

Inspection Report



GEMS Our Own Indian School 2014-2015



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School information



General information

Location	Al Quoz
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1991
Website	www.gemsoo-alquoz.com
Telephone	04-3391188
Address	P.O. Box 26845 Dubai
Principal	Mrs. Lalitha Suresh
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	13 th – 16 th October 2014



Students

Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age range	3 - 17
Grades or year groups	KG1 - Grade12
Number of students on roll	3645
Number of children in Pre-K	
Number of Emirati students	0
Number of students with SEN	277
Largest nationality group of students	Indian



Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	163
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teacher assistants	6
Teacher-student ratio	1:22
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	7%



Curriculum

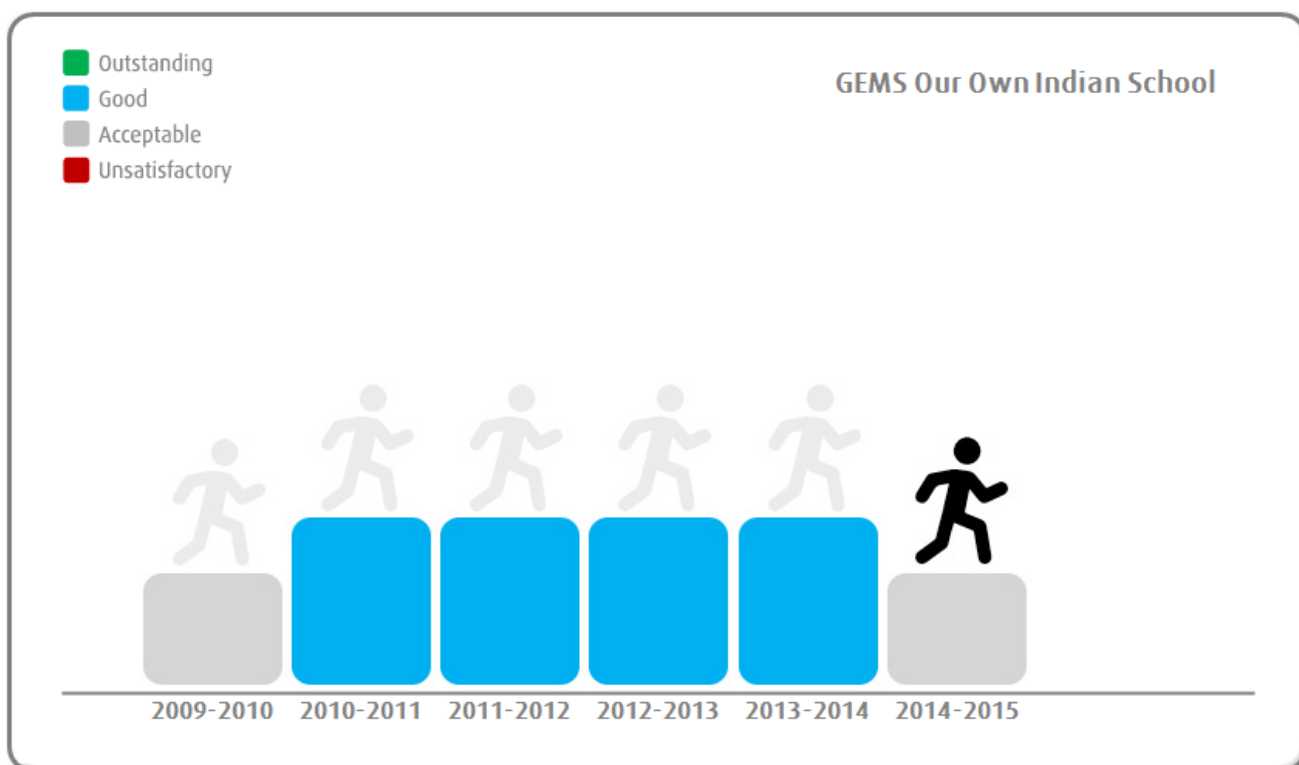
Educational Permit	KHDA
Main Curriculum / Other	CBSE
Standardised tests / board exams	CBSE
Accreditation	CBSE



Dear Parents,

GEMS Our Own Indian School was inspected by DSIB from 13th – 16th October 2014, 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 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 students' demonstrated positive attitudes, behaviour and work ethics and they showed enthusiasm for learning.
- Students in the middle phase had a deep understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures.
- Students in the secondary phase understood their community and environmental responsibilities.
- The curriculum in the secondary phase was of high quality.
- Senior students' were successful in external CBSE examinations.

Areas for improvement

- Improve student attainment and progress in Arabic as an additional language.
- Improve teachers' use of assessment during lessons to improve students' learning and progress, particularly in the Kindergarten and the primary phase.
- Ensure all students with special educational needs are supported effectively in all lessons so they routinely make good progress in all of their learning, by making greater use of specialists to train teachers.
- Improve self-evaluation processes so that leaders improve the school by identifying the correct strengths and areas for development.
- Reduce class sizes to ensure compliance with KHDA requirements for class sizes.

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 GEMS Our Own Indian School



How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, GEMS Our Own Indian School provided an **Acceptable** quality of education for its students.




- Students made better attainment and progress in the middle and upper phases than in the Kindergarten and primary phases.
- Teaching and learning were stronger in the middle and upper phases than in the Kindergarten and primary phases.
- Students in the senior school achieved well in the CBSE Board examinations.
- In the best lessons, good teaching resulted in students learning well and making good progress but this was not consistently found across the school, and some students did not make good progress in their learning, particularly those with special educational needs.
- School leaders had not identified correctly all the areas for improvement. As a result the school did not make the necessary improvements to the quality of teaching in order to improve students' learning and development.
- The Board of Governors had not fully supported the school leaders and students, for example, by reducing large class sizes and overcrowding in classrooms.



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

- Students with special educational needs made acceptable progress in their learning and development. Their learning, progress and attainment were not systematically reviewed or monitored carefully enough to make sure they had made good progress in all lessons and in all subjects. The school had not provided the necessary professional development for classroom teachers. As a result students received limited support for their learning from class teachers.
- The curriculum was not modified in lessons to make sure students with special educational needs made better than acceptable progress. Students with special educational needs often had to learn in the same way as other students; with the same tasks, resources and timings. Class teachers of students in the Kindergarten and primary phases did not use assessment information to help students to learn better.
- The special educational needs specialist leaders were effective in their leadership of special educational needs, although their impact was limited in scope to what they could provide to students who attended the specialist learning support facility. When attending the specialist provision, students received effective support from the coordinator and specialist teachers. There were good relationships between parents and the special educational needs specialists.

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

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

↑ Improved from last inspection

↓ Declined from last inspection

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Outstanding	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding

3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Good	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of support	Good	Good	Good	Good

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

- Students demonstrated positive attitudes and behaviour, strong work ethics and enthusiasm for learning
- Students' understanding of Islamic values and their awareness of Emirati and world cultures in the middle phase was outstanding.
- Students' understanding of community and environmental responsibility in the secondary phase was outstanding.
- The quality of the curriculum in the secondary phase was outstanding.
- Students' attainment in external CBSE examinations in the secondary phase was strong.

Changes since the last inspection

- Students' progress in science in the Kindergarten had improved.
- Levels of attainment and progress in English in the primary and middle phases had declined.
- Levels of attainment and progress in mathematics in the Kindergarten had declined.
- Levels of attainment and progress in science in the primary phase had declined.
- The quality of learning, teaching in the primary phase had declined.
- The quality of school leadership, self-evaluation and governance had declined.

Recommendations

- Ensure senior leaders are effective in their self-evaluation which leads to improvements by accurately identifying strengths and areas for development in the school.
- Use assessment findings during lessons to improve teaching, learning and student progress, particularly in the Kindergarten and primary phases.
- Improve student attainment and progress in Arabic as an additional language.
- Ensure all students with special educational needs are supported effectively in all lessons so they make good progress.
- Involve leaders with responsibilities for special educational needs in training classroom teachers to effectively support students in lessons.
- Ensure class sizes are compliant with KHDA requirements.

↑ 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	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
Science	Good	Good ↑

- The majority of children spoke English confidently. They listened attentively and were able to respond well to their teachers and each other. Their writing skills were not well developed.
- Most children understood the concepts of less and more in mathematics. They were able to count, sort and match numbers.
- Children were able to engage in scientific investigations and make basic observations about what they saw.

Primary

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

- The majority of students had good knowledge of the pillars of Islam and were developing their knowledge of how to prepare for prayers. Students' memorisation of the Holy Qur'an was not as well developed.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students had basic listening and speaking skills. They could respond to greetings and say simple words. The development of their writing skills was weak.
- In English, Kindergarten students were not as articulate and confident in speaking as students in other phases.
- In mathematics, students understood place value, rounding numbers, addition and subtraction of four digit numbers, multiplication and division of two digits, and the basic properties of geometrical shapes. They were less confident in describing and applying the geometrical properties of two and three dimensional shapes.
- Most students' understanding of scientific concepts was at an expected level. Their investigative and experimental skills were not developed as well.

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

- The majority of students in Islamic Education had good knowledge of the lives of the prophets and Islamic morals such as Ihssan, patience and reverence. They had developed a good understanding of the difference between optional and obligatory rituals. The application of the rules of recitation were not developed as well.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students had acceptable listening and speaking skills. They understood classroom instructions and could say simple sentences. Their writing skills were not developed.
- In English, most students' skills and development in reading and writing were much weaker than their skills in listening and speaking.
- In mathematics, students had good knowledge of the properties of quadrilaterals and the different properties of polygons. They could analyse graphs using statistics. However, they made less progress in understanding the relationship between fractions and decimals.
- Many students had developed good scientific knowledge and methods. This had enhanced their skills of enquiry, particularly when given opportunities through practical investigations.

Secondary		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Good	Good
Arabic as a First Language	Choose an item	Choose an item
Arabic as an Additional Language	Acceptable	Acceptable
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Outstanding	Good
Science	Good	Good

- The majority of students in Islamic Education had good knowledge of key concepts such as Suannah and the Holy Qur'an as the sources of the laws of Islam.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students could independently speak in a few sentences. They could decode Arabic scripts, but occasionally struggled to understand its meaning. Progress in developing writing skills was slow.
- In English, most students were able to express themselves well. They could confidently express and defend their point of view. They made good progress in creative writing.

- In mathematics, students demonstrated a good understanding, when applying knowledge to geometry, differentiation and integration techniques. They could use conditional probability. They made good progress in problem-solving techniques by reframing questions. The use of algebraic techniques to solve equations was not developed as well.
- Students could apply their scientific knowledge to carry out investigations in laboratory work. Progress was made equally well in physics, chemistry and biology.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Good	Good

- Students were enthusiastic and active learners when given opportunities to explore and take responsibility for their own learning. There were not enough of these opportunities in the Kindergarten and primary phases.
- Students worked well together by cooperating enthusiastically on tasks and supporting each other in learning.
- Students' skills in making connections between their learning in different subjects and applying their understanding to the world around them, was not evident in all lessons.
- Students' enquiry, critical and higher-order thinking were not strong across all subjects. Teachers missed opportunities to develop these skills in lessons.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students demonstrated highly positive and responsible attitudes to their work.
- They were respectful and courteous in all of their interactions.
- They participated enthusiastically in physical activities and understood and discussed the importance of fitness and healthy living for well-being.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Outstanding	Good

- Students across all phases had a good understanding and appreciation of how Islamic values influence modern Dubai society.
- They appreciated the heritage and culture of the United Arab Emirates that affected life in Dubai.
- Students celebrated their own and other cultures. They appreciated the variety and range of cultures from around the world. Students in the middle phase had a mature grasp of cultural diversity and were very aware of the common elements between cultures.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students showed strong pride in their school community. They were aware of their individual responsibility as part of the school and wider community. The school provided good care and support for new students. • Students had strong work ethics and were responsible members of the school community. • Students participated in community projects to improve the environment. Senior students were actively involved in environmental issues. 				

3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of teachers had strong subject knowledge and created detailed lesson plans. • The most effective teaching included collaboration, discussion, research and the use of Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) for student learning. • Teachers used open-ended questioning to stimulate students' thinking and discussion. However closed questioning, which required little thinking by students, was also evident in lessons, particularly in the Kindergarten and primary phases. • Teaching was not consistent across the phases. Less effective lessons did not provide challenge and meet the learning needs of every student, including gifted and talented and students with special educational needs. A number of lessons lacked creative approaches to build students' language skills. • The development of student's critical thinking skills was not routinely part of all lessons. 				

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Assessment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were effective internal assessment systems for tracking, monitoring and reporting on student progress. • The schools' response to student achievement in international assessments was to adapt the curriculum and teaching to ensure students were better prepared for international benchmark assessments. • The use of assessment information and the tracking of student progress in lessons, was inconsistent across the phases. • Overall, teachers had sufficient knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses but this was not always used to influence teaching. • Not all teachers planned appropriately challenging learning to ensure all students made good progress, particularly students with special educational needs and students in the Kindergarten. 				

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding

- The curriculum was aligned to the standards of the CBSE curriculum
- Curriculum planning allowed for smooth transitions between the phases. There was comprehensive planning for progression in all subjects across the secondary phase.
- The curriculum in the secondary phase was broad, balanced and innovative, secondary including enrichment opportunities and extra-curricular activities to meet the needs and interests of students.
- There were excellent opportunities for independent learning, for example, symposia and project work.
- Curriculum was reviewed annually and systematically developed.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good

- The curriculum was not consistently modified in lessons to meet the needs of all groups of students, particularly, the more able students and students with special educational needs. Large class sizes impeded the effective delivery of the curriculum to all students. The design of the Kindergarten curriculum did not always provide challenge for children.
- Students in the secondary phase had a range of subjects to meet their interests and academic needs, with some element of choice. Students in all phases had the opportunity to explore their talents in music, art and dance.
- Extra-curricular activities and strong community links enhanced students' learning and development. Students in most phases had the opportunity to explore their talents and interests.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding



- Teachers were aware of, and understood the child-protection policy and procedures. The potential dangers of the internet and social media had not been incorporated in school policy.
- The school environment was safe and hygienic and students were carefully supervised and monitored throughout the day. There were clear and effective procedures and record keeping in relation to school transport.
- Facilities and the wide range of equipment and resources were well-maintained, appropriate and safe for students.
- There was restricted space in many classrooms throughout the school and student numbers were excessive in some classes. This was a serious cause for concern in the event of needing to evacuate the school and also impacted negatively on teaching, learning and curriculum access for students.
- The school provided opportunities for all students to participate in physical activities and healthy living was promoted extensively throughout the school.


	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Quality of support	Good	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships between students demonstrated high standards of respect and courtesy. • Attendance and punctuality were good. • Students with special educational needs were identified and assessed using diagnostic tools. • Students were well supported by the specialist staff but were not always supported so well in lessons. Teaching did not always meet individual needs and so students did not make expected progress. . • Systems for monitoring the well-being and the personal development of students were effective. Individual advice and guidance were offered to students at key transition points to inform future careers and employment options. 				

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"> • Provision for students with special educational needs was managed by the school counsellor and leader for special educational needs. • Systems and processes for identifying and diagnosing students' needs were not yet precise or rigorous enough to ensure teachers had accurate information and effective strategies to meet students' individual needs in lessons. • Learning for students was limited, particularly in the Kindergarten and primary phase, because teacher support, learning resources and modification of the curriculum did not provide for the individual needs of all students. • Parents of students with special educational needs, felt welcomed by school leaders. They appreciated the regular updates about how well their child was learning in relation to their start points and the progress they made in their personal, social and academic targets set. • Teachers were given training in supporting students' with specific needs. , but monitoring the effectiveness of provision and its impact on student learning was weak. 	

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




	Overall
The effectiveness of leadership	Acceptable 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders were well intentioned and committed. Most leaders knew their roles and responsibilities but leadership capacity varied. • Relationships and communication throughout the school were effective. • School leaders knew the school needed improvement but had not accurately identified areas for improvement such as teaching, learning, assessment and students' attainment and progress. • Leaders demonstrated limited capacity to improve the school. 	
	Overall
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-evaluation was evident in the development and subject action plans for the school. However, these plans were not sharply based on the accurate analysis of student needs. • School leaders did not have a fully realistic view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Performance management was in place and included internal and external professional development. • The analysis of internal and external data had not significantly contributed to student improvement. • There were no mechanisms in place to measure the impact of teachers' professional development on students' attainment and progress. • The school had made limited progress in meeting the recommendations from the previous report. 	
	Overall
Parents and the community	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental involvement in the school was strong. • Senior leaders ensured effective communications and good links between the school and home. • Reports to parents and parent-teacher conferences were regular and informative. However, reports did not provide sufficient individual information on each child and did not give the next steps in learning. • There were sound, developed links with the community. 	

	Overall
Governance	Acceptable 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board of Governors sought the views of stakeholders in the school. They listened to opinions and concerns and responded to suggestions. • The board had not held school leaders sufficiently accountable for ensuring there were improvements in students' achievement and that the recommendations from the previous inspection report were met. • The Board of Governors had not supported the school sufficiently to overcome the challenges it faced. 	

	Overall
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day-to-day management of the school was highly effective and efficient. • Teachers were qualified and deployed well. However, there were few teaching assistants and this limited the support provided for students. • The premises were in an acceptable condition although overcrowding was a significant problem throughout the school. Classrooms were overcrowded and cramped, which restricted teaching, learning and the progress students made. • Resources and facilities were only adequate although there had been a few improvements, for example, art and craft areas, discovery room in primary, smart boards in the Kindergarten, computer trolleys, on-line resources and information technologies for teachers. 	

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	949	37%
	Last year	966	39%
 Teachers	91		53%
 Students	570		91%

- Less than half the parents and teachers but three-quarters of the students responded to the survey.
- Of those who responded, the majority were satisfied with the quality of education at the school.
- Most parents believed their children were making progress in English, mathematics and science but did not agree or did not know if they made progress in Islamic Education and Arabic.
- Almost all students believed they were developing a good range of learning skills and most parents agreed with this.
- Most parents and students believed teaching was good and that assessment led to improvement.
- Almost all parents and students believed the school was well led and most students felt safe, cared for and treated fairly.
- All parents believed they were well informed about their child's education.
- All parents felt that students with special educational needs were welcomed and almost all teachers believed students were accurately identified and making progress.
- Almost all teachers felt that a good range of extra-curricular activities were provided but a minority of students were dissatisfied with these and a significant number of students felt there was a strong need for better sport facilities.

*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