achievement against international expectations in English, mathematics and science from Year 2 to Year 6, but not in Year 3.

- The school evaluates students' potential and compares it with their assessment outcomes. Assessment information is not effectively used to shape lesson planning. Teachers do not consistently follow the school's marking policy. Target-setting for students is not well developed.

- The internal assessments in English, mathematics and science are carefully aligned to curriculum standards. In Islamic education and Arabic, internal assessments are not secure. There are external assessments in Arabic, as a first and additional language, from Year 4 to Year 10.

For development:

- Improve the quality of internal assessment in Islamic education and Arabic.
- In the FS, retain assessment evidence relating to each child's learning.
- Ensure that all teachers challenge students more and develop their independent learning skills.

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Across all phases, the curricula for English, mathematics and science ensure continuity and progression. In the primary and secondary phases, programmes for Islamic education, Arabic as a first language and Arabic as an additional language have repetition and lack sufficient challenge.

- The FS curriculum promotes active learning. In most subjects, the curriculum meets the learning needs of a large majority of students. However, the most able children are not challenged sufficiently, and the less able need better support in Islamic education and in Arabic.

- The curriculum is reviewed on a regular basis. Amendments are made where they are thought necessary. Leaders promote links across the curriculum to help students to transfer knowledge and skills across subjects, particularly in social studies, mathematics and science.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
• Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The FS curriculum meets the needs of most students. In other phases, modifications to meet the needs of some groups are not implemented well. Across the school there is limited use of information technology to support and extend curriculum provision.

- Students have too few opportunities to engage in activities that promote enterprise, innovation, creativity and social contribution. They are encouraged to, and often do, lend their support to campaigns such as litter-free beaches and the recycling of plastic.

- The FS curriculum develops children's early appreciation of UAE heritage and culture. This is effectively built upon in the other phases, where the curriculum increasingly promotes students' knowledge and understanding of the traditions, culture and values that influence Emirati society.

- Arabic is taught in FS for 30 minutes weekly.

For development:

- Modify the curriculum more skilfully to meet the needs of all groups of students.

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

- Throughout the school, there are effective arrangements for the safeguarding of students, including child protection. These have been shared with stakeholders. All school volunteers are checked. Students feel safe and are confident to report any concerns to an adult in school.

- The school's clinic is clean. Staff hold separate files for each student, containing necessary information regarding his or her health. The school's part-time doctor and full-time nurse look after students' health. The nurse promotes healthy lifestyles by giving talks in assemblies and classes.

- The management of school transport is effective, with adequate personnel to supervise the arrival and departure of students. Maintenance procedures are efficient. Staff report any defects and the school then takes the necessary steps to rectify them.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Care and support	Good	Good ⬆	Good

- Teachers know their students well. The school has effective systems for managing students' behaviour, resulting in positive and respectful relationships and an orderly school community. The management of attendance is secure. Parents are informed speedily if any child is absent.

- Staff implement effective systems to support students of determination, but the school has no process to identify those students who may have gifts and talents. Where identification is accurate, the quality of support contributes to improved outcomes.

- A dedicated support, care and guidance team provides sensitive, professional assistance to address and manage the diverse needs of students in an inclusive and nurturing environment. Students and parents have access to personnel for counselling on behavioural, social and emotional issues.

For development:

- Put in place an identification and support process available to all students, including those with gifts and talents.

Inclusion of students of determination

Provision and outcomes for students of determination	Acceptable

- School leaders are committed to the promotion of inclusion. The well-qualified inclusion team has developed effective policies, which are implemented successfully in the primary phase. It provides professional development and advice to staff, and offers support to teaching assistants.

- Children in the FS, and students with gifts and talents, have yet to be included in the formal identification process. As a consequence, they do not benefit from interventions. Specialist staff provide personalised interventions, tailored to individual students' needs.

- Parents hold the inclusion team in high regard. They value the personal and academic support currently offered. They are involved in developing individual learning plans and receive helpful advice on how to help their children at home.

- Individual education plans are being developed. Specific targets are now included for social, emotional and academic support. The learning support assistants, and the school's care and support team, make a positive contribution to students' learning and their personal development.

- The school monitors the progress of students of determination in a satisfactory way. However, information on their progress is not gathered consistently, and the progress of individual students is not measured accurately enough.

For development:

- Ensure that identification and support processes are developed in all phases, especially for younger children and for students with gifts and talents, who may already be missing early and crucial interventions.

6. Leadership and management

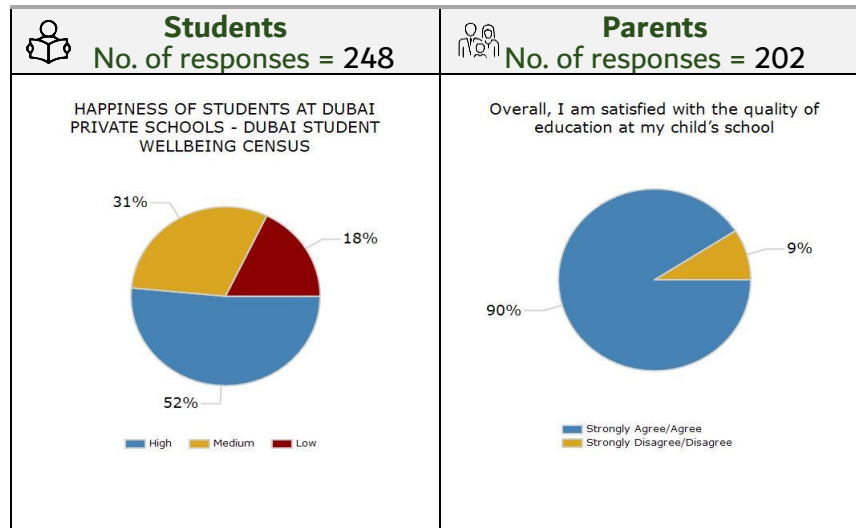|	
The effectiveness of leadership	Acceptable
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Parents and the community	Good
Governance	Acceptable
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good ⬆

- Senior leaders, including the principal, set a direction and vision that demonstrate commitment to the UAE. They engage positively with external evaluation and manage the outcomes of the process effectively. The school, with strong support from its stakeholders, has developed steadily in the recent past and is improving learning outcomes for students. It is compliant with all statutory and regulatory requirements. Relationships among staff are professional and morale positive.

- Senior leaders evaluate the school's work with a particular focus on the quality of students' experiences, their achievements and personal development. They have an overview of the work of teaching staff, have analysed performance, and use the results to inform change. The school prepares an improvement plan with relevant targets. Recent plans have led to some improvements. The school has addressed most of the recommendations from the previous inspection report.

- Parents have regular opportunities to be involved in the life and work of the school. Leaders ensure that parents are informed about key developments that affect the education of their children. Parents report that they feel welcome in the school, that their views are taken seriously, and that the school acts promptly to address any concerns. They express satisfaction with school reports on their children's academic progress, and on personal and social development.

- The Board of Governors has representation from the business and education communities, the Catholic Church and officers from the St Mary's group of schools. A director of teaching and learning makes weekly visits to support and ensure accountability. Governors are aware of the school's key priorities and have a reasonable overview of the school, which enables them to provide useful guidance to the school's senior leadership team. Governors ensure that statutory requirements are met.

- The school operates efficiently on a daily basis. Almost all teachers are certified for teaching expertise, but none has certification from the UK. The facilities have been improved since the previous inspection, specifically those for learning Islamic education and Arabic. Some classrooms, in other areas, are too small for the numbers of students in the class. The school has provided a new prayer room. Resources for teaching and learning are of good quality, but limited for information technology.

For development:

- Ensure that feedback from students in all phases is used as a source for school self-evaluation, and that information from stakeholders is used effectively to inform developments.

- Extend national and international partnerships, including those with other schools, to benefit students' learning achievements.

- Improve the arrangements for communicating with parents, as parents expressed concerns in the survey.

- Find ways to take students' opinions directly from student representatives, so that governors hear this unique perspective on the school.

Views of parents and students

Before the inspection, the views of the parents and senior secondary students were surveyed. Key messages from each group were considered during the inspection. They helped to form inspection judgements.

Students No. of responses = 248	Parents No. of responses = 202
HAPPINESS OF STUDENTS AT DUBAI PRIVATE SCHOOLS - DUBAI STUDENT WELLBEING CENSUS 31% 18% 52% ■ High ■ Medium ■ Low	Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of education at my child's school 90% 9% ■ Strongly Agree/Agree ■ Strongly Disagree/Disagree

Students	• Participation of students was from Years 7 and 8 only. Their views are very positive. They feel well-connected to their school, and confident about themselves as learners. A few students have experienced social, physical or cyber-bullying, and around one-fifth verbal victimisation. The team shared these concerns with the school.
Parents	• Almost all parents are satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school. They have concerns about aspects of communication between the school and parents, and inconsistencies in marking homework. The inspection found that there was some validity to the concerns expressed, and shared them with school leaders.

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